

We can improve!

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Madam, a visit to the pediatrician's OPD can be enlightening! Most of the patients we see are those of viral flu, diarrhoea, typhoid, measles, chicken pox, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis, and not to miss polio whose 59 alarming cases were detected in the year 2014, which has put a ban on Pakistanis from travelling abroad. All diseases are preventable!

Most of the vaccines pertaining to the above diseases are supplied by the Pakistan government free of cost at Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI)¹ centers. But what are the hurdles that prevent the little ones of our country from being immunized? Staff is ample but are the vaccinators present on duty? They are punctual during polio or measles programme! What makes their punctuality possible? Even with this punctuality during these programmes measles outbreak and polio cases are present.

I feel stressed over simultaneous programs, absentees,

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and employment of non-trained staff with political affiliation. Inefficacy of vaccines used due to lack of cold chain maintainance due to power failure. Children miss their dose mainly due to internal displacement, besides negative propaganda from people unrelated to medical fields regarding vaccination has further led to refusal from parents side.

The increasing frequency of these preventable diseases has taken an alarming scenario. The infrastructure of our government organizations has totally crumbled. Its revival shows no chance.

Through this letter I suggest that these orphaned institutions need privatization or adoption by NGOs. These guardian organizations should pay the staff and make them work and should use no ulterior motives through these programs other than just immunization.

References

1. Owais A, Khowaja AR, Ali SA, Zaidi AK. Pakistan's expanded programme on immunization: an overview in the context of polio eradication and strategies for improving coverage. *Vaccine* 2013; 31: 3313-9. doi: 10.1016/j.vaccine.2013.05.015. Epub 2013 May 22.