



Taking action to improve health for all

## Advancing Integrated Primary Health Care in Albania

A Model for Sustainable and People-Centered Systems



## **Objectives**

As Albania works toward achieving universal health coverage and building a more resilient health system, our study focused on understanding how its primary health care system has evolved. We set out with four key objectives:

- Evaluate Albania's efforts to reorganize and strengthen primary health care
- (PHC)Assess the integration of health and social care within PHC structures
- Benchmark Albania's progress against the WHO Operational Framework for Primary Health Care
- Identify gaps and opportunities for sustainable PHC transformation





Main Points:

**3812** total PHC institutions

- 412 Health Centers
- 3400+ Health Posts (rural network)

33% of Health Centers (136/412) have only 1 GP

24 Health Centers lack a doctor, served remotely

906 Health Posts serve fewer than 199 residents

**817** Health Posts serve between 200–500 residents

70% of Health Centers report no psychologist or social worker

Digital e-referral system piloted but no national EHR at PHC level

Average doctor-to-population ratio:

1 doctor per **1859** inhabitants

Average nurse-to-population ratio:

1 nurse per 470 inhabitants



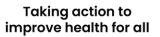


### Methodology

#### Applied a mixed-methods approach

- Policy analysis of national health strategies and legal frameworks
- Stakeholder interviews with health managers, policymakers, and healthcare workers
- Data mapping of healthcare infrastructure, workforce distribution, and service utilization
- Case studies of Family Medicine Health Centers, Health Centers, and Social Health Centers
- Benchmarking Albania's reforms with WHO standards for peoplecentered health systems







## **RESULTS**



#### **Emerging Innovations & Challenges**

#### **Early Innovations and Remaining Challenges**

- Digital health systems piloted: e-referrals, early electronic health records
- · Workforce imbalances persist, especially in rural areas
- Underutilization of nurses in community care and preventive services
- Financial sustainability and clear performance-based funding models still evolving





#### System Redesign & Service Integration

#### Primary Health Care System Redesign in Albania

- 1. Albania has reorganized PHC into a tiered network:
- Family Medicine Health Centers
- Health Centers
- Health Posts
- 2. Social Health Centers introduced to provide integrated

health and social services for vulnerable populations





## **Discussion & Impact**

- Albania offers a real-world example of PHC transformation in a resource-constrained setting
- Integration of health and social services shows potential for improving equity and accessibility
- Successes linked to strong policy alignment, early community engagement, and gradual adoption of technology
- Key challenges remain: workforce capacity, rural service access, and full implementation of digital infrastructure
- Albania's experience provides evidence-based recommendations for other countries pursuing PHC reforms to achieve universal health coverage



# THANK YOU



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