Research title

- The influence of the National Health Insurance scheme of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on healthcare access and catastrophic health expenditures for patients with chronic renal disease, and the possibility of integrating organ transplantation into the health financing system.

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Abstract

Citizens of the Lao People's Democratic Republic have difficulties in obtaining proper health services compared to more developed countries, due to the lack of available health facilities and health financing programmes. Haemodialysis (HD) is currently included under the coverage of the National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme. However, there are several technical barriers related to health service utilization. This study aims to analyse the effects of the Lao NHI on issues of accessibility and the possibility of encountering catastrophic health expenditures for patients with chronic kidney disease. In addition, the study provides policy recommendations for policy-makers regarding the provision of organ transplantation under NHI in the future. Savannakhet Province was purposively selected as a study site, where 342 respondents participated in the study. Two logistic regression models are used to assess the effectiveness of the NHI in terms of accessibility and financial protection against catastrophic health expenditures. The Andersen behavioural model is applied as a guideline to identify factors that affect accessibility and economic catastrophe. NHI is found to improve accessibility to health service utilization for household members with chronic kidney disease. However, due to the limited HD services, there are barriers to accessing health services and a risk of financial hardship due to nonmedical expenditures. Chronic conditions, in addition to kidney issues, dramatically increase the chances of suffering catastrophic health expenditures. In the short run, collaboration with neighbouring countries' hospital through copayment programmes is strongly recommended for NHI's policy-makers. For long-term policy

Biography

Born in 1985, Somdeth Bodhisane, Ph.D., is a post-doctoral research fellow the College of public Health Science (CPHS), Chulalongkorn University. He was educated in the US and Thailand. As an experienced postdoctoral research fellow with a demonstrated skill in data collection, qualitative and quantitative research methodology; He has published a series of top impact journals and book chapters on health economics and trade policies. He is currently a visiting lecturer at Chulalongkorn University.