

# SUSTAINABILITY IN HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE PROVISIONS

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## ABSTRACT

Sustainability is recognised as a crucial requirement for developing health care systems that are appropriate over the long term since they face enormous challenges. The newly created sustainable system analyses the social, environmental, and economic pillars of sustainability using a set of criteria that are indicated by quantifiable indicators. Enhancing the quality and safety of healthcare offers the chance to boost community health through enhancing the sustainability of health services. However, there is disagreement over the definition of the phrase and the qualities of a "sustainable healthcare system." Consequently, this text's goal is dualistic. First, samples of the current literature on sustainable health care systems will be presented. This material will then be analysed in light of how it conceptualises sustainability and the advantages and disadvantages of various methods. This work then identifies key components of sustainable healthcare systems, as well as how such systems might benefit our health and communities in the long run. Since public health is impacted by environmental quality, sustainability and health care are intertwined.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Healthcare Systems, Environment, Social, Sustainability, Conceptual Framework.

## INTRODUCTION

Health will be defined as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity [2] in order to create sustainable healthcare systems. These activities will include "all the activities whose primary purpose is to market, restore, and maintain health" [7]. The definition of healthcare systems describes them as extremely complex systems with numerous stakeholders [3]. Additionally, it should be remembered that the healthcare system is an open one that contains dynamic reciprocity with other social and environmental aspects [1]. One of the reasons why Muzyka et al. [4] stated that "not everybody suggests that identical issue when they talk about 'sustainable health care'" is because there is still no universal definition of sustainable healthcare systems. This is analogous to the hazy boundary separating healthcare systems from various social systems. Sustainability in healthcare is defined as a trade-off between patient needs, financial concerns, and environmental costs [8]. Due to the complexity of current problems, sustainability science has evolved over the past ten years toward applying an integrated approach with cross-sectional terms like intergenerational justice, quality of life, or social cohesion rather than maintaining a clear distinction between the three pillars. [6]

The healthcare systems must be able to handle four distinct difficulties throughout the medium term.

- To start, new technologies and therapies have sparked a need for technology while also resulting in ineffective and inefficient health care initiatives.
- Secondly, there are issues with demand driven by demographics due to the rising costs of addressing the needs of an ageing society.
- Third, a lack of employees who are helpful to the system's services and a shortage of essential health workers both contribute to challenges with hands capacity and funding.
- Fourth, in order to address quality and safety concerns, health services must be of higher quality and include more sophisticated preventative healthcare components.

## II. ROLE OF SUSTAINABILITY ON HEALTH

Global initiatives to expand out the healthcare industry's real estate focus on making adjustments like reducing waste, using sustainable building practises, conserving energy, and staying away from hepatotoxic materials like PVC and phthalates. Savings from these methods will be used to enhance patient care.

However, access to healthcare and illness prevention are also important components of sustainable healthcare, thus it goes beyond the environment. Consider a respiratory illness in children. With an inhaler and medication, it's usually easy to treat. Even some young children eventually outgrow it. However, the respiratory condition (asthma) worsens if you don't have access to treatment. It eventually develops into chronic.

Any and all sustainability initiatives must prioritise human health. "All of things" (food, shelter, power, and healthcare) and the stress that their scarcity causes, according to Hollis, "have a significant part in our health." Additionally, they have an impact on your psychological condition. We even have to accept issues with stress related to not being able to own any of those items, on top of stress related to other factors like climatic events or general racism. You will be more likely to develop illness and disease as a result of all these pressures.

To keep society moving forward, we need people who are healthy and productive. Sadly, all of our technological advances have damaged the ecosystem, generating air and water pollution. And often, those who are poorest are the ones who suffer the most from the effects of pollution. This could result in illness, missed classes or work, and decreased productivity.

Sustainability methods ensure that everyone, especially those from lower socioeconomic statuses, has access to a safe, healthy environment. They can continue to be effective and productive because of this [7,8].

## III. OVERALL PERSPECTIVES ON SUSTAINABILITY IN HEALTH

Regarding the role of property in health, there are three major themes:

- Sustainable environment for a healthy lifestyle.
- Implications of a Dynamical Climate.
- Sustainability in health system performance.

