

National Health Policy, 2019 (2076 BS)

- The National Health Policy (NHP) is the overarching framework that guides the development and implementation of all health-related programs and strategies in Nepal. The latest version was introduced in 2019 to align the health sector with Nepal's new federal structure and the constitutional guarantee of health as a fundamental right.
- **Vision:**

To ensure all citizens are able to live a healthy and productive life.
- **Mission:**

To ensure citizens' fundamental right to health by developing a just, effective, and responsive health system.
- **Goal:**

To ensure all citizens have access to and utilize quality health services, thereby contributing to their overall well-being and the nation's prosperity.
- **Key Objectives and Strategies:**
- The policy is built around several key pillars designed to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC).
- **Alignment with Federalism:**
 - Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the federal, provincial, and local governments in delivering health services.
 - Empowering local levels to manage basic health services, while provincial and federal governments handle specialized care and policy-making.
- **Universal Health Coverage (UHC):**
 - Making quality health services accessible and affordable for everyone, without financial hardship.
 - Strengthening and expanding the **National Health Insurance Program** to cover all citizens.
 - Ensuring the availability of **free basic health services** at local health facilities as guaranteed by the constitution.

- **Quality of Care:**
 - Developing and enforcing minimum service standards for all health facilities (public and private).
 - Establishing a national accreditation system to certify the quality of health institutions.
 - Promoting evidence-based medicine and standard treatment guidelines (STGs).
- **Human Resources for Health (HRH):**
 - Ensuring an adequate supply of skilled and motivated health workers at all levels.
 - Improving the training, deployment, and retention of health professionals, especially in rural and remote areas.
- **Availability of Essential Medicines and Technologies:**
 - Ensuring a consistent supply of **safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines**, vaccines, and health technologies at all health facilities.
 - Strengthening the national supply chain and logistics management system.
- **Strengthening Regulatory Bodies:**
 - Enhancing the capacity and autonomy of regulatory bodies like the Department of Drug Administration (DDA), Nepal Medical Council (NMC), and Nepal Pharmacy Council (NPC) to ensure quality and accountability.

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● **2. National Drug Policy, 1995 (2051 BS)**

- The National Drug Policy (NDP) is a specialized, thematic policy that focuses exclusively on the pharmaceutical sector. It was formulated to implement the principles of the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Essential Medicines Concept. Its primary aim is to ensure the rational use of safe, effective, and quality drugs at affordable prices for all citizens.
- **Main Goal:**

To ensure the availability and accessibility of safe, effective, and quality drugs to all citizens and to promote their rational use.
- **Key Objectives and Components:**
- **Selection of Essential Medicines:**

- To prepare and periodically update a **National List of Essential Medicines** based on the country's prevalent diseases, scientific evidence, and cost-effectiveness. This list guides public procurement and health insurance reimbursement.
- **Quality Assurance:**
 - To ensure that all drugs available in the country (both locally produced and imported) meet established quality standards.
 - This is achieved by enforcing **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)**, strengthening the capacity of the **National Medicines Laboratory (NML)**, and improving post-marketing surveillance.
- **Rational Use of Drugs (RUD):**
 - To promote the appropriate use of medicines by health professionals and consumers.
 - Strategies include: promoting prescription by **generic name (non-proprietary name)**, developing and implementing Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs), and controlling the misuse and overuse of antibiotics to combat **Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)**.
- **Local Production and Self-Reliance:**
 - To encourage and support domestic pharmaceutical industries to become self-reliant in producing essential medicines, thereby reducing dependence on imports.
- **Drug Pricing and Affordability:**
 - To make essential medicines affordable to the general public by implementing appropriate drug pricing control mechanisms.
- **Drug Procurement and Distribution:**
 - To establish an efficient and transparent system for procuring and distributing drugs, especially within the public health system, to ensure they reach the last mile.
- **Human Resource Development:**
 - To develop sufficient skilled human resources (pharmacists, pharmaceutical assistants) for the pharmaceutical sector, from industry to hospital and community pharmacies.
- **Drug Information and Pharmacovigilance:**

- To provide unbiased and accurate drug information to health professionals and the public.
- To establish a national **pharmacovigilance system** to monitor and manage Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs).
- **Traditional Medicines:**
 - To promote the scientific evaluation and regulation of traditional medicine systems like Ayurveda to ensure their safety and efficacy.
- **Legal Framework:**
 - To continuously update the **Drug Act** and related regulations to address emerging challenges in the pharmaceutical sector.

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● **Relationship and Synergy between NHP and NDP**

- The two policies are intrinsically linked and work in harmony.
- **Hierarchy:** The **National Health Policy (NHP)** is the **umbrella policy** for the entire health sector. The **National Drug Policy (NDP)** is a **thematic, specialized policy** that provides the detailed framework to achieve the medicine-related goals set out by the NHP.
- **Interdependence:** The success of the NHP is heavily dependent on the successful implementation of the NDP. For example:
 - The NHP's goal of **Universal Health Coverage** cannot be achieved without the NDP's objective of ensuring **affordable and available essential medicines**.
 - The NHP's emphasis on **quality of care** is directly supported by the NDP's focus on **quality assurance** and the **rational use of drugs**.
 - The NHP's strategy to strengthen regulatory bodies directly empowers the DDA to better implement the provisions of the NDP.