

Assessing Health Policies in Türkiye: Expert Insights on Current Challenges and Policy Recommendations from Written Motions

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INTRODUCTION

- ✗ In contemporary times, the realm of healthcare faces multifaceted challenges that demand innovative and informed solutions.¹
- ✗ In Türkiye, the pharmaceutical landscape faces numerous challenges. Foremost among these is the compromised availability of medications in pharmacies, largely attributed to fluctuations in the exchange rate. Addressing these concerns requires not only a deep understanding of the current healthcare landscape but also an insight into the directions in which health policies could evolve in the future.
- ✗ Parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, often raise pertinent questions related to these issues, providing a glimpse into the prevailing concerns and areas demanding attention. Analyzing these written question motions presented to the parliament can offer valuable insights.
- ✗ This research leverages such parliamentary data as a foundation to understand and garner expert viewpoints on the potential trajectories of health policies, aiming to provide a comprehensive picture of the envisioned solutions to today's health challenges.

METHOD

- ✗ Based on the published analysis of written question motions presented to the parliament, as featured in ISPOR Europe 2022², an expert opinion questionnaire was crafted, focusing on areas such as medicine, health, hospitals, medical devices, and medical supplies. This questionnaire was disseminated to members of health policy committees from various political parties, including AK Party (AKP), Republican People's Party (CHP), Good Party (İYİ), Deva Party (DEVA), and Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP). Out of 26 members approached via email, 7 responded to the questionnaire. Subsequent to the survey, in-depth interviews were held with 5 of the responding members.

40
Questions Prepared E-Survey

26
E-mails Sent to Stakeholders

7
Participant Answered

4
Depth Conducted

RESULTS

%100

Healthcare Expenses: The escalation of out-of-pocket expenses in Türkiye is creating significant barriers to healthcare access.

Rare Disease Centers: There's a conspicuous shortage of specialized centers dedicated to rare diseases within Türkiye.

Medication Access: Türkiye's provision of necessary medications falls short when compared to the standards set by European Union(EU) countries.

Support & Production: Türkiye demonstrates a pronounced lack of domestic support, coupled with insufficient production capabilities, in the health sector.

Medical Needs: A consistent recognition of the unmet medical needs pertaining to chronic ailments and diabetes was observed.

Cancer Treatment: There is a unanimous call for the recalibration of economic assessment and pricing mechanisms, especially in the realm of combination cancer therapies.

%86

Rare Disease Attention: Policymakers don't prioritize rare diseases.

%71

Patient Perspective: Essential to integrate into treatment systems.

%57

Vaccination Awareness: Over half are informed about vaccination in Türkiye.

- ✗ Every participant (100%) indicated that the escalation in out-of-pocket healthcare expenses in Türkiye hinders effective access to healthcare services. A significant majority (86%) opined that rare diseases do not receive prioritized attention from policymakers in Türkiye. Furthermore, unanimous agreement (100%) was observed regarding the insufficiency of specialized centers for rare diseases and the lack of access to medications, especially when benchmarked against European Union (EU) nations.
- ✗ All respondents pointed out the inadequacy of support and domestic production endeavors within Türkiye. They unanimously recognized the presence of unmet medical needs in areas like chronic diseases and diabetes.
- ✗ Over half (57%) of the participants were aware of vaccination practices in Türkiye, while 71% underscored the need for incorporating patient perspectives into treatment modalities. Every respondent endorsed the need to modify economic assessment and pricing strategies in cancer treatment to accommodate the distinct nature of combination therapies.

CONCLUSIONS

- ✗ In summation, the scrutiny of textual motions presented to the legislative assembly underscores the impediments arising from elevated direct healthcare expenditures, insufficiencies in procuring medications, and the dearth of specialized establishments for rare ailments. Further challenges are evident in the unaddressed medical necessities within the realms of chronic illnesses and diabetes.
- ✗ To forge efficacious forthcoming health directives in Türkiye, it is paramount to integrate patient perspectives, enhance cognizance of vaccination practices, and recalibrate economic assessment paradigms.

REFERENCES

¹Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on the Health Professions Education Summit; Greiner AC, Knebel E, editors. Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2003. Chapter 2, Challenges Facing the Health System and Implications for Educational Reform. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK221522/>

²Karahan, E. B., Kockaya, G., Okcun, S., Cam, K., Cansever, M., Ileri, S., ... & Karacar, G. (2022). HPR134 Health Policy Analysis of Written Question Motions Submitted to the Presidency and Ministries by the Deputies Between 2018–2022 in Türkiye. Value in Health, 25(12), S256.

Abbreviations: AKP: AK Party (AKP), CHP: Republican People's Party (CHP), İYİ: Good Party (İYİ), DEVA: Deva Party (DEVA), HDP: Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), EU:European Union

CONTACT