### A. Sustainable Environment for a Healthy Lifestyle.

In contrast to some poorer nations, where obvious indications include poor sanitation, trash, waste, smogginess, and haze, affluent countries have few visible markers of the environmental impact on health.

The built and natural environments have an impact on health. Fostering conditions that protect and advance community health and well-being is crucial. Outside of the health department, many decisions that eventually affect the health and wellbeing of many nations are made, including those related to land use and transportation planning. The department is essential in conveying the value of the built and natural surroundings to people's health and welfare.

### B. Implications of a Dynamical Climate

All people's health and wellbeing are affected by the changing environment, but those who are already vulnerable are most affected. These effects include an increase in the number and severity of bushfires, which are associated with an increase in injury, death, metabolic process risks, and adverse effects on psychological state and wellbeing. They also include an increase in the average annual range of hot days and the deaths and hospitalizations linked to them.

The department's Environmental Health Unit offers pertinent information on managing the effects of weather-related disasters, including as heatwaves, bushfires, and drought, on health. There are more details about environmental health.

### C. Sustainability in Health System Performance

Health services produce enormous amounts of waste and require key resources like water and energy because of the nature of the services they provide. The department's sustainability in healthcare - Environmental sustainability strategy 2018-19 to 2022-23 outlines our commitment for the following five years to further enhance the environmental sustainability of the health system and to adapt the health system to make it more resilient in the face of global climate change. The department implements a number of initiatives and programmes that are further documented for such programmes in order to help health services enhance their environmental performance.

## IV. WHY SUSTANABILITY IS IMPORTANT IN HEALTH CARE

### A. Creating the Commitment to Environmental Sustainability in Health Care Organizations

Most health care institutions recognise the need of protecting the environment, but many don't have official systems in place to do so. It will be detrimental to a health care organization's bottom line as well as its surrounding community to treat sustainability as a "nice-to-have" rather than a top priority. There are many reasons why it is crucial for health care organisations to change their ways of thinking and give sustainability top priority in their organisational structures.

- **Sustainability Strategies Keeps Harmful Things out of the Environment**

Every day, hospitals, health systems, physician practises, and other health care institutions add to the millions of pounds of medical and other trash that, if not properly disposed of, could harm the environment. These pollutants will probably destroy ecosystems and result in adverse health issues for the neighbourhood if they leak into the nearby landfills and rivers. Health care businesses may ensure that unwanted materials won't enter the environment by creating processes that make sure waste is consistently collected, segregated, processed, and disposed of properly.

- **Proper Medical Waste Disposal Prevents Fines and Different Financial Repercussions**

Numerous municipalities have stringent regulations on how waste and exercise are handled. The exercise and garbage disposal efforts of their community will be stymied, the environment may be contaminated, and health care organisations may be subject to heavy fines if they don't strictly adhere to these regulations. As a result, it's crucial to implement a thorough medical waste disposal policy to ensure that your employees properly and methodically separate all medical, hazardous, sharps, and medication waste. To ensure that varied waste streams are dealt with and rendered harmless, the programme needs to have defined procedures. This is not only wise for the environment, but it will also help your company avoid costly consequences to its reputation and bank sheet.

- **Health Care Organizations are Part of a Community**

Health care organisations have a duty and responsibility to protect patients, employees, and the community as a result of their fundamental missions; a strong sustainability programme might be a crucial component of that. Managing internal operations to conserve resources, such as by using reusable containers whenever possible, engaging in vigorous recycling, developing programmes that mitigate the chance of environmental contamination, etc., are all part of such a programme. It entails lowering the organization's carbon footprint, ensuring harmful substances don't enter landfills and water systems, and managing internal operations to ensure resources aren't wasted.

