

# A model of sustainable health care

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What might a sustainable social health care enterprise look like as a mode of public health care delivery? Research from Thailand seeks to answer that question in the *International Journal of Productivity and Quality Management*.

Nuttasorn Ketprapakorn of the School of Business at the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce and Sooksan Kantabutra of Center for Research on Sustainable Leadership in the College of Management at Mahidol University, both in Bangkok, explain that while there are many concepts covered in the research literature on [social enterprise](#) and sustainable enterprise little is found by way of theoretical models in this area. Researchers and practitioners alike need a model that allows this area to be developed.

Specifically, the team points out that the United Nations reported in 2020 that [non-communicable diseases](#) (NCDs) account for some 41 million deaths annually, almost three-quarters of all deaths. As such, the team has focused on exploring the role of a sustainable social [health care](#) enterprise in pursuing good health and well-being for all to reduce these figures. A model of sustainable social health care should help considerably in this regard.

The team has used a sociological research approach known as grounded theory to study the issues. They took Theptarin Hospital as a useful case study through which to develop their theoretical model of a sustainable health care enterprise. Theptarin is a small hospital founded in 1985 that has 80 in-patient beds. It is well known for its research into diabetes and its training in this area of medicine. Earlier work demonstrates that it is a sustainable health care enterprise. The team also points out that it has previously been described as meeting 15 of the 19 sustainable leadership elements.

The team developed a concept through their work that suggests that a health care enterprise might be sustainable if it incorporates five key factors: inspiring a social vision, developing a widely shared organizational culture, creating relevant knowledge, generating a national momentum, and having an international impact. Their study has implications for management and the future development of research in

this area beyond the [developing world](#).

**More information:** Sooksan Kantabutra et al, Toward a sustainable social healthcare enterprise development model, *International Journal of Productivity and Quality Management* (2022). [DOI: 10.1504/IJPQM.2022.10046310](#)

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