

Assessment 4: Analyzing a Current Health Care Problem or Issue

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Analyzing a Current Healthcare Challenge: Limited Access to Healthcare

Healthcare systems globally face a myriad of challenges that demand collaborative efforts to achieve positive outcomes. This scholarly paper explores a significant healthcare issue: limited access to healthcare. The identified problem revolves around the minimal or nonexistent access to healthcare facilities for individuals residing in rural areas, rendering them vulnerable to various diseases and complications. Addressing this issue is crucial to alleviating the global burden of diseases.

Healthcare Challenge – Limited Access to Healthcare Facilities

The World Health Organization defines healthcare as a fundamental human right, underscoring governments' responsibility to provide basic health services to all residents (Zegeye et al., 2021). Healthcare access encompasses coverage (facilities), services, timeliness, and workforce (AHRC, 2016). Studies indicate a notable concentration of healthcare providers in urban areas, leaving rural populations underserved (Brusnahan et al., 2022). Approximately 400 million people lack access to healthcare, resulting in 8 million preventable deaths (Zegeye et al., 2021). The identified causes include a shortage of qualified professionals, economic disparities, cultural and social norms, government underinvestment, and minimal health awareness (Coombes et al., 2022).

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The selected scholarly articles effectively emphasize the importance of healthcare access, quantify the prevalence of limited accessibility, and identify reasons for this issue, empowering practitioners and policymakers to propose effective solutions.

Analyzing the Challenge of Limited Healthcare Access

Limited healthcare access is a pervasive issue, especially in rural areas worldwide. A comprehensive understanding of the causes and impacts of this problem is essential for healthcare providers to develop evidence-based intervention plans.

To comprehend limited healthcare access, it is vital to define it as the ability to avail oneself of healthcare services when needed. Limited access occurs when individuals are deprived of these services for various reasons.

Causes of Limited Healthcare Access

Factors contributing to limited healthcare access include individualized factors and population-based disparities. Individualized causes encompass demographic factors such as gender, with females having less access in low or middle-income areas. Lack of education and awareness is another individualized factor (Dawkins et al., 2021). Structural barriers, such as urban-rural disparities, allocate only 10% of healthcare resources to rural areas in the US (Coombs et al., 2022). Other barriers include cultural acceptability issues, lack of financial resources, transportation problems, and high insurance costs.

Stakeholders in the Problem

Communities with limited access and healthcare professionals in deprived areas are affected. Limited access increases the disease burden, impacting morbidity and mortality. Healthcare professionals in these areas face limited career opportunities, leading to migration and posing a challenge for global healthcare systems.

Potential Solutions for Healthcare Accessibility

Addressing causes is crucial for effective solutions. Proposed solutions include telehealth services, equitable resource allocation, and enhanced health education and literacy.

- **Telehealth:** Telemedicine facilitates care outside hospitals, overcoming barriers of transportation and location differences (Barbosa et al., 2021).
- **Allocation of Resources:** Equitable distribution of financial, human, and organizational resources improves healthcare access (Love-Koh et al., 2020).

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- **Health Education and Literacy:** Enhancing literacy and awareness through community-based programs combats limited healthcare access (Ann-Marie Lynch & Vinceroy Franklin, 2019).

These solutions aim to eliminate health disparities, provide quality care, and empower deprived populations.

Ethical Implications of the Recommended Solution

Ethical principles (autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice) guide proposed solutions for equitable healthcare access.

- **Autonomy:** Health education empowers individuals to make informed healthcare decisions.
- **Beneficence and Non-maleficence:** Solutions aim to benefit patients by improving access without causing harm.
- **Justice:** Equitable resource allocation fulfills the ethical principle of justice, ensuring unbiased healthcare distribution.

Conclusion

Limited healthcare access is a significant issue demanding effective solutions. Proposed strategies, including telehealth, resource allocation, and health education, align with ethical principles for evidence-based, ethically sound interventions in healthcare systems.

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