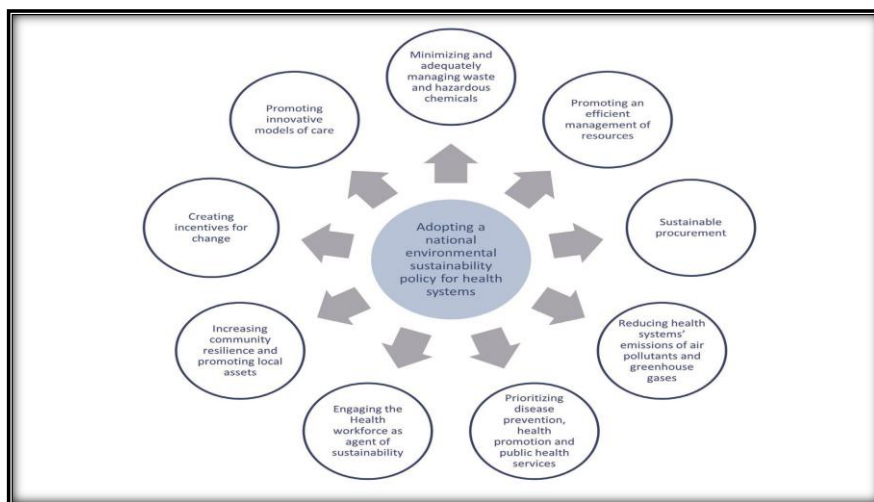


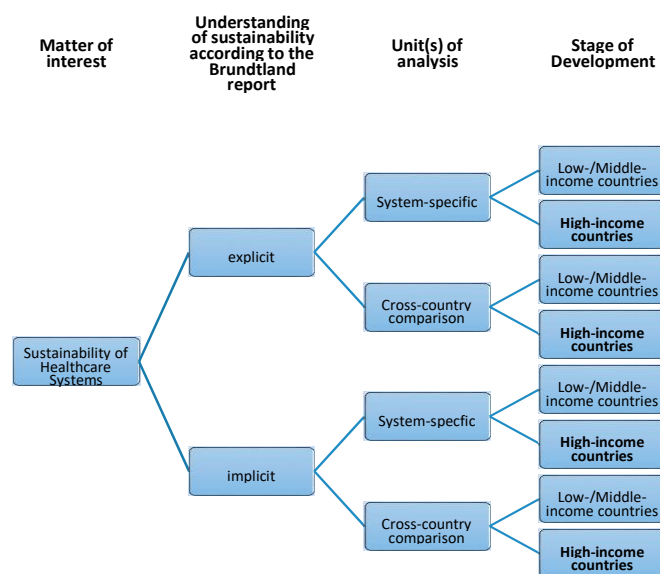
Figure 1: - Possible elements of a national environmental sustainability policy for health systems

## V. ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF ANALYSING HEALTH CARE SUSTAINABILITY

First, studies that addressed the sustainability of the health care system were divided into those that explicitly or implicitly related to comprehending it. The research's outputs took into account development's three unique and interdependent components (economic, social, and ecological). Studies that didn't specifically address the Brundtland criteria had to at least demonstrate how crucial it is to consider sustainability while keeping in mind the requirements of future generations. However, these strategies frequently failed to demonstrate a deeper comprehension of the three pillars of sustainability.

Second, research efforts were distinguished based on whether the goal of the study or project was to examine care systems across countries or through a more in-depth review of one care system (which might even be conducted on a lot of abstract level, of course).

The third distinction was made between strategies aimed at highly industrialised, high-income nations and their healthcare systems, and low-income nations that are comparable to middle-income nations. Analysing nations that have a long history of having high standards for healthcare from a completely different perspective than nations that are developing systems due to rapid economic growth and significant societal change, or those with underperforming healthcare systems [10].



**Figure 2: - Alternative Ways of Analysing Health Care Sustainability**

## VI. CHARACTERIZING SUSTAINABILITY HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

### A. System-Specific Approach for a Sustainability Health Care System

- Obtaining long-term funding, abiding by moral standards that apply to individuals, societal systems, and the environment, and ensuring high-quality development through each original analysis and the incorporation of sound knowledge.
- Not focusing on immediate election times or explicitly favouring specific interest groups.
- Enhancing individual capabilities (compliance and empowerment) through information and better data channels (internet).
- Considering both direct and indirect interference, with the latter implying better general health (and not just healthcare) conditions
- Better blending of the resources of all involved parties.
- Providing openness in regards to exposing covert lobbying actions, fostering knowledge-based debates, and producing cost-effective documentation so that the medical staff may concentrate on their actual job.
- Taking into account the real professional needs of the many stakeholders, this entails not just increases in compensation but also improvements in the way they are valued and how they approach continuing education.
- Appreciating scientific and technological innovation for improving performance in a qualitative way and lowering physical obstacles, for instance by taking advantage of the possibilities of e-health communication technology.

