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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

## HIMACHAL PRADESH PRIMARY CARE -HEALTHY AND PROGRESSIVE !? IMMEDIATE ATTENTION WITH HUMAN RESOURCE ALLOCATION IS NEED OF HOUR !

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#### Abstract

In recent past, India's healthcare delivery services evaluation had transformed radically and new initiatives are being launched. Healthy States Progressive India ranking based on Health index particularly reflects any region's health indices at various levels. In Healthy States Progressive India (HSPI) report of 2017 HP was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in achievers section with overall composite scores of 61.20 on various health outcome indicators. HP achieved overall 5<sup>th</sup> position among larger states section in first such report. Now according to HSPI-II Himachal Pradesh slips marginally to 6<sup>th</sup> overall rank with composite index score of 62.41, although well placed under front runner section among larger states. To elaborate, input indicator such as proportion of ANMs positions vacant at sub-centre level had deteriorated markedly in currently released report from NITI Aayog. Vacancy of health worker at primary care level had increased double fold with indicator score of 22.58 only which itself is a big concern. HP had reflected poor performance with incremental indicator value of (-15.85) as per report based on HMIS for full immunization coverage. Immediate attention with adequate human resource allocation of ANMs and staff nurses, medical officers at sub centre, PHCs, CHCs is need of hour.

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#### Introduction:-

In recent past, India's healthcare delivery services evaluation had transformed radically and new initiatives are being launched. India-State level disease burden initiative by Indian council of medical research and Healthy States Progressive India ranking based on health index is one such progressive and impactful exercise by NITI(National Institute of Transforming India) Aayog<sup>1</sup>. Healthy States Progressive India ranking based on Health index particularly reflects any region's health indices at various levels. Each indices had been given due weightage in overall scores along with detailed description of methodology to evaluate scores<sup>2</sup>. First health index report was released in 2017 where base year was taken as 2014-15 and reference year taken was 2015-16<sup>3</sup>. Recently, subsequent healthy states progressive india –2019 (HSPI-II) report had been published with 2015-16 as base year and 2017-18 as reference year i.e., a two-year time frame period which lays a platform for any government to evaluate its policies and took corrective measures accordingly<sup>4</sup>. Depiction of results in variable colour coding is self explanatory for concerned authorities to take remedial measure on priority basis.

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Himachal Pradesh (HP) is one of the states of India with a population of 6,864,602 and density of 123/km<sup>5</sup>. In Healthy States Progressive India (HSPI) report of 2017 HP was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in achievers section with overall composite scores of 61.20 on various health outcome indicators. HP achieved overall 5<sup>th</sup> position among larger states section in first such report. Now according to HSPI-II Himachal Pradesh slips marginally to 6<sup>th</sup> overall rank with composite index score of 62.41, although well placed under front runner section among larger states. Similarly, incremental performance rank from base year of 2015-16 to 2017-18 is 12<sup>th</sup> with meager increase of (+1.21) index score .

As per report, key indicators which had shown marked improvement are , total case notification rate of tuberculosis, Integrated Disease Surveillance project (IDSP) reporting completeness, average occupancy of Chief medical officer for last 3 years , proportion of staff under e-pay roll slips . But there are hair raising concerns also with indicators related to primary care.

In this hilly state with significant geographical disparities and challenges, predominant population is residing in rural areas and any deficiencies at primary care level will affect co-related indicators of Health Index also. To elaborate, input indicator such as proportion of ANMs positions vacant at sub-centre level had deteriorated markedly in currently released report from NITI Aayog. Vacancy of health worker at primary care level had increased double fold with indicator score of 22.58 only which itself is a big concern. Similar is the indicator performance of proportion of staff nurses positions vacant at PHCs and CHCs level. These two indicators are complementary at their respective levels in achieving universal goal of full immunization. Indicator related to functional first referral unit (FRU) had also performed poorly in report which is also some way related to other key mentioned outcome parameters. These three inter dependent input indicators are specifically related to vital health outcome performance indicator of full immunization coverage. HP had reflected poor performance with incremental indicator value of (-15.85) as per report based on HMIS for full immunization coverage. Similarly, indicators like infant mortality rate and under-5 mortality rate had also shown negligible incremental performance i.e in negative value. All above mentioned indicators as per report are red colour coded indicating maximum deterioration and warranting utmost attention by state health authorities.

To conclude, although the state government and health care delivery system is striving hard to take Himachal Pradesh on path of universal health coverage with sustained focus on utilization of services<sup>6</sup>. But, immediate attention with adequate human resource allocation of ANMs and staff nurses, medical officers at sub centre, PHCs , CHCs is need of hour. Establishment of health and wellness centre is step in right direction by government of HP to prioritize non communicable diseases at primary care level. But simultaneous impetus on this component of primary care health delivery with integration of services will result in higher overall incremental performance and thereby will ensure better position among best for HP in next Health Index report.

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