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Towards universal health coverage: An example of malaria intervention in Nepal

Shiva Raj Adhikari

Tribhuvan University-Patan Multiple Campus, Nepal

A comprehensive and more integrated assessment of health system functioning requires to measure the universal health coverage (UHC) for the diseases specific interventions. This paper aims to contribute measurement of the UHC by utilizing the locally available data related to Malaria in Nepal. This paper utilizes the elements of UHC as outlined by WHO report 2010: population coverage, service coverage and financial coverage. The concept of UHC represents both improvements in health outcomes and protection people from poverty induced by health-care costs. Measuring UHC focusing on tropical disease highlights the progress made towards elimination of diseases and exhibits health system bottlenecks to achieve the goal of elimination of diseases. Several bottlenecks are found from the results in the Nepalese health system which strongly suggests focusing on health system strengthening to shift the health production function of Malaria intervention. The disaggregated data clearly shows the inequality of service coverage among sub groups of the population. Effective coverage of the Malaria intervention indicates the insufficient quality of intervention. None of households faced catastrophic impact due to payment for malaria care in Nepal; however, it doesn't capture the hospital based care of malaria. The paper provides current status of UHC for malaria intervention and system bottlenecks to where policy makers and stakeholders should give focus to improve the malaria control strategy of Nepal.

sssadhikari@yahoo.com

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