India

Population[1] (000s) *(2024)*	Urban population[2] (%) *(2024)*	GDP per capita[3] (current US$) *(2022)*	Life expectancy at birth[4] (years) *(2021)*	UHC SCI[5] *(2021)*
1 450 936	36.9	2 484.8	67.3	63

Trends in the density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives[6] (SDG indicator 3.c.1)

Density of medical doctors, nurses, midwives (per 10 000 pop.)

- 2014 or before: 24.4
- 2015 or 2016: (bar)
- 2018: (bar)
- 2019 or 2020: (bar)
- 2024: 35.9

— 44.5 per 10 000 pop: GSHRH:2030 (2016) — 22.8 per 10 000 pop.: World Health Report (2006)
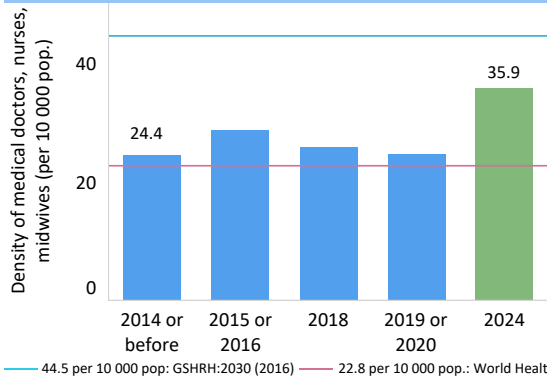
Trends in UHC Service Coverage Index (SDG indicator 3.8.1) and the density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives (SDG indicator 3.c.1), 2010–2019[7]
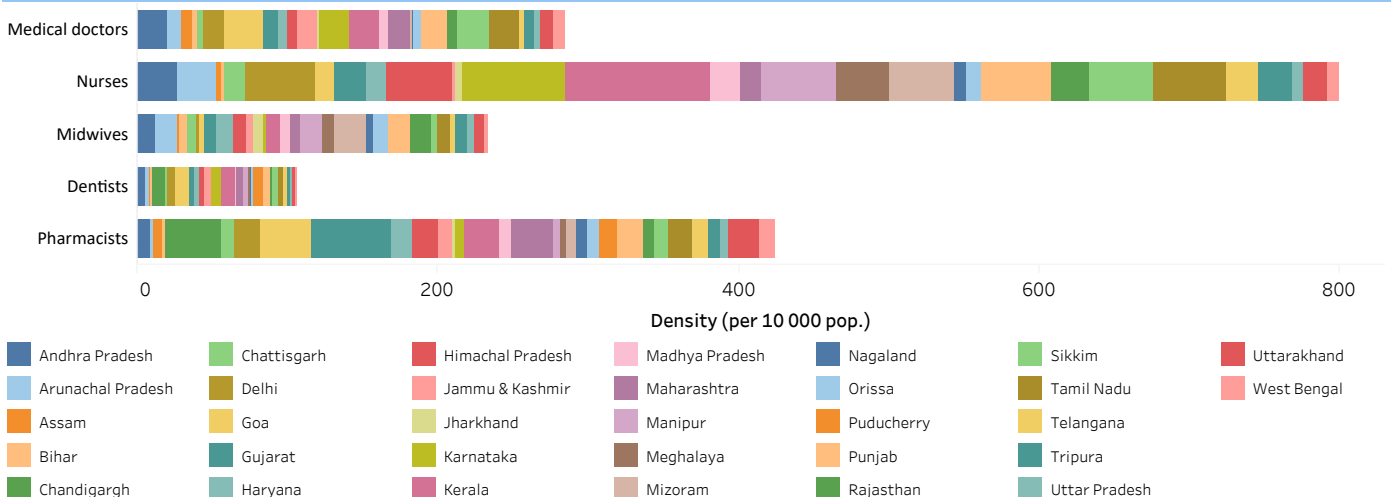

Regional UHC SCI

2010 ... 2019

Density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives per 10 000 population

