

**Sixth Intergovernmental Group of Experts on**

**Consumer Law and Policy**

**18-19 July 2022**

**Room XVII, Palais des Nations, Geneva**

**Consumer Protection in the Provision of Health Services**

*Presentation*

*UNCTAD*



INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
**Consumer protection law and policy**

18 - 19 July 2022, Palais des Nations





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# Consumer protection in the provision of health services: Robin Simpson, UNCTAD

Roundtable, Monday, 18 July 2022  
1115-1300, Room XVII, Palais des Nations,  
UN, Geneva.





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**Consumer protection law and policy**

# Social Infrastructure for Health

- Comprehensive social protection
- Finance & affordability
- Identity & eligibility
- Integration of informal sector workers
- Development of eHealth & telemedicine



## **Comprehensive protection in health**

*Health care and financial support during non-work;*

Physical comprehensiveness of service: decentralisation & multiservice centres. Important role for eHealth.

Income support during pandemics and other emergencies: from temporary to permanent.

Integration of refugees and migrant workers into social protection services: Refugees: cost sharing; migrant workers: transborder rights.



Integration of informal sectors: 40% of global population have no social protection.



## Financing & affordability

Network services and public health: indirect cost reduction for health services by addressing social determinants of health.

The 'Poor pay more' syndrome.

Need to mitigate levels of Out-of-Pocket Spending (OOPS):

40% of health spending in Low Income Countries.

Need to break out of OOPS / donor funding syndrome.



Medicines & OOPS: Can consumers outside formal systems benefit from generic substitution?



# eHealth

Definitions and limitations of eHealth. Innovation and risk.

Cheaper and better internet access. Competition and consumer protection.

Coverage gap, usage gap & consumption gap.

eHealth in a decentralised infrastructure. Digital technology as a virtuous circle.

Data as a public good



## **Consumers should not have to be digital experts to have access to their rights:**

Technological neutrality and entitlement to service: 'dematerialisation' & the digital trap. Worldwide concerns.

Service providers should anticipate some consumers' techno-phobia and consumers should be able to get help.







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# Thank you

[robinpsimpson@gmail.com](mailto:robinpsimpson@gmail.com)

