

Community participation in health: The challenge in Chile La participación social en salud: El desafío de Chile

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Health care reforms implemented in Latin America and the Caribbean over the last 20 years have viewed community participation as a system-wide component. Nonetheless, these reform efforts have yet to break through the conceptual and operational barriers holding back the development and expansion of community participation. In Chile, changes introduced to the health care system are far from achieving any real participation from the community. Therefore, the consumer's role needs to be redefined from merely controlling the parts, to reaching across the whole system in a way that consumer input might identify and quickly correct any possible shortcomings in the health system's design, as well as its operations. With this in mind, the main challenges are to strengthen coordination among the various promotion and participation commitments, as well as community control, and to generate data and other evidence to assess the impact of community participation in health strategies.