Regional density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives per 10 000 pop.
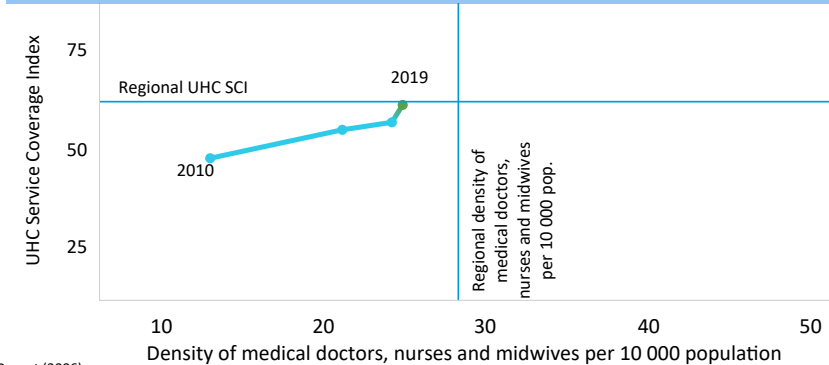
Density of other key primary health care (PHC) workers

Community health workers[8] (ISCO-08:3253)

Density (per 10 000 pop.)
- 2021: 7.0
- 2022: (bar)
- 2023: (bar)
- 2024*: 16.0

*Now includes anganwadi workers responsible for child health and nutrition

Traditional medicine and associate professionals[8] (ISCO-08:2230, ISCO-08:3230)

- 2020: 4.0
- 2023: 5.2

Allied and healthcare professionals[8] (as per National Act, 2021**)

- 2021: 9.2
- 2024: 10.3

** encompasses 56 categories of health professionals, approximately 172 000 in public system at district level
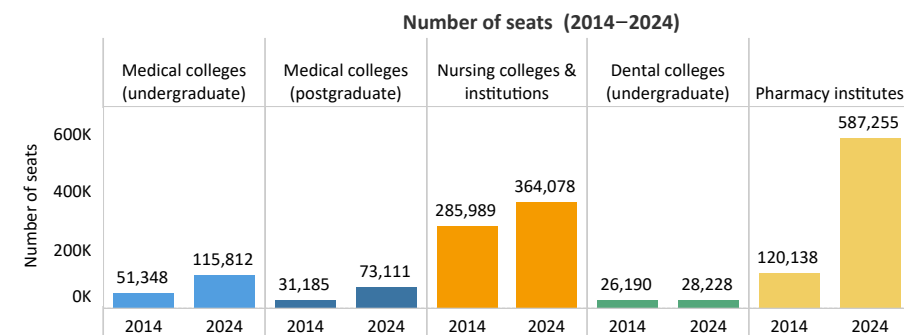
Countries in the SE Asia Region benefit from a range of key occupations close to communities. These health workers, central to the effective functioning of primary health care and district health systems, are often the first point of contact for those most vulnerable and for emergency response.

Distribution of health workforce[8] (subnational level)

- Medical doctors
- Nurses
- Midwives
- Dentists
- Pharmacists

Density (per 10 000 pop.)

Legend:
- Andhra Pradesh
- Arunachal Pradesh
- Assam
- Bihar
- Chandigargh
- Chattisgarh
- Delhi
- Goa
- Gujarat
- Haryana
- Himachal Pradesh
- Jammu & Kashmir
- Jharkhand
- Karnataka
- Kerala
- Madhya Pradesh
- Maharashtra
- Manipur
- Meghalaya
- Mizoram
- Nagaland
- Orissa
- Puducherry
- Punjab
- Rajasthan
- Sikkim
- Tamil Nadu
- Telangana
- Tripura
- Uttar Pradesh
- Uttarakhand
- West Bengal

Production of select health workers[8]

Number of seats (2014–2024)

Number of seats

	Medical colleges (undergraduate)	Medical colleges (postgraduate)	Nursing colleges & institutions	Dental colleges (undergraduate)	Pharmacy institutes
2014	51,348	31,185	285,989	26,190	120,138
2024	115,812	73,111	364,078	28,228	587,255

The increasing production of health workers across countries of the SE Asia Region speaks of a further increase in the availability of health workers in the near future. It is crucial to align this growth with evolving population and health system needs.

