

## Does Healthcare System in Kerala Need a Change? Emerging Patterns of Morbidly and Hospitalisation

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*Although the 'Kerala Model' is often viewed as a rare combination of higher-order human development and not so discernible patterns of consistent exponential economic growth, it appears that in recent times the health system in Kerala has been facing the emerging crisis in public health. This paper assesses the determinants of morbidity and hospitalisation here using NSSO 71<sup>st</sup> round data. While we compare the results with the extant literature, drawing cues from the results, we explore public policy options that are appropriate to the context of Kerala. Moreover, the paper also examines the disease profile of hospitalized households.*

### I Introduction

Indian healthcare sector is wide, intensive and growing rapidly. It is expected to rank amongst the top three healthcare markets in terms of incremental growth by 2020. With this enormous growth, Indian healthcare sector needs to cater to a much higher level of demand for healthcare services which is on a constant rise (Mckinsey and Company 2010), capturing public and private organisations (Gangolli, *et. al.* 2005). Private sector plays a major role in the healthcare delivery. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) report (2013), out of pocket expenditure in India is 85.9 per cent of the Indian healthcare expenditure, which is one of the world's highest rates. However, India remains among the five bottom countries with poor health infrastructure and an inadequate health workforce (Gudwani 2012). Healthcare infrastructure is insufficient to meet the burden of diseases.

According to the constitution of India (7<sup>th</sup> Schedule, Article 246), health is in the state list. However, the central government is engaged in policy-making, planning, guiding and evaluating healthcare systems across the nation. Moreover, the it allocates funds to states which are responsible for managing the public healthcare system.

Amongst the states Kerala has been reporting consistently noticeable higher magnitudes of human development (Table 1). Since the state was formed in

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