PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

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**Prevention Is Better Than Cure**

**Aim**

United Kingdom faces an intuitive appeal, that poses a challenge to the policy makers on the need to act early to prevent a policy challenge from becoming worse. The policy’s primary aim is to address the root cause 0of major health problems in United Kingdom in order to promote a health population. The policy will also promote excellent result in the healthcare sector by unleashing innovation and creating awareness, which will help reduce community’s and government burden in matters associated with health. It will increase personal control over health by helping them manage their health conditions when problems arise.

**Problem Statement**

The demographics of the UK population have changed and so has the need for healthcare needs have increased. For years the UK government have been spending approximately 5% of its annual manual budget on preventing health problems and promoting its citizens wellbeing (Martin et al.,2020, 1) According to the UK national Health System (NHS) the country has been doing well in preventing and managing prevalent health problems. However, this does not limit the country’s population health from becoming a major problem. Chronic health problems are becoming more prevalent. The government is failing to adjust to the epidemiological transition and adopt new preventative interventions.

The advancement in life expectancy at birth have slowed down since 2011 to approximately 81.3 years (OECD ,2019 ,4). This has been primarily due to the deterioration in mortality rates improvement at old ages. Diseases such as Ischemic heart diseases and stroke have become the leading cause of mortality rates. The burden of diseases as a result of the mental health illness s such as anxiety, depression, and panic disorders has also been growing in the last 25 years (McKee et al., 2021,1983). This has also accelerated in the last two years as a result of the pandemic. The maternal mortality rates have also increased in UK compared to other Europe countries. Other diseases such as Alzheimer’s and other non-communicable diseases increasingly becoming prevalent increasing the multi-morbidity especially in older people.

The causative for all these problems is the change in behaviors and lifestyles, predisposing individual’s vulnerable chronic conditions. For instance, regardless of the decline in smoking levels to approximate 17% among adults, heavy tobacco consumption continues to affect the health of the UK population (OECD ,2019 ,7). Although the levels of alcohol continue to fall at considerable levels, the levels of binge consumption, is on the rise. In 2017 more than 1 in 5 individuals in UK were obese rising the beyond the levels of other EU countries. As a result, the government has acknowledged the need to address the problem from its roots to prevent its adversity and impact to the economy.

**Background Research**

One of the most prevalent problem and which the government of UK has failed to meet the health needs in and the preventions better than cure policy requirements, is the obesity prevalence levels. Majority of adults in England and more than quarter of the children between 12-15 in UK live with obesity (Theis, and White ,2021,127). Even though the government has formulated and adopted strategies to fight obesity, its prevalence continues to exceed the national levels. One of the rationale for its failure is the designs of the policies. Majority of the obesity policies are designed on the demands of individual urgency to change their live style behaviors rather than shaping the external determinants and hence less likely to reduce the health problem.

Another health problem that the United Kingdom government has not been able to prevent fully is the prevalence of multi-morbidity. Even though individuals are more likely to be healthier than in the past, there is an increasing number of people with ill health. 23% of UK population has satisfied the multi-morbidity index and which increases with age (McKee et al.,2021, 1983s). Most of the older people remain to exhibit, diabetes and hypertension. These populations have become susceptible to chronic conditions and are likely to need healthcare for multiple health conditions. The previous government policies have failed to address the risk factors that expose individuals to multi-morbid health conditions. For instance, the public health need to address the issue of smoking, alcohol taking and lifestyle, which increases the chances of obese, diabetes and multi-morbidity. The recommended policy will address the social, economic, cultural determinants of health to prevent adverse health conditions.

In order to comprehensively address the prevalent challenges, a collaborative action must be taken between the key stakeholders. For instance, the public health and the national government has been on the fore front, in providing resources that are needed to meet the health needs of particular population. Individuals and families have also taken part in lifestyle changes to control their health condition .local health practitioners have been responsible for actualizing the healthcare services to the general public, through vaccine administration , lifestyle and behavior advocacy and awareness on health .Among these stakeholders , the individual and the public health sectors are the most affected stakeholders .The reason being , the government is spending a lot of resources to cater for the health issues. Additionally, individuals also become heavily affected both health wise and economically.

**Policy Recommendations**

Due to the increased prevalence of health issues, in UK, there is need for the government to embrace on preventative measure to decrease disease prevalence and burden. In England the chronic disease, mental health problems, multi-morbidity, obesity and lifestyle diseases have increased. The burden level of diseases has increased to and the levels of disability adjusted life years increased due to drug use disorders. As a result, the national and local government needs to collaborate and devise a policy strategy that help the general population understand the importance of healthy life. This policy may include addressing the health related behaviors such as diet and physical activity to prevent the prevalence of diabetes and other related issues. Also since the policy will be based on the policy in all concepts, reducing disparity trough equity care, will also help preventing health problems from advancing.

