

Policy Levers for Health System Reforms

India Health Systems Capacity Strengthening Program
(December 2-13, 2024)

The Module 2, **Policy Levers for Health System Reforms**, of the *India Health Systems Capacity Strengthening Program*, will consist of 8 sessions, each with interactive and participatory virtual classes. Although each session will be conducted as a standalone webinar, the topics are interlinked. Participants interested in learning about comprehensive health system reforms will benefit the most by participating in the entire Module. Only those participants who attend the entire course (Modules 1, 2 and 3) will be awarded completion certificates.

Continuing from Module 1, Health System Assessment and Diagnosis, organized during August – October, 2024, Module 2 will focus on the policy levers available to health system researchers, practitioners and policy actors to design health system reforms.

Module objectives:

1. This Module aims to equip participants with a robust conceptual framework and understanding of policy levers, with a focus on India's unique contextual realities.
2. Participants will learn the key concepts of each of the five health system policy levers (control knobs), considerations for designing health system reforms, and the interlinkages among the policy levers.
3. Our goal is to support researchers and practitioners in the practical task of designing health system reforms. This includes identifying the underlying causes of both successful and poor performance (covered in Module 1) and leveraging evidence to inform and design effective health system reforms.

Session 1: Overview of the Control Knob Framework

Prof. Winnie Yip

Monday, December 2, 2024 | 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST

This session provides an overview of the Getting Health Reform Right (GHRR) Framework, and its relevance to universal health coverage (UHC). The *GHRR* Framework helps policymakers diagnose health system issues, design reforms, and manage the reform process. The session aims to introduce the main elements of the *GHRR* framework, linking it to the challenges of UHC in India. Topics covered include the health reform cycle, key elements of the approach, causal analysis, health systems analysis, a focus on the five policy levers, and applying the *GHRR* framework to UHC. Discussion questions will explore the goals and policy levers within the *GHRR* framework, definitions of health systems, and the interaction of technical, political, and ethical analyses.

Session 2: Persuasion

Dr. Abdo Yazbeck

Tuesday, December 3, 2024 | 6:00 – 8:00 PM IST

Persuasion as a critical control knob for driving health policy change by influencing stakeholders' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Persuasion involves strategic communication to build consensus around the need for reform and its proposed solutions, often by framing messages in ways that resonate with stakeholders' values and priorities. This process relies on trust, credible evidence, and compelling narratives to humanize policy goals and make them emotionally and cognitively engaging. Effective persuasion also requires ongoing, transparent dialogue with stakeholders, addressing resistance and fostering buy-in through adaptive and targeted communication strategies. By aligning diverse interests and overcoming barriers to change, persuasion creates the socio-political conditions necessary to implement and sustain technical reforms, making it indispensable for successful health policy transformation.

Session 3 and Session 4: Health Financing

Prof. Bill Hsiao

Friday, December 6, 2024 | 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST (Session 3)

Monday, December 9, 2024 | 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST (Session 4)

Health Financing is a fundamental control knob for shaping health system performance and achieving policy goals. Health financing encompasses the methods for collecting, pooling, and allocating financial resources to fund healthcare services. The way financing is structured has profound implications for equity, efficiency, and access to care. It determines how funds are raised—whether through taxes, insurance premiums, or out-of-pocket payments—and how they are pooled to share risk among populations. Effective financing mechanisms ensure that resources are distributed in ways that prioritize essential services, protect individuals from catastrophic health expenditures, and incentivize efficiency in service delivery. Policy reforms in health financing often address issues such as the extent of public versus private funding, the design of payment systems, and the alignment of financial incentives with desired health outcomes. By shaping the flow and allocation of resources, health financing serves as a powerful tool for improving the sustainability, accessibility, and equity of health systems.

Session 5: Provider Payment

Prof. Winnie Yip

Tuesday, December 10, 2024 | 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST

Provider Payment is a pivotal control knob for influencing healthcare provider behavior and improving health system performance. Provider payment refers to the methods and mechanisms used to compensate healthcare providers, which directly shape their incentives, efficiency, and quality of care. Common payment models include fee-for-service, capitation, salary, and performance-based payments, each carrying distinct advantages and drawbacks in terms of cost control, service delivery, and equity. The choice of payment system can encourage or discourage specific behaviors, such as overprovision of services, risk selection, or a focus on preventive care. Reforms in provider payment often aim to align financial incentives with health policy objectives, such as improving quality, reducing unnecessary treatments, and enhancing equity. By carefully

designing and adjusting payment systems, policymakers can influence how resources are used, ensure financial sustainability, and improve the overall performance of health systems.

Session 6 and Session 7: Organization

Prof. Winnie Yip

Wednesday, December 11, 2024 | 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST (Session 6 – Macro level)

Thursday, December 12, 2024 | 7:00 - 9:00 PM IST (Session 7 – Meso and micro levels)

Organization is a critical control knob that focuses on how health systems are structured and managed to deliver services effectively. Organization encompasses the arrangement of institutions, roles, and relationships within the health sector, influencing who delivers care, how it is coordinated, and the overall efficiency and equity of service delivery. At the macro level, this control knob addresses the distribution of responsibilities between public and private sectors, the integration of services across levels of care, and the design of processes for governance and accountability. At the meso level, organization concerns the decision structures, process, human and financial resources of health facilities which inevitably affect the way care is delivered in the health system. The micro level involves the competence, behavior, motivations, and incentives of individual health providers. Organizational reforms may involve restructuring health facilities, decentralizing decision-making, strengthening management capacity, or fostering collaboration among stakeholders. By optimizing organizational arrangements, policymakers can improve access, reduce fragmentation, and enhance the quality of care, ultimately ensuring that health systems are better aligned with the needs and priorities of the population.

Session 8: Regulation

Prof. Michael Reich

Friday, December 13, 2024 | 6:00 – 8:00 PM IST

Regulation is a key control knob for shaping the behavior of individuals and organizations within the health system to achieve desired policy objectives. Regulation involves the use of laws, rules, and guidelines to influence practices related to healthcare delivery, financing, and access. It governs a wide range of activities, including the licensing of providers, the approval of medical products, the oversight of insurance markets, and the enforcement of quality standards. Effective regulation balances the need for control with flexibility, ensuring compliance while encouraging innovation and efficiency. Poorly designed regulations can lead to unintended consequences, such as stifling competition or creating administrative burdens, while well-crafted policies can improve equity, protect consumers, and ensure the accountability of providers and institutions. Regulation is an essential tool for steering health systems toward improved performance, but its success depends on the capacity of institutions to implement and enforce rules effectively.

Module 2: Policy Levers for Health System Reforms (December 2 to 13, 2024)

SESSION NAME	INSTRUCTOR	DATE/TIME
Session 1: Overview of the Control Knob Framework	Winnie Yip	Monday, December 2 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST
Session 2: Persuasion	Abdo Yazbeck	Tuesday, December 3 6:00 – 8:00 PM IST
Session 3: Healthcare Financing (A)	Bill Hsiao	Friday, December 6 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST
Session 4: Healthcare Financing (B)	Bill Hsiao	Monday, December 9 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST
Session 5: Provider Payment	Winnie Yip	Tuesday, December 10 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST
Session 6: Organization (Macro level)	Winnie Yip	Wednesday, December 11 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST
Session 7: Organization (Meso and Micro level)	Winnie Yip	Thursday, December 12 7:00 – 9:00 PM IST
Session 8: Regulation	Michael Reich	Friday, December 13 6:00 – 8:00 PM IST