

## **5th Edition of Bringing Evidence to Public Health Policy (EPHP 2026): Asia Pacific Dialogue on Future-Focused Health Systems in a Changing Context**

The conference will facilitate dialogue on the theme “Future-Focused Health Systems in a Changing Context.” While derived from the Health Systems Research Symposium 2026 ([HSR2026](#)), the EPHP theme will bring a sharp focus to regional and national experiences, fostering exchange and generating insights to inform health system reform and research in India and the Asia Pacific region.

### **Conference sub-themes**

Health systems in the Asia-Pacific region, including India, face persistent disruptions, from border conflicts and humanitarian crises, to climate shocks, digital transformation, pandemics and shifting geopolitical alignments. These are compounded by structural inequities, including caste and ethnic discrimination, gender inequalities, precarious labour, and widening socioeconomic disparities, undermining health system performance and equity. To respond, health systems must move beyond mere resilience strategies to bold, forward-looking approaches, grounded in adaptive leadership, system transformation, local knowledge and a commitment to justice. The following sub-themes offer an independent yet interconnected consideration of 'how' such future-focused health systems transformation may be achieved.

***Politics and Polycrisis:*** *Health systems in the Asia-Pacific region grapple with multiple disease burdens, including endemic and emerging infectious diseases, pandemic risks, and rising NCDs, creating a polycrisis situation. Addressing these overlapping pressures requires responsive political leadership, inclusive governance, and financing models that build resilient, equitable, and future-ready health systems. We welcome submissions that explore:*

- *Rethinking governance and political leadership in a multipolar Asia-Pacific;*
- *Navigating shifting global and regional health governance amid overlapping crises;*
- *Protecting neutrality and care continuum while governing health systems in fragile and politically contested settings;*
- *Redesigning sustainable health financing architectures amid donor fragmentation and shifting conditionalities;*
- *Strengthening regional health diplomacy, collective negotiation capacity, accountability, and solidarity across the Asia-Pacific;*
- *Regulating corporate power and addressing commercial determinants of health;*
- *Advancing regional leadership and equitable power shifts in global health;*
- *Decolonizing global health governance, financing, and priority-setting in diverse regional contexts.*

***Plurality and Partnerships:*** *Health systems in the region are shaped by a diverse ecosystem of public, private, informal, and community actors, pluralistic care traditions, and expanding corporate influence. While this plurality presents challenges for equity and accountability, it also offers opportunities to build inclusive, people-centred, responsive and resilient health systems. This sub-theme explores how*

*embracing this plurality of actors, sectors, and care modalities can strengthen health systems' performance, responsiveness, inclusion and equity"*

- *Partnerships with frontline actors like traditional healers, community health workers, informal providers, care workers, small private providers and pharmacies;*
- *Engaging non-traditional actors: private sector, religious leaders, community-based organizations, climate activists, technology firms and food traders;*
- *Commercial determinants and environmental pressures that compound vulnerabilities and demand regulatory action;*
- *Regulation of the commercial sector and strengthening the public-private ecosystem;*
- *Systems thinking to situate health systems within societal changes like urban design, education, and food systems;*
- *Recognizing people and communities as active agents in health system transformation and improving responsiveness to their needs and expectations.*

**Platforms and Participation:** *Platforms are the structural foundations of modern health systems, encompassing physical infrastructure, digital technologies, institutional frameworks and the social contracts linking communities, governments and health actors. Across the Asia-Pacific, digital technologies are rapidly transforming health systems. While this holds the potential to improve access and responsiveness, it also raises the risks of exclusion, bias, data privacy, digital harm, and loss of public trust. At the same time, conventional service platforms like hospitals and primary health care networks face growing demands for integration, flexibility, and people-centeredness. Future-focused health systems should ensure that digital, physical, and social platforms support health and well-being, strengthen social contracts, and bridge knowledge with action. This sub-theme explores how platforms shape health system performance and resilience, and equitable access to care.*

- *Governance of digital health and AI to ensure ethical, equitable and accountable use;*
- *Ethical use of AI in HPSR, including standards for evidence, transparency and participation;*
- *Digital well-being, prevention of digital harm, and tackling digital ;*
- *Integrating service delivery platforms across primary health care, hospitals, home care, and emergency response;*
- *Social contracts as platforms for inclusion, trust and shared responsibility;*
- *Data sovereignty, privacy and citizen empowerment in digital health ecosystems;*
- *Epistemic justice, evidence to action, and navigating fragmentation across platforms.*

**Pathways and Planet:** *Countries in the Asia-Pacific region face severe impacts of the climate crisis, including extreme weather events, air pollution, food insecurity, and disease outbreaks. These ecological risks intersect with poverty, migration, unplanned urbanization and social inequalities, disproportionately affecting the marginalized populations. Health system transformation requires engaging with these planetary realities to integrate climate justice in health governance and financing.*

- *Integrating climate resilience and sustainability into health governance and service delivery;*
- *Designing and implementing One Health approaches through cross-sectoral coordination;*
- *Strengthening core health systems functions, such as surveillance, risk communication, and supply chain resilience;*
- *Health promotion models that recast human health within planetary health and intergenerational equity;*

- *Reimagining metrics, performance frameworks, and accountability ecosystems to capture equity and resilience;*
- *Exploring post-SDG futures for health and planetary wellbeing;*
- *Interrogating the evolving role of HPSR in a changing world.*