

Waste sorting can generate revenues, jobs

Social Desk

Humans are dealing devastating blows to the environment through their harmful activities such as polluting the air and contaminating the soil which result in global warming and climate change.

Plastic bags that we use on a daily basis are among major environmental pollutants. Plastic bags are difficult and costly to recycle and most end up on landfill sites where they take hundreds of years to degrade naturally. They break down into tiny toxic particles that contaminate the soil and waterways and enter the food chain when animals accidentally ingest them.

Household waste also harms the environment. Sorting rubbish can help ensure that hazardous substances are disposed of safely. By separating different materials, most of them can also be recycled into new products.

Hamid Reza Panahandeh, who is an environmental activist, says sorting household waste can generate huge revenues and reduce environmental pollution.

"The value of our country's waste in one year amounts to €4 billion. Household waste can enter the recycling process. For example metals can be recycled and converted into new metal products. Plastics can turn into granules. Wet waste can be converted into compost and fruit peels can be processed for feeding livestock," he said.

Dry waste includes items such as bottles, cans, clothing, plastic, wood, glass, metals and paper. Wet waste pertains to all items that are organic like food items, soiled food wrappers, hygiene products, yard waste, tissues and paper towels, as well as any other soiled item



● thehindu.com

that would contaminate the recyclables. Panahandeh added that the recycling industry can generate 120,000 jobs in the country.

He said environmental issues should be pushed to the forefront calling on the government to raise public awareness about threats

posed to the environment. The environmental activist said apart from awareness, the carrot and stick approach can be useful.

"To resolve environmental problems a combination of awareness, reward and punishment are effective. If people had to pay for the plastic bags, they would

use them several times. Free services could also be offered to households that sort waste."

The segregation of wet and dry waste plays a major role in promoting a more sustainable environment and reducing the adverse impacts of waste on our planet.

Family doctors: Heart of healthcare systems

By Ebrahim Nouri Goushki
Family medicine specialist

Family physicians play a vital role in a nation's healthcare system as they serve as the primary point of contact for individuals seeking medical care. They establish long-term relationships with their patients, providing continuous and comprehensive care throughout their lives. This enables doctors to have a deep understanding of their patients' medical history, lifestyle, and social conditions, allowing for personalized care and support. In addition to physical

health, family doctors adopt a holistic approach, considering patients' emotional, social, and psychological well-being. They prioritize preventive care, early disease detection, and screenings to promote overall health and prevent chronic illnesses. Moreover, family physicians act as the central coordinators for healthcare needs within the community, ensuring efficient care delivery. They serve as crucial collaborators within the healthcare system, working alongside specialists and hospitals to optimize patient care and prevent redundant services. They fulfill the roles of

advocates and educators within their communities, guiding individuals through the complexities of the healthcare system and facilitating access to necessary resources. Through patient education, family physicians empower individuals to effectively manage chronic conditions, make healthy lifestyle choices, and prioritize disease prevention. Recognized as the backbone of healthcare, family doctors possess a distinctive perspective on patients' health challenges and deliver comprehensive care that aligns with the principles of primary healthcare.

By emphasizing preven-

tive healthcare and social support, it is essential to harness the existing pool of healthcare professionals, particularly family physicians, to enhance the provision of care and prevention strategies. Their unwavering dedication, compassionate approach, and expert knowledge establish them as the essential lifeline of healthcare, offering trustworthy support to patients and their families.

Family physicians, known by various names such as general practitioners and primary consultants, are called to actively participate in preventive and primary healthcare, transcending their traditional

roles as supervisors and gateways to secondary services.

Family physicians, more than any other healthcare providers, assume a uniquely pivotal role as stewards of the system. Despite limitations within the healthcare system, such as the inability to address health disparities and ensure timely allocation of financial resources, family physicians remain dedicated to public health, advocating for comprehensive care.

Family physicians play a vital role in providing primary and ongoing healthcare to families, addressing a wide range of physical, mental, and social issues. In Iran, the implementation of a network expansion plan aligned with the principles of Primary Health Care (PHC) in rural areas has garnered international recognition and pride within the country's healthcare system for over 38 years. Since 2004, a free insurance plan, coupled with a family doctor and referral system, has been established for villagers, nomadic areas, and small cities with populations below 20,000, aiming to enhance the well-being of rural communities.

Recognizing the program's weaknesses and the mixed success of the urban version in Fars and Mazandaran provinces, national and international experts propose a model that builds upon the existing rural and urban packages. The suggested approach involves implementing a family medicine program and referral system with a team-oriented approach throughout the entire country, incorporating improvements based on the experiences and

challenges faced in both rural and urban settings. By adopting a unified approach, the goal is to promote equitable healthcare delivery across Iran's diverse regions.

The strategic principles followed in this model are:

- 1 A shift is being made from a family-centered approach in healthcare to a community-centered approach. A family medical team will now take on comprehensive duties under the supervision of a family physician, working in comprehensive health service centers and neighborhood healthcare facilities.
- 2 The existing healthcare networks and workforce will be maintained, while a new infrastructure similar to the village healthcare house will be established in cities. This infrastructure aims to provide active services following the same model as the village setup.
- 3 Private sector doctors will be utilized as co-workers of family doctors, providing assistance in patient treatment. These doctors will not replace family doctors but will work alongside them.
- 4 A level one to two referral system, allowing general practitioners to freely refer patients to specialists anywhere in Iran, will be implemented.
- 5 The family medicine program will adopt a flow-oriented health information technology management system, streamlining the implementation processes through electronic health records.
- 6 The primary focus is on integrating and ensuring comprehensive health processes rather than a centralized organization.

Iran facilitating child adoption process



● BORNANEWS

Social Desk

More than 38,000 Iranian families have applied for adopting children over the past three years amid efforts by Iran's Welfare Organization to facilitate the process of child adoption.

"A total of 9,372 families applied for child adoption in the year to March 20, 2023. With regards to the number of families that had applied for child adoption over the past three years, the number of total applicants surpassed 38,000," Saeed Babaei, an official with the Welfare Organization, told IRNA.

He added that about 6,000 of these families have adopted children in the last three years. The official said the organization is making it easier for families to adopt children.

Babaei noted that most child adoption applications pertained to the provinces of Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Isfahan, Mazandaran and Kerman respectively.

Weight loss drugs can lead to muscle loss



● BIGSTOCK

Weight loss drugs have soared in popularity in the past year, helping some lose dramatic amounts of weight — but not all that weight is fat.

Some of that is actually lean mass, which is everything in the body that isn't fat, including your bones, organs and, importantly, muscle, NBC News wrote.

"When we look at weight reduction from any intervention, about one-third of the weight we lose tends to be lean mass, and that can be problematic," said Dr. Jaime Almandoz, an associate professor of internal medicine in the Division of Endocrinology at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. That lean mass loss is generally from muscle. "Lean mass is healthier and associated with better metabolism, so when we lose lean mass, we may lose some of that function."

The more muscle mass a person has, the better the resting metabolic rate, or the number of calories a person burns at rest. When a person loses muscle mass, the resting metabolic rate decreases, too.



● YJC