- Promoting scientific collaboration and transfer for the development of real estate in low-income nations while taking global interdependence into account.
- Addressing ecological issues, which is effective yet does not involve speech communication.
- Promoting data exchange, conducting analysis, and creating future techniques inside a healthcare system institution that has not yet been founded.

## **B. Cross-Country-Comparison Approach for a Sustainable Health Care System**

- Since high achievers like Sweden rank among the countries with the lowest health care spending, performance cannot be exclusively determined by the amount of money spent.
- In order to reduce rising costs, it is essential to manage publicly supported pharmaceutical pricing through cost controls and training for doctors.
- Promoting a content and productive workforce, especially outside of compensation, is essential for a high-performing system.
- Long-term care costs will be reduced through investing in broader health determinants, health promotion, and prevention.
- Once integrated approaches to the period of care are devised and implemented, a high share of senior citizens isn't necessarily accompanied by rising costs.
- Investing in health-related data and communication technologies as well as offering training and skill development can even increase workforce productivity.
- User fee structures might be advantageous for controlling costs, but they shouldn't delay the discovery of symptoms because people don't go to doctors.
- By ensuring that there is sufficient surgical capability, lengthy waiting times should be avoided [12].

## **VII. RELEVANT DIMENSIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS**

Overall, the analysis of outstanding practises seems to suggest that in order for care systems to advance toward sustainability, they must be forced to address a number of critical issues. The following five criteria are suggested by sustainability: long-term strategic view and innovation; illness prevention and health promotion; quality; institutionalisation of environmental issues; as well as institutional accountability and personal responsibility.

### **A. Long-Run Strategic Perspective and Innovativeness**

Long-term strategic viewpoints and innovativeness typically have an economic connotation when discussing sustainability. Political actors play a crucial role in this situation since they frequently have the power to make decisions that alter the "game's rules." There are three effects of this strategy. A sustainable health care system should, first and foremost, limit financial costs. Unfortunately, no one can agree on how to ensure overall economic sustainability, even researchers and policymakers. The promotion of some agreement that adapts to both patient and provider behaviour, as well as a reallocation of resources to initiatives that enhance health, is necessary [13]. Additionally, health care providers need to be motivated to create the right incentives in order to provide the best value for money [4]. A certified reduction in client demand for medication through education programmes, for instance, or the use of price limits can all help to reduce rising pharmaceutical prices [12]. Critical issues include the implementation of cost-control management practises and a literary analysis of current strategies [13].

The lack of strategic thinking among policymakers is the second problem. Progressive decision-making must be replaced in a property care system by long-term, supported strategic deliberations. A realistic assessment of the current situation, followed by the formulation of specific, long-term goals and a detailed plan for how to achieve them, may be the key to effective strategic management. Muddling through and patchwork repairs should be replaced with fundamental and long-lasting changes that balance social and financial imperatives [14], and trade-offs in society need to be forced to be openly discussed and communicated [4]. A property care system should also be adequately adaptable, which refers to the capacity to respond to changes in the system's inputs or outputs [1]. This might be promoted in two ways: first, by reaching consensus on care objectives; and second, by fostering ongoing, inclusive discussion of care reforms across party lines.

The maximisation of a system's inventiveness is the third problem. This problem is centred on scientific and technical innovation since it helps to generate effective prescription pharmaceuticals, improve healthcare services, and lower body barriers [11,13]. The ability to remain competitive over the long term may depend on continuing to be inventive. It also includes looking for creative funding models, though. Even if there is minimal consensus, reforms are unavoidable. User fees, the separation of long-term care and expensive medical aid, or other recommendations like these should ultimately be judged on their ability to keep costs as low as possible without negatively impacting the social following [14].

