

World Health Day 2017: People over Profit

7 April, 6 to 8.30 pm, IIC Annex, Lecture Room 1

World Health Day marks the creation of the World Health Organisation which was designed to provide direction to global health policy. Arguably, one of WHO's major failures has been its reticence to take decisive steps to promote the role of the public sector in the provision of healthcare, as well as meaningfully contribute to the regulation of the private sector. Public health activists and trade unions of health sector workers have a common interest in a strong and accountable health system that ensures quality healthcare services. However, the situation in India is just the opposite, with an ever growing private sector that is pushing the commercialisation of services even within public facilities, and a corporatisation of the private sector that is entrenching profiteering at the cost of people's health and decent work.

In this context, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan, Public Health Resources Network and Public Services International are proposing a panel discussion on *World Health Day 2017: People over Profit*.

The Panel will discuss factors that have contributed to weakening of the health care system in the country and make counter proposals to contribute to its strengthening. The context will be set by discussing the National Health Policy released in March 2017 and the role it proposes for the public and the private sector. Significant trends are noticeable from the rapid and consistent expansion of the private sector. The sector is transforming into a for-profit commercial sector and is increasingly attracting foreign equity capital. Arguably, Public Private Partnerships have contributed more to this trend, than to ensuring an improved access to health care. A thorny issue in the private sector remains the regulation of cost and treatment practices. Medicines pricing and procurement cost of medical devices and equipment are an added challenge. Finally, a necessary condition for the expansion of the private sector is the neglect of the public sector. One less discussed element of this process is the informalisation of the workforce in the public sector. The conditions of work in autonomous health facilities will also be discussed, in the context of the implications on the quality of services provided.

This will also be the occasion to release a Booklet Series of PSI titled "Non-Standard Work in Healthcare in South Asia".

Chair: Vandana Prasad, Public Health Resources Network

Panel:

- A Critical Analysis of the National Health Policy 2017 – Amit Sengupta, Delhi Science Forum
- Public Private Partnerships: For Public Interest or For Profit - Bijoya Roy, Center for Women Development Studies
- Market-based Price Control of Medicines and Stents: A Great Deception - Amitava Guha, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan and Centre of Indian Trade Unions
- Trends in the Expansion of Private Healthcare in India - Indira Chakravorty, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan
- Informalisation of Employment in Public Healthcare Facilities – Susana Barria, Public Services International
- Working Conditions in Autonomous Health Institutions: Trade Union Representative.

Report Release "Non-Standard Work in Healthcare in South Asia"