

**Letter to Editor:**

**Community medicine: An unutilized branch of health sector by Government of India**

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Effective administration is very important in any sector for the efficient delivery of services without compromising over the quality.<sup>1</sup> General administration of India is efficiently managed by services like Indian Administrative Services (IAS), Indian police services (IPS) etc. but coming to the health sector which is the immediate need of the people after food and shelter is very much neglected. Is it an exaggeration? No, not at all because administrative aspects of health sector in India is managed by people who are not having any idea on health administration. A person trained in community medicine/public health is the qualified person to run the administration services of health sector similar to the role played by IAS, IPS. At present no/very few persons trained in health administration are managing health services in our country. The best quotable example is that No or very few DMHO (District medical officers)/State programme officer (SPO)/District programme officer (DPO) in Andhra Pradesh state of India is a specialist in Community Medicine. If the scenario of a Non Empowered Action Group state is like this then the situation in an Empowered Action Group state can be understood.

Politicians of India will be stating that irrespective of so many resources in terms of Humans, materials and finances spent, services are not

reaching the public to a full extent and the improvement of health indicators is very slow.<sup>2</sup> This can be attributed to the poor management of resources already in place because of lack of appropriate knowledge over the management of available resources. If the specialist trained in health administration are placed at a SPO/DPO level in poor performing states the best results can be achieved. The best evidence in front of our eyes is the eradication of polio from our country with the help of surveillance Medical Officers (SMO). Majority of SMO's are well trained in Community Medicine specialists in the aspect of Health Administration. Agencies like WHO and UNICEF are utilizing the services of community medicine specialists by posting them as regional consultants. Then why can't Government of India (GOI) can utilize them in similar roles as country has already spent millions of rupees on making these young doctors as health administrators. An amendment should be brought by GOI that the programme officer or regional consultant cadre should only be managed by qualified persons in health administration like community medicine specialists. By doing this there is not only a betterment in quantity of services delivered but also there is an improvement in quality also.

**References:**

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2. Getting India's health care out of ICU on Sep 13 2012. Available from <http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/article3850103.ece> (last accessed on 27 november 2014)