## **B. Disease Prevention and Health Promotion**

A sustainable healthcare system is thought to depend heavily on prevention and wellness programmes [11,33]. The most frequently cited settings for enhancing preventive and promotion efforts are primary healthcare institutions [4]. They will also help a healthcare system get better results while spending less money [34] since they will address problems early on and effectively help to prevent them. The importance of strong medical facilities that provide patient-centred, easily accessible, and comprehensive services must therefore be emphasised in a property attention system.

Another goal is to prevent chronic diseases due to the large number of medical visits that are a measure of chronic diseases [35]. A sustainable healthcare system requires effective chronic illness prevention by minimising waiting times and providing quick, high-quality solutions for people who are currently dealing with or at risk of developing chronic diseases [36]. Patients with chronic illnesses also have an increased risk of developing additional chronic diseases.

When it comes to preventing obstacles and promoting health, it is vital to take the attention workforce into account as well. The objective is to maintain high levels of dedication and morale among employees, which are crucial for offering patients high-quality care. Slashed employee morale and mental illnesses like melancholy or burnout have returned to seriously affect the healthcare work force as doctors, nurses, and alternative healthcare professionals are required to try and do everything they can. For instance, inadequate staffing levels and work overload are investigated as major contributors to job turnover in the clinical workforce [38].

As a result, a sustainable healthcare system must ensure that the work hours of healthcare workers are limited to a reasonable number of hours and that the services provided are adequately compensated. In the unlikely event of mental problems, assistance should be given right away. A sustainable healthcare system should also ensure that its personnel don't remain in the same job for the rest of their lives but instead advance professionally by utilising coaching programmes for lifelong learning.

## **C. Quality**

The widely accepted definition of quality given by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) is "the degree to which health care services for individuals and populations increase the probability of desired outcomes and are measured in accordance with current professional knowledge" [39]. Indicators are necessary to measure the quality of life, and in accordance with Donabedian, these indicators take into account the organisation, the operations, and the results of health services [40]. However, there are other approaches to turning the IOM's basic definition into specific requirements, particularly when considering outcome metrics.

Some people examined numerous healthcare and health frameworks of chosen nations for prospective healthcare performance dimensions, and they created a framework for measuring the performance of the healthcare system that was integrated into a larger framework for measuring health indicators. Effectiveness, safety, and responsiveness/patient-centeredness are considered to be the three core quality dimensions. Additional performance indicators, such as acceptability, care atmosphere and amenities, continuity, governance, or safety, may also be found in their analysis of other attention performance frameworks. In general, the outcomes of informed public discussions about the objectives and scope of healthcare should serve as the criteria used to validate quality. As was undoubtedly indicated previously, "sustainability" has at least been considered as a component of quality frameworks for healthcare systems. This essay acknowledges the critical relationship between "quality" and "sustainable," but it makes the case that we should consider "quality" as an important attention property since a lack of quality can lead to lower public acceptance and, ultimately, higher pricing for the entire system.

It is now more important than ever to consider health-related information and communication technologies (ICT) and to integrate them with customary procedures. All facilities should be equipped with modern technology so that information can be processed effectively—structured analysis of enormous data is especially important—and a continual evaluation of its influence on patient care can be done. The goal of health policy should be the decrease of unjustified variation because attention variation and the associated concerns with over- and under-treatment are not only global [41] issues, but also a major concern inside countries. Governments must address inequalities, for example by setting region-based targets and redistributing resources in regions with low utilisation rates, or by implementing changes to payment systems to stipulate lower use in areas where there is a high suspicion of overuse [42]. The distribution of the burden of paying for insurance also means that the distribution of healthcare and its benefits must be meticulously monitored. Of course, accessibility is a factor in equitability. In a home healthcare system, local offers for each patient must be acquired, and patients must be attended to according to their needs. Additionally, this involves cutting waiting times, which have a significant

impact on how a population views the overall quality of the system, as well as the fairness of minorities, such as ethnic minorities, immigrants, people with special needs, or the elderly, when it comes to the area or state [4].