The policy recommendations are likely to be effective since they address the root cause of the larger health problem. Most of the health related problems are caused by modifiable or rater avoidable lifestyle needs. For example, the increased intake in tobacco and smoking has increased the levels of chronic health conditions such as heart diseases and stroke while increased intake of alcohol increases the individual’s susceptibility to obesity and diabetes. This factors are not essential to human life, they are taken for leisure and therefore they can be prevented. Once they are prevented the correspondent health related problem will also be prevented hence promoting a health population. The policy is also likely to be effective in that, it will help individuals manage the health conditions when health problems arise.

**Part 2 –Critical Analysis**

**Policy Development Process**

Prevention is better than cure is one of the most crucial policies in the healthcare arena. Implementation of the policy will ensure that that individuals in UK are living a healthy life. The policy intends to persuade individual to be responsible over their health life. In order for the policy to be effectively implemented, it has to undergo through various development processes and which will determine the its efficiency and effectiveness. The first process of the policy development process is the identification process. Under this face, a problem has already been identified in the United Kingdom. Individuals have been suffering from health problems that could be prevented if appropriate actions were taken. This problem has to be addressed on the onset and at its root cause before its gets to adverse conditions. During this process the policy developers learn more about situation and the suitable strategies the can to be implemented to mitigate the prevalence of the problem. The second phase of the development process of the policy is the formulation and the adoption phase. The formulation process of the policy depends on the nature of the policy.

On the third phase of the policy development is the implementation process. This is where the stakeholders will actualize the policy recommendations into practice to the general public. In this phase the relevant stakeholders and the allocated resources to the policy shall be required to make the policy effective and efficient. For instance, the government is involving in supporting various programs that promote public awareness on preventive measures to certain health problems. For example, during the Covid 19 pandemic the government was responsible for creating awareness to the general public to prevent spread of the pandemic. They are also involved in advocating for certain vaccines awareness and their importance in prevention of health problems. Finally, the evaluation phase involves the assessment how effective the policy has been. The evaluation can either be base of the impacts of the policy to the general health system, the cost benefit analysis, and the efficiency of the process. The evaluation of the anticipated health policy, will be based on the its impacts on the health lifestyle among the general population.

**Impact of the political Perspectives**

The political perspective has a significant impact on the prevention is better than cure policy especially in the initial processes. The political environment impacts the way polices are being developed, monitored and implemented. To begin with the political perspective will mitigate the barriers, provide incentives and provide opportunities that may influence the decision making. On the political environment the government has the mandate to mitigate the barriers and provide the resources that might be required in formulating and implementing the policies that will maintain a healthy population. The government also provides incentives that supports and the development process and improvement thus promoting and effective and efficient process.

Bearing in mind that healthy population is the backbone of a strong economy, the policy success will help reduce the government burden on health investments. The public policy directly benefits the political environment by improving the people ways of life. The policy will lessen the cause of health problems that can be prevented. For instance, the mitigation strategies put in place will help to reduce smoking in UK and hence prevent the prevalence of cancer. This may be achieved through the governments involvement in the national awareness and education on the strategies that can be taken to reduce chronic conditions hence lessening the governments pressures on resource allocation. The political arena also has an influence of making promoting health equity across different backgrounds.

The political perspectives and priorities can also determine the health of the population simply by establishing policies and laws that protects the wellbeing of an individual. The national government has the core responsibility of protecting and ensuring that citizens are living a healthy life. It may be involved in providing detailed information pertaining to living healthy and the importance of living healthy. The political leaders in the government must collaborate with other non-state actors actively pay attention to health issues and provide support in dealing with the health problem. The kind of support offered may be either financial, technical or human resource availability. For example, the government may provide support to the poor families by help g them acquire basic needs that will eventually lead to a health life. Also it is essential to initiate the policy development process from a political perspective to promote its effectiveness and efficiency under political waves.

In addition, political priorities influence the how the actors respond to the situation. The politics of policy formulation and implementation is about managing actors, institutions and organizations that have a significance influence in the health sector. The political environment must support healthy relationship between the involved stakeholders. Also the prevention is better than cure is dependent on other preexisting law and policies that promotes the health of an individual. For instance, the limiting smoking in public places limits the number of people who are likely to smoke. It is also a strategy to prevent adverse effects to the passive smokers in the general public. This policy will help reduce lifestyle behavior diseases and hence promoting a healthy life.

**Influence and Involvement of Relevant Stakeholders**

The process of identification of the health problem, implementation, formulation and evaluation of the policy “prevention is better than cure” involves multiple stakeholders. Some of these stakeholders may involve the federal government, the community, private stakeholders and families. The National government has the core role of creating a conducive environment for the policy nourishment. They do so by allocating budgetary and other resources to the healthcare departments to promotes the efficient of the policy. This are essential in various operations along the policy development process. The national directors of public health also play a critical role in implementation of local actions towards prevention. They are frequently involved in the decision making processes. The government experts are also responsible for strategy or vaccine implementation as a preventative measure during an outbreak of health problem.

