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Public Health Concerns and Promotional Activities in Saudi Arabia

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Introduction

- ▶ The population is increasing.
- ▶ Amongst the countries within the Gulf Cooperation Council, Saudi Arabia has recorded fastest growing population.
- ▶ The kingdom might have a population of 35 million people by 2025.
- ▶ Increasing demand of health care services.



Cont...,

- Its healthcare spending is high.
- Centralized health care facilities.
- Some areas lack healthcare facilities.
- Focused mainly on tertiary and secondary care rather than primary care.



Patients Rights

- ▶ Patient's right have been ranked as the highest issues.
- ▶ Disagreement between patients/ families and healthcare professionals.
- ▶ Manual guide for medical practitioners' provides guidance to healthcare professionals in KSA.
- ▶ The guide states patients' rights to:
 - ✓ Be rendered high quality healthcare.
 - ✓ Authorize any medical intermediation.
 - ✓ Medical data mediation.
 - ✓ Right to decline treatment against medical recommendation.



Equity of Access to Resources

- ▶ 2nd highest ranked ethical challenge fronting public medical concern.
- ▶ Equity dissemination of health care resources is a major challenge.
- ▶ Most of the resources are mainly found in the major cities.
- ▶ The small cities lack substantial amount of healthcare resources.
- ▶ Inequities exist even among residents and non-residents.
- ▶ Treatment for patients with serious health issues are not subsidized.



Cont...,

- ▶ Patients are favored based on gender and/or race.
- ▶ Favoring of patients has been pointed out as a moral issue by 83.6% of the healthcare professionals.
- ▶ Healthcare resources are unevenly distributed basing on availability of specialists.
- ▶ Primary and secondary care are disadvantaged.



Confidentiality of Patient Information

- ▶ Third highest ranked medical issue.
- ▶ Management of patient's health records are not guided by clear policies.
- ▶ Clinicians are allowed to manage health care records.
- ▶ Sharing of patient information without proper consent.



Cont...,

- It is not easy for patients to know if their medical records have been shared.
- The patients might not file a complaint against the healthcare professionals or hospitals.
- Preventive measures have been taken by healthcare professionals in main hospitals.
- Healthcare professionals have taken an insurance policy against medical errors.



Status of Current Promotional Activities

- ▶ Physical Promotional activities.
- ▶ Motivational and educational messages about exercise through social media.
- ▶ Involving of training physicians in the PHC centers.
- ▶ Have in place Lifestyle therapy.



Recommendations

- ▶ Have in place electronic health records.
- ▶ EHR ensures all relevant health records are stored.
- ▶ Equitable healthcare resources sharing.
- ▶ A policy to guide obtaining of patient's consent.
- ▶ Develop structured communication.



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