

The Transformation Tracker

HSTP Monthly Newsletter



Welcome to The Transformation Tracker – the monthly newsletter from Health Systems Transformation Platform (HSTP). This newsletter aims to bring you the latest news and highlights from team HSTP and our work towards strengthening health systems in India.

In this newsletter, we bring you snippets from three of our intervention areas:

ONE HEALTH

The concept of a "coordinated and systematic approach to infectious disease response"

HEALTH SYSTEMS GOVERNANCE

Attention on medical labs, to deliver quality, rational, and affordable care

BUILDING COMPETENCIES

of the Primary Healthcare Workforce to improve quality of primary healthcare

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. Do share your comments, suggestions at communications@hstp.org.in

Focus on One Health

say Pranay Lal and Rajeev Sadanandan

HSTP team, drawing upon its wealth of expertise in pandemic preparedness and disease management, has developed a comprehensive One Health strategy. This intervention is structured to reduce the occurrence of epidemics, public health emergencies, and the emergence of antimicrobial resistance by establishing an all-encompassing One Health programme at the state level.

Last month, Rajeev Sadanandan (CEO, HSTP) and Pranay Lal (Senior Advisor, HSTP) wrote an Op-ed for The Hindu titled "[With Climate Change, Tackling New Disease Scenarios](#)," where they emphasize the need to protect ecosystems, foster collaborations, and embrace the One Health paradigm to guard against future pandemics. The authors call for greater coordinated efforts between the central and state governments and increased synergy among specialized agencies. The focus of both states and the central government should be on building robust surveillance systems, sharing data, and establishing clear lines of responsibility.

The One Health approach is a crucial strategy for building a resilient and healthy future for the planet. Stay engaged and informed about HSTP's work in this rapidly emerging area of public health.

Here are **EIGHT** key takeaways from the article that can provide you with an overview of why Rajeev and Pranay believe that the One Health approach is the solution for tackling new diseases:

- Human-induced climate change is increasing the global risk of infectious diseases. Changes in temperature, precipitation, and humidity disrupt disease transmission cycles and alter the distribution of disease vectors and animal reservoirs. Heat can also affect the infectivity and virulence of pathogens.
- Habitat loss due to climate change forces disease-carrying animals to encroach upon human territories, increasing the risk of human-animal interaction and the transfer of pathogens from wildlife to humans. This can lead to diseases that were once harmless to animals becoming fatal for humans.
- The expansion in the range of infectious agents due to climate change has led to diseases finding new transmission routes through environmental sources, medical tourism, and contaminated food and water sources.
- Changing ecosystems, the introduction of new invasive species, and the extension of the range of existing life forms make it difficult for ecologists and epidemiologists to predict disease outbreaks.
- Current disease surveillance and reporting systems require improved strategies to detect and manage climate change-induced diseases.
- While there is a global focus on the mysterious "Disease X," it is crucial to address known agents like influenza, measles, dengue, and others that continue to challenge public health systems. Climate change affects not only infectious diseases but also injuries, extreme weather events, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and mental health issues.
- Crucial steps in mitigating the spread of climate change-induced diseases include protecting ecosystems, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and actively monitoring pathogens.
- The One Health Approach, which integrates the monitoring of human, animal, plant, and environmental health, is crucial for preventing outbreaks, especially those originating from animals. It also addresses various health concerns such as zoonotic diseases, neglected tropical diseases, vector-borne diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and environmental contamination.

Exploratory Research in Health Systems Governance

Documenting the Challenges and Gaps in Regulating Medical Laboratories in India

One of the first steps to improve the functioning of an existing system, is to do extensive research on identifying the gaps and challenges that prevent it from functioning at an optimum level. However, there is a notable absence of research in low and middle-income countries concerning the provision of diagnostic services even though accurate diagnosis is a fundamental pillar of healthcare delivery. This is the thought that led Pallavi Gupta and Sunil Nandraj from the Health Systems Governance team at HSTP to delve into the intricacies of medical laboratory services in India in their recent publication titled "Challenges and gaps in regulating medical laboratories in India."

In the study, they have explored various aspects, including licensing, geographical distribution, pricing practices, quality assurance, staffing requirements, information exchange protocols, and the impact of emerging technologies on the sector. Published in the esteemed journal "Medical Law International," in August this year, it critically examines the challenges and deficiencies within the regulatory framework governing these essential services. By shedding light on these issues, the authors underlined the urgent need for strengthening regulatory mechanisms in this crucial domain. To give it a read, please click here: [Gupta, P., & Nandraj, S. \(2023\). Challenges and gaps in regulating medical laboratories in India. Medical Law International, 0\(0\). \(OnlineFirst\).](#)

Building Competencies

Enhancing the Capabilities of Primary Healthcare Providers

Primary health care is the foundation of a good health system. But unless citizens are assured of the quality of primary care in public health systems, they are likely to bypass PHCs. A crucial step in quality care is enhancing the competencies of primary healthcare providers, which includes Medical Officers, Nurses, Pharmacists, and Medical Laboratory Technologists. HSTP collaborates with the state governments and various stakeholders to facilitate capacity-building initiatives for different healthcare cadres.

Last month, we published our collaborative work on the Competency Based Training (CBT manuals) to build competencies for in-service pharmacists and medical laboratory technologists as strategic partners to the government of Odisha:

PHARMACISTS	MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGISTS
In partnership with the Indian Pharmaceutical Association and SCB Medical College, Cuttack, we developed Competency-based Training Manuals aimed at empowering in-service Pharmacists. Following the assessment phase of the project, HSTP transitioned into the intervention phase last month.	HSTP, in collaboration with the Indian Confederation of Medical Laboratory Science and the All India Institute of Medical Science, Bhubaneswar, created Competency-based Training Manuals to enhance the skills and knowledge of in-service Medical Laboratory Technologists in primary healthcare settings.

About HSTP

Health Systems Transformation Platform (HSTP), a not-for-profit Indian organisation, aims to generate evidence on health policy and systems and promote the use of that evidence in policymaking. HSTP's strategy is to analyse the state of the healthcare system, identify opportunities for improvement, propose solutions to the state government, support them in the implementation of the accepted ones, and validate them through implementation research. We then turn our analysis, implementation research and findings to knowledge products, that are available for use in alternative situations so that our research can achieve the scale large enough to make a difference at the national level. *HSTP is a not-for-profit organization registered in the name of Forum for Health Systems Design and Transformation, a company licensed under section 8 of the Indian Companies Act 2013.*