

Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences
Faculty of Medicine
Department of Community Medicine

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Course Plan

Principles of Health Services

1. Course Information

Course Title: Principles of Health Services

Course Type: Theoretical

Credit Hours: 1.5 credits

Program: Doctor of Medicine / Medical Doctor Program

Semester: First Semester, Academic Year 2026–2027

Start Date: 28/06/1405, corresponding to 19/09/2026

Department: Community Medicine

Faculty: Faculty of Medicine

University: Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences

Course Instructor:

Dr. Razie Toghroli

Course Coordinator:

Dr. Razie Toghroli

2. Course Description

The course “Principles of Health Services” is designed to introduce medical students to the fundamental concepts of health, disease, prevention, health promotion, primary health care, health systems, and the organization of health services. The course provides students with a basic understanding of how health services are planned, organized, delivered, and evaluated at individual, family, community, and population levels.

Special emphasis is placed on the structure of the health system in Iran, the primary health care network, referral systems, the role of general practitioners, equity in health, and universal health coverage. The course also introduces students to the social determinants of health and helps them understand how economic, cultural, environmental, and regional factors influence health outcomes.

For international students, this course provides an opportunity to become familiar with both general principles of health services and practical examples from the Iranian health care system, including experiences from community-based health care delivery in urban, rural, coastal, and underserved areas.

3. General Objectives

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to:

Explain the concepts of health, disease, illness, and well-being.

Describe different dimensions of health, including physical, mental, social, and spiritual health.

Explain the concept of social determinants of health.

Differentiate between levels of prevention and provide relevant examples.
Describe the principles and components of primary health care.
Explain the organization of the Iranian health care system.
Identify the main components of the primary health care network.
Describe the roles of health houses, health posts, comprehensive health service centers, and referral levels.
Interpret basic health indicators used in public health and health services.
Explain the role of general practitioners in health promotion, disease prevention, primary care, family medicine, and referral systems.
Discuss the importance of equity in health and universal health coverage.
Analyze selected challenges in the delivery of health services, especially in underserved and geographically dispersed communities.

4. Specific Learning Objectives

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

Define health according to the World Health Organization and compare it with broader modern concepts of health.
Explain the difference between disease, illness, and sickness.
Describe the health-disease continuum.
Identify major social, economic, cultural, behavioral, and environmental determinants of health.
Explain primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary prevention.
Provide examples of preventive interventions in clinical and community settings.
Describe health promotion and health education.
Explain the historical background and key principles of primary health care.
Describe the Declaration of Alma-Ata and its importance in global health.
Explain the concepts of accessibility, availability, affordability, acceptability, and quality of health services.
Describe the structure of Iran's health care system.
Identify the main levels of health service delivery in Iran.
Explain the role of community health workers and primary care teams.
Describe the concept and function of the referral system.
Explain the role of family physicians and general practitioners in primary care.
Interpret selected health indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality rate, under-five mortality rate, maternal mortality ratio, vaccination coverage, and disease burden.
Discuss equity in health and factors contributing to health inequalities.
Explain universal health coverage and its relevance to health system performance.
Analyze selected national health programs and their importance in disease prevention and health promotion.

5. Teaching and Learning Methods

Interactive lectures
Class discussions
Question and answer sessions
Case-based learning
Small group discussions
Analysis of real examples from health systems
Student presentations

Review of national and international health programs

Problem-solving exercises related to primary health care and health service delivery

6. Course Schedule

Session	Date	Topic	Main Contents
1	28/06/1405	Introduction to the Course and Basic Concepts of Health	Course orientation, definition of health, disease and illness, dimensions of health, health-disease continuum
2	04/07/1405	Determinants of Health	Social, economic, cultural, environmental, behavioral, and biological determinants of health
3	11/07/1405	Levels of Prevention	Primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary prevention; examples in clinical medicine and public health
4	18/07/1405	Health Promotion and Health Education	Concepts of health promotion, health education, community empowerment, behavioral change
5	25/07/1405	Primary Health Care	History of primary health care, Declaration of Alma-Ata, principles and components of PHC
6	02/08/1405	Health Care System in Iran	Structure of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, levels of health service delivery, role of medical universities
7	09/08/1405	Primary Health Care Network	Health houses, health posts, comprehensive health service centers, district health centers
8	16/08/1405	Health Care Team and Their Responsibilities	Roles of general practitioners, community health workers, health care providers, midwives, and public health staff
9	23/08/1405	Referral System and Family Medicine	Concept of referral, levels of referral, family physician program, continuity of care
10	30/08/1405	Health Indicators	Mortality indicators, morbidity indicators, life expectancy, vaccination coverage, burden of disease, use of indicators in health planning
11	07/09/1405	National Health Programs	Immunization, maternal and child health, communicable disease control, non-communicable disease prevention
12	14/09/1405	Equity in Health and Course Review	Health equity, health inequalities, universal health coverage, challenges in health service delivery, final review

7. Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- Attend classes regularly and punctually.
- Participate actively in classroom discussions.
- Study assigned materials before selected sessions.
- Contribute to small group activities.
- Analyze simple health service scenarios.
- Prepare and present a short classroom assignment if required.
- Respect academic ethics and professional behavior during all course activities.

8. Assessment Methods

- Class attendance and active participation: 10%
- Class assignment or student presentation: 20%
- Midterm exam or quiz: 20%
- Final examination: 50%

Total: 100%

9. Recommended References

- Park's Textbook of Preventive and Social Medicine
- Oxford Handbook of Public Health Practice
- World Health Organization documents on Primary Health Care and Universal Health Coverage
- Educational materials on health services and community medicine approved by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education
- National guidelines on the primary health care network, family physician program, and referral system
- Selected official documents from the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran

10. Course Policies

- Class attendance is required according to the educational regulations of Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences.
- Excessive absence will be handled according to university rules.
- Students are expected to participate respectfully and professionally in all classroom activities.
- Assignments must be submitted on time.
- Academic honesty is required in all written and oral activities.
- Mobile phone use during class should be limited to educational purposes.
- The final grade will be calculated based on the assessment methods described above.

11. Expected Course Outcomes

After successfully completing this course, students should have a clear understanding of the principles of health services, primary health care, prevention, health promotion, health indicators, health equity, and the organization of health care delivery. They should also be able to recognize the role of physicians in improving individual and community health through preventive, clinical, and population-based approaches.