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UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - General Comment No. 14: The Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (2000)

General Comment No. 14 is an explanatory note on the necessary elements for the fulfillment of the right to the highest attainable standard of health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights).

[General Comment No. 14](#) of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is an explanatory note on the necessary elements for the fulfillment of the right to the highest attainable standard of health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights).

The comment recognizes the close relation of the right to health with other fundamental human rights. The analysis is divided into five sections starting with an explanation of key terms and concepts relating to the notion of health and being healthy. This is followed by details of States parties' obligations, violations, implementation at the national level, and the obligations of non-state actors. The right to health can be guaranteed by addressing elements of *availability*, *accessibility*, *acceptability* and *quality*, while ensuring non-discriminatory and gender-based approach. State parties to the Covenant have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the right to health. Regardless of their individual capacities, State parties always have a core obligation to ensure the satisfaction of, at the very least, minimum essential levels of the right. That is, aside from the economic situation of each country, all States have the obligation to provide essential primary health care for all their population.

In relation to women and the right to health, the explanatory note notes the need for States to "undertake preventive, promotive and remedial action to shield women from the impact of harmful traditional cultural practices and norms that deny them their full reproductive rights."