

Abstract

In China, there are two problems in the allocation of resources, including the serious lack of health resources and poor equity of the allocation of these resources, due to previous health policy of "Giving Priority to Efficiency and Fair Balance". Along with the growth of economic of China, the health resources increase. However, current Chinese Total Expenditure on Health out of GDP is only 5%, which just is above the WHO's lowest standard. China has a wide territory and a large amount of population, thus the issue of equity of resource allocation would be more important for China to consider and pay more attention on it. World Health Report(2000) shows that the rank of the performance of Chinese health system is 144 out 191 countries and the fairness in financial contribution only ranks the 188th. There is distinction of resources allocation among the urban and rural areas, also within the city among different populations.

Equity means the equitable chance for people to pursue health and need. The equity in health care commonly means equal access to health care for those in equal need of health care; equal utilization of health care for those in equal need of health care; equal (or, rather, equitable) health outcomes (measured by). People pay more attention on the issue of equity in health, and the discussions about the field of health tend to focus on the analysis of equity in health care. How to allocate health resources appropriately has been a pivotal issue in China. The comparison of the equity in health care among different areas of China would show, to some extent, the equity in health care of whole China. On the other hand, the lack of total resources forces us to put the improvement of economic ahead. However, it needs us to examine whether the inequity in health care has been improved with the rapid growth of economic.

It is one relative direct and simple way to examine the equity in health care by investigating the equity in health resources allocation in areas. In this study, through the analysis the data of doctors per 10,000 units and beds of hospital per 10,000 units in 1996 of five areas (province or prefecture), we find the inequity in resources allocation in China. Furthermore, through analysis of the same indices from these five regions, we also find that the inequity has not been improved during the time from 1996 to 2005. And in terms of beds of hospitals per 10,000 units, the disparities among these areas show the trend to be larger. Therefore, it is no evidence that the growth of economic bring the same degree of growth of health resources; especially, the resources allocation needs the government' s more control and guidance to reach the goal of equity.

Under the new guidance of “Giving Priority to Equity and Efficient Balance”, policy-makers should take more efforts to optimize the resources allocation in health care, enhance the aid and assistance to the rural population and vulnerable groups. To sum up, it is the ultimate aim for a country to construct an efficient system to produce high outcomes and ensure that everybody have the equal opportunities to utilize what they need for health and gain equitable outcomes in health.

Keywords: health resources, resources allocation, health care, equity in health care.