#### **D. Institutionalization of Environmental Concerns**

This chapter makes the case that two different types of environments—first, the overall social setting, and second, the ecological setting—should be taken into account in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of what constitutes a sustainable healthcare system. The relationship between the two can be seen, for instance, in talks of environmental justice, which refers to situations in which one group is disproportionately affected by environmental dangers and their harmful health effects, which then cause health disparities within civilizations [43]. Property science has determined that the existence of particular values doesn't always correspond to concrete actions [16]. Run the talk and move forward with the actual institutionalisation of property in order to bridge this gap between awareness and actual decision-making.[17]

The integration of social issues, which is referred to in this article as "indirect prevention" in line with Schön's theory [11], reflects the first peaceful environment. Given that healthcare is a complex, open system [1] with many interdependencies, it is important to take into account external influences. The concept advanced by Dahlgren and Whitehead [18,19] that community networks, general socio-economic, cultural, and environmental conditions, in addition to individual behaviour, influence human health, aids North American nations understanding of the significance of indirect barriers and is consistent with the comprehensive approach of the Brundtland report.

Broader socioeconomic and cultural determinants of health, such as education, infant development, income, and social status, as well as interdependencies with families, community groups, and employers, need to be taken into account in order to create a sustainable healthcare system. To institutionalise these developments, one might think about conducting a "Health Impact Assessment" of political measures within various policy domains, similar to the Regulatory Impact Assessment (because it is conducted globally, for example) or the Integrated Impact Assessment (because it is conducted at the national level) [20].

Environmental risk factors are still estimated to account for an average of 16% Factor Questionnaire of the burden of disease (measured in healthy life years lost), and can cause conditions such chronic lung disorders that impair breathing, cardiovascular diseases, or bronchial asthma. A vicious circle is frequently seen: Environmental degradation necessitates medical intervention, which again harms the environment, as in the case of medical waste, particularly disposable items, along with infectious agents and biohazardous compounds like heavy metals and radioactive isotopes. To give another example, medical treatments typically result in a significant energy consumption. Prescription drug use is expected to increase over the coming years, and while this will likely improve standard of living, the production, use, and disposal of these drugs appear to pose severe environmental and health risks. Furthermore, as links between human and natural health become more and more obvious, the final and occasionally irreversible loss of diversity in many societies poses serious risks to public health. For example, diversity helps protect water quality and air quality, reduces the risk of communicable disease outbreak, and stimulates social life, which lowers stress levels, promotes physical activity, and fosters personal growth. Although the relationship between diversity and human health is complex and frequently even harmful, it has been emphasised that diversity is important for the development of prescription pharmaceuticals and alternative medical practises [21–26].

Therefore, the ecological environment should be acknowledged and treated as a significant concern in a sustainable healthcare system. According to Schön [18], it is possible to contend that the detrimental effects of the exploitation of natural resources must be mitigated at all times, for example by creating efficient and cost-effective solutions that will reduce environmental waste. The decrease in prescription drug usage, as indicated by Götz and Deffner, could serve as an example: Each party engaged in prevention efforts can contribute to increased informed prescription drug use, and a three-pronged strategy including a variety of stakeholders appears to be the most promising: The solution should include political measures (such as environmental goals), communication efforts (such as raising stakeholder awareness), and measures to support changes in patient behaviour (such as prescription options that reduce medication use or the introduction of co-payment) [27]. The creation of efficient take-back systems and, consequently, the expansion of use potentialities without endangering patients' health, are required to combat the tendency toward more disposable items, which has been a hot topic for a while [28]. The objective should be to provide a remedy for the rising and occasionally unnecessary use of unidirectional objects. Water and energy usage in healthcare facilities should be highly frugal, and renewable energy sources should be used as much as possible. This frequently has less to do with ceasing to use non-renewable resources and more to do with using them wisely. Additionally, the introduction of novice tending facilities needs to be encouraged, and as a result, the tending workforce needs to receive instruction on how to operate sustainably. In general, it is important to acknowledge and respect the interdependence of the natural and social surroundings with reference to human health.

