

Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh
National University of Ireland, Galway

Summer Examination 2001

Diploma in Health Services Research

Paper 3

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Answer 1 question from each Section
45 minutes for each question

Use one answer book for *each question*

Time Allowed: 2 hours 15 minutes

Section A: Health Economics

- Q1. Is health care unique? In what ways, if any, does health care differ from conventional goods and services? What are the implications of these differences, if any exist, for governments?
- Q2. Health care analysts have sometimes interpreted the institutional features of the health care sector responses to various "special" characteristics of health care as a commodity. For example, both the agency relationship between the physician and the patient and the prevalence of not-for-profit organisations in the health care sector can be interpreted as institutional arrangements designed to reduce the incentives for health care workers to exploit asymmetries of information.

Identify two institutional changes or policies in Ireland today and discuss how their design reflects a recognition of some of the special features of health care as a commodity. The institutional changes or policies could be with respect to organisational forms in the health care sector, the relation among various organisations and professional groups, reimbursement/funding issues, health human resources, etc. Be specific about the institutional changes you are discussing.

(J. Stewart)

Section B: Health and Public Policy

- Q3. The department of Health and Children is in the process of preparing a new health strategy to replace "Shaping a Healthier Future" published in the mid 1990s. Imagine you are hired to consult in its preparation. What are the priority issues within the traditional health care sector and beyond it that should be considered in your opinion? Select two of these and discuss how you would set out strategic targets.
- Q4. Models of quality assurance can be helpful in evaluating both the process and output of a service. Discuss with examples, considering principles and models with which you are familiar.

(C. Kelleher)

Section C: Quality Assurance in Medicine

- Q5. Quality is variously described as meeting the customer expectations, and meeting specifications. Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of both definitions, and propose an appropriate definition for quality in the context of a health care service

OR

You have been appointed as the person with responsibility for accreditation of the quality system of a small healthcare related organisation. Outline how you would approach this task, paying special attention to the documentation requirements of the system.

(H. Grimes)

- Q6. The Health Strategy (1994) demands consumer quality and Technical quality throughout the health services. Elaborate on these two types of quality in the case of delivering a health promotion service. Illustrate your answer with relevant examples. What difficulties do you see in delivering a quality health promotion service?

(H. Grimes)

OR

Outline, using the provision of paediatric immunisation as an example, the opportunities and challenges of the implementation of quality assurance in the primary care setting.

(A. Murphy)