

**Interdisciplinary Research and Training  
for Improving Access to and Use of Medicines in China**

**Proposal submitted to the Harvard China Fund by**

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**In partnership with**

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**March 10, 2008**

## **Abstract**

China faces major challenges in providing affordable access to essential medicines for its 1.3 billion people, leading to preventable morbidity and mortality, episodes of impoverishing illness, and large-scale losses to the health system. Fortunately, government policy is rapidly expanding health care and medicines coverage through the new urban and rural health insurance schemes. To achieve their potential, these systems will require appropriate conceptual frameworks and specific technical skills to address medicines policy questions with applied research, using routine and ad-hoc data.

Together with colleagues at Xuanwu Hospital, Capital University of Medical Sciences, the Beijing Public Health Insurance Committee (in charge of the urban scheme in the capital), the Ministry of Health's Division of Cooperative Medical Schemes, its Center for the Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme, and the China Health Economics Institute (in charge of rural health insurance development), and WHO China, we propose to expand the novel Medicines and Insurance Coverage (MedIC) Initiative to China. MedIC is an interdisciplinary global partnership between universities and insurance systems focused on strengthening capacity for medicines policy decision making in health care organizations and insurance schemes, and engaging in focused research on policies to improve medicines access and use.

In the 12-month project, we propose to (1) conduct contextual research on medicines financing in the urban and rural health systems in China; (2) develop and implement the first MedIC Course on Medicines Policy Analysis in the Beijing urban health system; (3) develop and plan MedIC Courses in the New Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme; and (4) build lasting Harvard-China institutional relationships. This project will build on the successful 2007 MedIC Course in Manila attended by key officials from our Chinese partner institutions and form the basis for long-term collaborative research.