Progress over the decade

Strategic direction & governance	National Health Policy 2017 with the goal of UHC achievement; Prime Minister's flagship Ayushman Bharat ("Healthy India") scheme launched in 2018 to implement National Health Policy, with strengthening HRH as central to both Major HRH-related regulatory reforms enacted to support 2017 National Health Policy, including National Medical Commission Act 2019; National Dental Commission Act 2023, National Nursing and Midwifery Commission Act 2023; National Commission for Indian Systems of Medicine Act 2020; National Commission for Allied and Health Professionals Act 2023; and National Telemedicine Practice Guidelines 2020; with common platform for regulators established Developed 'Healthcare Professionals Registry' as part of India's digital health mission, to serve as a comprehensive repository of registered health care professionals across different occupations and systems of medicine
Transformative education	Significant expansion of health professional education institutions and seats, with improvements in geographic distribution and share of public medical and nursing colleges, as enabled through increased public investment, public-private partnership, co-location of education institutions, and regulatory reforms In line with regulatory reforms, development of educational standards and implementation of competency-based curricula across health professions, including integration of soft skills and 'yoga' across all curricula; introduction of specialized nurse-practitioner courses and task shifting provisions; strengthening of accreditation of medical colleges and other health care institutes through Quality Council of India and digital innovations Expansion of digital e-learning platforms, as example SWAYAM, DIKSHA and Extension of Community Health Outcome ("ECHO"), with the former focused on educators and latter two on health workers
Rural retention	Established new government medical colleges in rural & underserved areas, mandatory rural postings for new graduates, and mix of financial and non-financial incentives, including central and state collaboration in improving health-related infrastructure and working environment and housing Increasing public funding at district and sub-district level through National Health Mission alongside mandated local government and community involvement in planning and monitoring Expansion of telemedicine in supporting existing health staff deliver quality care to patients in rural areas
Key innovations for strengthening the PHC workforce	Creation, recruitment and posting of a new cadre of mid-level healthcare providers ("Community Health Officers") at scale, with estimated 138,000 CHOs, for delivery of comprehensive PHC through AB-Health and Wellness Centers Expanded role for mid-level level health care providers through range of government initiatives, including integrating CHO courses in the national nursing curricula, and on the job capacity strengthening through a nation-wide online mentoring project Digital initiatives like Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, CoWIN, Aarogya Setu and e-Sanjeevani (telemedicine platform)
International migration	Government has developed the 'Heal by India' framework to leverage India's young population and significant production capacity to meet the overall health system needs including initiatives at strengthening quality of health sector educational institutions and ensuring stringent licensing examinations, ensuring pathways for global employment, and pathways for foreign students to study in India Bilateral agreements related to health worker migration and mobility signed with multiple nations, as linked to increasing global demand for health professionals from India Eased post-graduate education admission and eligibility for foreign (citizen) medical graduates, postgraduates for temporary registration & practice, as well as ongoing development of short-term courses and fellowships for foreign medical graduates to enhance skills in specialized fields
Identified achievements, challenges and future priorities	**Achievements**: significantly increased production as needed to address the needs of the healthcare system; historic regulatory reforms to support access and quality to competent HRH; establishment and strengthening of public medical colleges and health facilities in rural and remote areas; creation and scale up of mid-level health providers and digital innovations to support service delivery, continuous professional development, and quality monitoring & improvement. **Challenges**: need to address imbalances in skill mix, create career pathways, strengthen task shifting/task sharing strategies; continue thrust on transformative approach from top-down to multidisciplinary, empowered HRH model **Priorities**: develop a National Human Resources for Health Policy; accelerate investments in transformative education with priority to developing a clinically competent and compassionate health workforce; fully leverage traditional medicine practitioners and mid-level providers; advance HRH data, analysis and monitoring; fully establish remaining new regulators (NNMC and NDC) and initiate capacity building of health professional regulators; support the establishment and help lead a network of health professional regulators in the SE Asia Region.