The other stakeholders who are key to the success of the policy, is the community. The community has high power and high influence towards the efficiency of the policy, the community may involve both the people and the community actors. Engaging the community in promotion and disease prevention programs has a great influence in helping people gain control over their health and embrace healthy choices. The community actors help to create awareness at the local levels and improves the interaction and the collaboration between the community and other stakeholders. At this levels the community actors may be involved in enduring that the community resources scheduled by the national government reaches the target community as well as educating the population on the importance of preventive measure. This will help to extend the healthcare services to where they are most needed in the community. Also the local community and social practitioners helps in actualizing the proposed health recommendation.

Finally, fore the policy to be excellently effective the media, marketers m, and health experts must be present. These groups of stakeholders have a higher influence but low poser over the policy effectiveness. The social media have a positive impact when used to initiate and prioritize the policy discussions and evaluation process. The media market also plays a critical role in influencing the policy formulation leading to the policy adoption and compliance with the laws and regulations. More so the media may also be used in endorsing and promoting the policy makers and public awareness (Bou-Karroum, et al., 2017). Therefore, throughout the development process the media and the researchers must be actively involved to lure policy compliance.

**Implications of Strategies Used**

The health in all policies(HiAP) encompasses an effective and strategized interventions to improve the overall health of the population by incorporating the health considerations through a collaborative decision making across different sectors. The primary focus of the policy is the promote the aspect of equity, accessibility, health and sustainability outcomes of various policy priorities during the development and implementation process. The policy approach is based on the social, environmental, cultural and political determinants of health that are determined by the decisions made beyond the heath sector (Local Government Association, 2016, 4). Therefore, the policy demands for an intersectrol collaboration between the health sectors, the government and the private sectors to support and improves the achievement and the priority objectives. By initiating a collaborative action especially with cigarette manufactures to regulate the amount of harmful tobacco in the cigarrete can be a good start to regulate smoking related health problems.

The health in all policies engages collaboration and partnership between different health sectors to achieve the health goals. The policy promotes engagement of the key players and key stake holders in health. This approach has helped improve the wellbeing and the health of the local population as well as promoting equity among the population. For instance, the collaboration may encompass the restrictions of smoking at public places, regulating drinking and driving, or regulating the age limit that should take alcohol, and monitor the manufacture of food products may help prevent the lifestyle and behavior related health problems. The HiAP policies also informs the decision making processes with the goal of prioritizing and maximizing the positive health effects and minimizing the negative health impacts. As Obesity continues to be a major problem in UK the HiAP policy approaches are to help reduce the harm to overweight and obesity through the “Fitter Future for All framework”. The program empowers individuals to take healthy choices, to reduces vulnerabilities of obese and overweight and other health related problems. Also for the increased the drug and alcohol usage the DoH has a strategy to mitigate the harm related to substance use. These approach aligns with the aims of prevention is better than cure and will influence decision making in other health sectors.

**Potential Barriers of Implementing the Policy Recommendations**

There are various barriers that may hinder a successful implementation of the policy recommendations. To begin with, as much as the policy implementers may work hard to ensure the success of the policy, there might be a poor collaboration between the different sector’s which may affect the success of achieving a common goal. For instance, some production companies may be motivated to make more profit rather than maintaining environmental sustainability to prevent environmental pollution associated health problems. Dumping of production and manufacturing wastes to the environment jeopardizes the health of the surrounding population. The organization will be against the policy approaches which is to maintain the inter-sectoral collaboration to promote a healthy population. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every sector to collaborate and embark on activities that promotes the health of the society and observe sustainability in their production activities.

Awareness also plays a critical role in ensuring that the community is well informed of the potential health problems within the community. Lack of adequate resources to develop effective campaigns to the public may also be a limitation hindering the implementation of the policy. The policy endorsement to the community may require facilitators, campaign materials, brochures and other resources. Also prevention also demands for adequate and evidence based research pertinent to a disease epidemiology in order to manufacture a highly effective vaccine for prevention. Therefore, successful. implementation of the policy recommendation will require and integrated collaborative action between the government, non-governmental, nonprofit organizations and charity groups to mobilize resources essential for an effective public awareness and health related research.

Ensuring a successful policy implementation demands a lot of research to identify and analyze the community needs that are pertinent to healthy. Lack of adequate information on healthy living may hinder a successful implementation of the policy in the society. Some people may lack adequate information on dietary, control and management of various diseases through vaccination .Also due to inadequate information on diseases and potential predisposing factors to those health problems communities may still engage in lifestyle behaviors that put them vulnerable to health problems .Smoking , dietary and alcohol taking are some of the behavioral and lifestyle activities that the community may lack information on hence predisposing them health related problems. The projected public awareness must reach the diverse population and expressed ion simplified and understandable language for all communities. Sometimes the community may also have negligence and ignorance to the primitive health guidelines offered. Therefore, it is essential for the entire population to envy healthy lifestyle guidelines highlighted in the policy to avoid adverse health outcomes in future.

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