

## Understanding Governance

**What is the purpose of the chapter?**

**How does Chapter 3 connect to other chapters?**

1. The healthcare system in Singapore as a case study to demonstrate governance in action.

- Singapore's economic progress has made possible progress in our healthcare system and vice versa (contributions of system towards economy). Can explore the exporting of Singapore's healthcare service.

- Comparisons with British case study to show different approaches and measures of success.

- Relevance of healthcare sector as case study
- Impact of success in meeting needs of people on legitimacy of government. Healthcare as one of the most visible indicators of effective governance, issue that touches lives of people directly.
- Amount of resources allocated, long term planning involved.
- Healthcare policies are related to many policies in many other areas: economic development, urban planning, labor manpower, population planning etc.

- To demonstrate how policies evolve over time to meet changing needs. What are the key changes? What is the significance of these changes for understanding the role of governance?

- Singapore's healthcare system has been moving towards self-reliance: partly a result of increasing affluence, partly a result of belief in avoiding the trappings of a welfare-based system.

- Need to take into account growing realities in Singapore society: Differentiated healthcare (pay what you can afford) reflect increasing differences in socio-economic status

- Need to innovate: Community-based healthcare services can be seen as evidence of growing innovation in governance, and also an attempt to achieve a balance between self-reliant and welfare-based system.
  - Balancing act: Need to balance need of conserving resources and need of managing societal expectations.
  - Appreciation in context via comparison with Britain's system. How is the comparison done and what is the impact of the comparison?
    - Similarity in presentation lies in showing how have both systems evolved and met needs of people?
    - Difference in how self-reliance is positioned against a 'welfare'-based system. Importance of showing that difference is not that stark. Singapore's system is not entirely based on self-reliance nor is Britain's system entirely welfare-based.
  - Pros and cons of 'welfare system' need to be shown: welfare systems can work in some societies.
  - Long term causes and consequences of governmental decisions, e.g. the decision to adopt a welfare based system in Britain is partly the result of the country's long history of exposure to political ideologies that supported such a system; and once adopted, such a decision is difficult to reverse.
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**What do I already know about the workings and how would I assess the quality of the healthcare system in Singapore?**

**What do my students already know/what are my students' existing perceptions?**

1. What are my personal experiences and opinions about the healthcare system in Singapore? How will I assess the quality of the system?

2. How would I find out my students perceptions of the system?

- Key indicators to measure effectiveness of healthcare systems. The first is Access: Equitability, Affordability; the second is Quality: Facilities, Manpower, Research capabilities, Health education. Try to maintain a balance between the two, as the latter is often neglected because the improvements are less visible and tend to evoke less emotive responses from the public.

- Engage personal experiences and stories that students may have to share about their own or known encounters with health services.

### **What are the different ways through which to develop an appreciation of the topic?**

1. What is my and the students' stake in the issue? Why does healthcare matter to me/them?

2. How is healthcare connected to other social issues?

- Engaging personal experiences and stories may be a useful avenue as students' families and friends may have rich encounters to share, which would help bring the learning alive.

- See connections with governance above. Healthcare policies are related to many policies in many other areas: economic development, urban planning, labor manpower, population planning etc.

- What other foreign case studies may be used to provide more insights?
- America: tussle between public and private healthcare, recent healthcare reforms.
- Vietnam/China: healthcare reform in developing countries with close links to Singapore.

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