

ILA-2

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND RESEARCH IN INDIA: IS IT A LACK OF POLITICAL WILL OR A FUNDING ISSUE?

Dr Shahid Perwez

M-CRIL, India

In India there is one government doctor over 10000 patients (as opposed to WHO recommended doctor-patient ratio of 1:1,000) – and one nurse for about 500 patients. As a result, India needs 6,00,000 doctors and 20,00,000 nurses to meet the demands of an efficient public health care, according to the findings of a US-based Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy early this year. Even if we entirely depend on doctors and nurses, India will continue to face the burden of health care. So, to curbe these issues, it's time to focus on prevention and rehabilitation with the contribution of social scientists and social work professionals and further research. In this article, I wish to highlight the need and value of social science, in general, and social workers, in particular, in tackling the challenge of an efficient public health system in the country.