



THE SOCIAL ORIENTATION OF HEALTHCARE MODERNIZATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15382019>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 28th April 2025

Accepted: 30th April 2025

Published: 10th May 2025

KEYWORDS

medicine, healthcare, Uzbekistan, reforms, digitalization, social policy, public health, telemedicine, medical education.

ABSTRACT

This article examines the current directions of transformation in the healthcare system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, including institutional reforms, digitalization, infrastructure modernization, and the development of human capital. Special attention is given to the social impact of these transformations in the context of improving population well-being and strengthening public health.

Medicine, as a key component of the state's social policy, reflects the level of societal development and the efficiency of public administration mechanisms. Within the framework of building a "New Uzbekistan," which is centered on the individual, public health protection issues have acquired strategic importance. Since 2017, Uzbekistan has been implementing a comprehensive healthcare reform aimed at transitioning from an administrative-bureaucratic model to a flexible system focused on the quality and accessibility of medical services.

1. Legal Framework for Reforms

The foundation for healthcare modernization was laid by the following documents:

- Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated December 7, 2018, No. UP-5590 "On comprehensive measures for radically improving the healthcare system of the Republic of Uzbekistan";
- Uzbekistan's Healthcare Development Strategy until 2030;
- The new edition of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Protection of Citizens' Health" (2021).

These documents have set a course for strengthening preventive medicine, decentralizing management, and introducing market mechanisms in healthcare financing.

2. Digitalization of Healthcare

One of the priority directions is the digital transformation of the sector. The "E-Healthcare" and "Digital Uzbekistan – 2030" programs include:

- implementation of electronic medical records and databases;
- development of telemedicine platforms;

- online consultations and e-prescriptions;
- integration of AI solutions into diagnostics and treatment planning.

Digitalization fosters transparency, reduces bureaucratic procedures, and broadens public access to quality medical services.

3. Development of Medical Infrastructure

A significant step forward was the construction and modernization of healthcare facilities. Between 2017 and 2024, over 1,500 medical facilities were built or renovated, including:

- multi-profile hospitals;
- perinatal and cardiology centers;
- oncology and surgical complexes;
- transplantology clinics.

Special attention is being paid to rural medicine and outpatient clinics, helping to eliminate the urban-rural healthcare gap.

4. Human Resources and Medical Education

Medical training is being reformed in line with international standards:

- simulation technologies are being introduced;
- branches of foreign medical universities (from South Korea, India, Russia) are expanding;
- an Agency for the Development of Medical Education and Science was established in 2023.

The state support program for young doctors, especially in the regions, provides housing benefits, bonuses, and professional retraining.

5. Modern Reforms in Medical Education

As part of the ongoing healthcare transformation, improving medical personnel training has become vital. A landmark step was the Presidential Resolution of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated January 22, 2024, No. PP-38 "On additional measures to deepen reforms in the healthcare sector."

This resolution launched a pilot project to introduce World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) standards at Tashkent Medical Academy from the 2024/2025 academic year. This reflects Uzbekistan's aspiration to integrate into the global educational space and to train highly qualified personnel capable of addressing modern healthcare challenges.

Reform goals include:

- improvement of medical education;
- professional retraining and advanced training;
- human resource development;
- implementation of modern curricula based on international standards.

The project is funded by the extra-budgetary resources of Tashkent Medical Academy, with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation responsible for implementation.

Key measures include:

- the introduction of international curricula and standards into vocational education;
- the establishment of a Nursing Academy at the Chilanzar Public Health Technical School named after Abu Ali ibn Sina;
- the transition to a differentiated two- or three-year training system in public health colleges.

These initiatives aim to enhance the quality of medical personnel training and ensure the sustainable development of medical education in accordance with international standards of quality and effectiveness.

New Institutional Transformations: Establishment of Tashkent State Medical University

One of the most significant developments in medical education was the adoption of Presidential Resolution No. PP-149 dated April 22, 2025, "On measures to improve the system of medical personnel training," establishing Tashkent State Medical University.

This university aims to transform medical training in line with international standards. It was formed by merging three leading institutions:

- Tashkent Medical Academy;
- Tashkent Pediatric Medical Institute;
- Tashkent State Dental Institute.

The university's primary goals include:

- development of a modern scientific-educational environment;
- implementation of clinic-oriented training programs;
- integration of fundamental and applied medicine;
- strengthening of research and teaching potential through academic autonomy and international partnerships.

The new university structure includes:

- an Institute of Medical Scientific and Innovative Research;
- three clinics based on the merged institutions' clinical facilities;
- academic lyceums (Nos. 1, 2, and 3) and branches in Termez and Chirchik.

Infrastructure development is a key priority. A new academic complex for 5,000 students is planned, featuring an IT center, simulation center, library, experimental laboratory, and publishing house, funded by the Korea EDCF fund.

The education model will be based on a competency-based approach, clinical orientation, extensive use of simulation technologies, and international programs, including instruction in English.

The university is set to become a flagship of higher medical education in Uzbekistan, delivering practice-oriented and research-driven physician training and contributing to the export of educational services.

6. International Cooperation

Uzbekistan is actively integrating into the global medical community:

- agreements have been signed with WHO, GAVI, KOICA;
- experience-sharing programs with clinics in Germany, Japan, and Turkey are underway;
- joint research is being conducted in oncology, virology, and immunology.

This cooperation facilitates the transfer of advanced technologies and enhances the quality of healthcare services.

7. Social Impact of Medical Reforms

The effectiveness of healthcare reforms is evident in:

- reduced maternal and infant mortality;
- increased life expectancy (from 71.2 years in 2016 to 74.3 in 2023);
- improved immunization coverage;
- greater access to specialized care.

Furthermore, public awareness regarding hygiene, disease prevention, and healthy lifestyles has increased. These reforms have not only medical but also deep humanitarian effects, contributing to social stability.

The development of healthcare in the Republic of Uzbekistan is a strategic national priority. The ongoing reforms reflect the integration of international experience, a human-centered approach, and sustainable social development. The healthcare system is becoming not only a mechanism for treatment but also a key institution of social support, equality, and justice.

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