The right health workforce – a matter of planning?

An appropriately resourced health workforce is essential to healthcare provision, vital to quality of care, health system performance and ultimately to population health. Due to changes, not only in the future of health service delivery but also in employment patterns & preferences of health professionals, health workforce planning (HWFP) is high on the agenda. Regarding the implementation of planning results, health policy-makers must overcome split responsibilities, building bridges between different professional bodies and ministries. The methodological task itself is also challenging, bearing in mind the long-term impact & the interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral aspects of HWFP. Although the importance of health workforce governance is beyond doubt, there is no clear answer yet as to the level and nature of integrated health workforce planning needed.

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