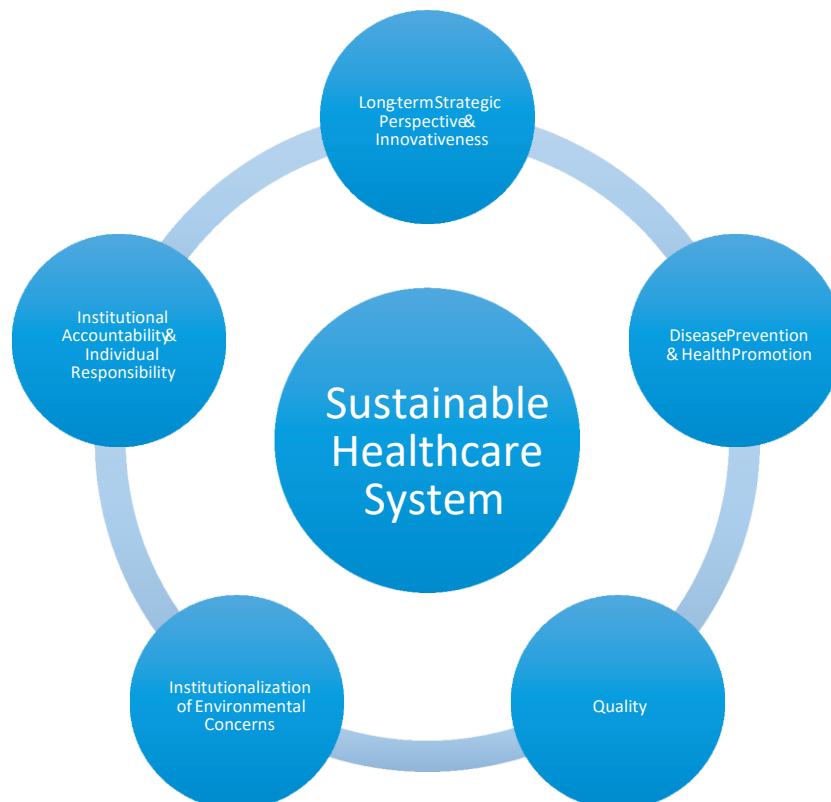
## E. Institutional Responsibleness and Individual Responsibility

The issue of responsibility arises in order to ensure widespread acceptability, long-term stability of the entire system, and last but not least, to decide how to change society and what resources it will ultimately commit to doing so. This also covers the contentious issue of what a person must give up in order to maintain the equilibrium of the entire system. As a result, there are three ways that responsibility is conceived about in this article.

First, it suggests that a system for managing property should be unambiguous and have competencies that are equally dispersed in terms of measurement [18]. Because healthcare systems are publicly supported, it's important to make it obvious who gets the money and which UN agency is responsible for what and to what extent in order to win over the public. The question of whether higher responsibility could not only produce a lot of economical results but also remove obviously inefficient structures and redirect resources to other system components that are recognised as much more imperative through higher transparency also arises because it has already been demonstrated that higher expenditure isn't directly associated with higher tending outcomes [29].

Second, being responsible entails valuing collaboration with all stakeholders during the decision-making process. The need for involvement was considered as being especially important for real estate development, not only in relation to the particular decision-making but also in relation to a continuous conversation within society about common goals for future development [30]. The population must be taken into account in order to garner support for changes among all interested parties within the tending system, which is necessary to ultimately accept the trade-offs that societies are predicted to produce in the future [31].

Third, the need for patient empowerment seeks to sanction them to demand ownership of their own health, a principle that is supported by liberal political concepts and the observation that advances in information and communication technology have contributed to intelligent patients UN who have higher demands for higher info and are less keen on skilled gatekeepers. This could be accomplished by giving patients clear information and stressing the need of taking charge of their own health. It underlines that a sustainable healthcare system should rely on maturity and the ability of its patients to worry about their lives on their own and partially while outside the social framework. This does not necessarily mean that the entire healthcare system should be privatised [32].



**Figure 3. Relevant Dimensions of Healthcare System Sustainability**



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