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How do health systems and health contribute to the sustainable development goals?

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While there is considerable research and policy interest into how factors outside the health system (i.e. social determinants) influence health outcomes, there has historically been less interest in how health and health systems affect other economic and societal objectives. Such evidence can be useful to health policymakers making the case for investing in health systems to demonstrate that health systems do more than just improve health. The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies has put together a special issue of the journal *Health Policy* to explore the evidence on how health and health systems advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provides a helpful conceptual framework for considering economic and societal objectives. The articles each consider a particular SDG and review relevant literature with an emphasis on causal studies to explore the ways in which health and health systems have causal effects on key societal objectives such as poverty reduction, gender equality, climate change, and responsible consumption. In this presentation we will provide a summary of the findings from the special issue, highlighting areas with the strongest (and weakest) evidence and discuss how this work can be factored into budget negotiations and decisions about resource allocation.