

MODULE SPECIFICATION

KEY FACTS

Module name	International Health Systems
Module code	HPM004
School	Health Sciences
Department or equivalent	Division of Health Services Research and Management
UK credits	15
ECTS	7.5
Level	7

MODULE SUMMARY

Module outline and aims

What is the most effective and fair way of organising, delivering and financing health care? What is a health system and how can its performance and effectiveness be measured? How can governments and health services respond to the complex challenges of the 21st Century?

Over the last few decades a number of developments - such as ageing populations, new health technologies and rising public expectations - have helped push health care to the top of the political agenda almost everywhere. As pressures on health services increase, politicians and policymakers around the world struggle to meet the conflicting demands of expanding and improving health care and health outcomes, while at the same time attempting to constrain health spending and manage scarce resources.

Taking an international and comparative approach, this module attempts to answer the question of which approaches to designing and improving health systems are most likely to resolve such dilemmas. It enables you to understand and critically evaluate health care systems in terms of their main features, goals, organisational principles, funding, efficiency, equity of access, social protection and other dimensions. It also provides you with the frameworks and tools needed to undertake analysis of health systems in developed and developing countries. The module will also consider and critically assess the options for reforming health systems.

Content outline

Topics covered in this module will include:

- The nature of health systems, and approaches to understanding their main goals, components, functions, actors and influences upon them.
- The advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to health financing functions, both public and private, such as raising revenue, pooling funds and purchasing and providing services.
- How health financing arrangements affect the achievement of key aims such as efficiency, quality, sustainability, comprehensive coverage and equity of access

to health services.

- International approaches to resource allocation, priority-setting and rationing.
- The components of health system performance and methodologies that have been used to measure it.
- The relevance of these issues to policymakers seeking to improve the performance and effectiveness of health systems, and options for reform.

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of this module, you will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Develop a critical awareness of the main goals, components and functions of health systems, and of the main actors and stakeholders involved.
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of different types of health system, and of the challenges involved in comparing them.
- Show a critical appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of different models of health care financing, including market-based approaches, in terms of their impact on key aims of health systems.
- Show a critical understanding of international approaches to resource allocation, priority-setting and rationing.
- Demonstrate a critical knowledge of the main approaches to measuring and evaluating the performance of health systems.
- Demonstrate a critical appreciation of the relevance of the issues covered in the module to efforts to reform health systems and improve their performance.

Skills:

- Critically analyse health systems in developed and developing countries with respect to their organisational and funding principles, and assess their effectiveness.
- Conduct electronic and library searches in order to identify relevant literature and evidence from a range of sources, and to critically appraise and synthesise it.
- Critically apply appropriate theories, concepts and evidence to the analysis of the issues covered in the module.
- Present the results of your research and analysis clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Engage critically and independently in debates related to the issues covered in the module.
- Work effectively and collaboratively within multi-professional groups.

Values and attitudes:

- Show appreciation of the complexity of the political, economic and social factors that have influenced how different health systems are organised and financed, of the ideological and contested nature of debates in these areas, and of the perspectives of those involved in and affected by them.
- Show respect and tolerance for other participants.
- Correctly reference the work of others and adhere to University regulations regarding plagiarism and academic misconduct.

HOW WILL I LEARN?

Teaching and learning will take place via a mix of lectures, group activities and discussions which allow you to examine the issues in more detail, providing both teacher and peer led input, promoting discussion and developing communication and group working skills.

Teaching sessions will take place over four days (typically 10am to 5pm), and are supplemented by self-directed study which allows you both to gain a deeper understanding of the subject generally, and to pursue topics which are of particular interest to you in greater detail.

Teaching and learning are facilitated by Moodle, the University's online Virtual Learning Environment.

Teaching pattern:

Teaching component	Teaching type	Contact hours (scheduled)	Self-directed study hours (independent)	Placement hours	Total student learning hours
Lectures, group work, class exercises and discussions	Lecture	24	126	0	150
Totals:		24	126	0	150

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessments

You will write a report of 4,000 words that critically analyses a specific health system, or type of health system, and makes recommendations for improving its performance.

Assessment pattern:

Assessment component	Assessment type	Weighting	Minimum qualifying mark	Pass/Fail?
Report	Written assignment	100%	50%	No

Assessment criteria

Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria for module assessments will be made available prior to an assessment taking place. More information will be available from the module leader.

Feedback on assessment

Lecturers and/or the module leader will be available to provide formative feedback and advice on the written assignment prior to submission. Following the assessment marks and feedback will be provided in line with the Assessment Regulations and Policy, normally within 4 weeks of the submission deadline. Markers will be available to answer queries about the marks and feedback if these are not clear. A selection of all assessments will be internally moderated and sent to the external examiner. All initial marks will be therefore provisional, pending external examiner approval and ratification by the Assessment Board.

Assessment Regulations

The Pass mark for the module is 50%. The Programme Specification contains information on what happens if you fail an assessment, but in the first instance you should contact the module leader.

INDICATIVE READING LIST

Blank, R.H. & Burau, V. (2013). *Comparative Health Policy*. 4th Edition. Palgrave Macmillan.

Carrin, G. et al. (eds.) (2009). *Health Systems Policy, Finance, and Organization*. Oxford: Academic Press.

Gilson, L. (ed.) (2012). *Health Policy and Systems Research: A Methodology Reader*. WHO. At <http://www.who.int/alliance-hpsr/resources/reader/en/>.

Gottret, P. & Schieber, G. (2006). *Health Financing Revisited: A Practitioner's Guide*. World Bank Publications.

Ham, C. & Robert, G. (eds.) (2003). *Reasonable Rationing: International Experience of Priority Setting in Health Care*. Buckingham, Open University Press.

Hunter, D.J. (2008). *The Health Debate*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Klein, R. & Maybin, J. (2012). *Thinking about rationing*. King's Fund. At <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/rationing.html>.

Kutzin, J. (2008). *Health financing policy: a guide for decision-makers*. WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Mahon, A., Walshe, K. & Chambers, N. (eds.) (2009). *A Reader in Health Policy and Management*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Mossialos, E. et al. (eds.) (2002). *Funding Health Care: Options for Europe*. Open University Press. At <http://www.euro.who.int/en/home/projects/observatory/publications/studies>.

OECD (2002). *"Measuring Up" - Improving health system performance in OECD countries*. Paris: OECD.

Roberts, M., Hsiao, W., Berman, P. & Reich, M. (2008). *Getting Health Reform Right: A Guide to Improving Performance and Equity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sabik, L.M. & Lie, R.K. (2008). 'Priority setting in health care: Lessons from the experience of eight countries', *International Journal for Equity in Health* 7: 4.

Smith, P., Mossialos, E. Papanicolas, I. Leatherman, S (eds.). (2010). *Performance measurement for health system improvement: experiences, challenges and prospects*. Cambridge University Press. At <http://www.euro.who.int/en/who-we-are/partners/observatory/studies/performance-measurement-for-health-system-improvement-experiences,-challenges-and-prospects>.

Smith, R.D. & Hanson, K. (eds.) (2012). *Health systems in low- and middle-income countries: an economic and policy perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

WHO (2000). *The World Health Report - Health Systems: Improving performance*. Geneva: WHO. At <http://www.who.int/whr/2000/en/>.

WHO (2010). *The World Health Report - Health Systems Financing: The Path to Universal Coverage*. Geneva: WHO.

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For use from: 2017-18

Appendix:

CODES		
HESA Code	Description	Price Group
B	Subjects allied to medicine	
JACS Code	Description	Percentage (%)
L431	Health policy	100%