Foreword

Health at a Glance: Asia/Pacific 2012 presents the latest comparable data and trends on key aspects of health and health systems in selected Asia/Pacific countries and economies. The indicators provide a concise and quantitative overview of health status, determinants of health, health care resources and utilization, and health expenditure and financing in the region.

This publication has been jointly prepared by the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific (WPRO), the WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia (SEARO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the OECD/Korea Policy Centre. The WHO regional offices validated data and charts and provided editorial input for the chapter on quality of care.

Countries in the Asia/Pacific region are diverse, and their health issues and health systems often differ. Being able to compare health system performance across countries can provide new ideas, inspire policy makers to consider new approaches, and draw attention to good practices in other countries.

We are particularly delighted to include a chapter on the quality of care in the region. The measurement and improvement of quality of care has become a crucial element of health system governance worldwide, with industrialised and transition countries alike developing new methods and policies. We have some way to go before we can reliably measure the quality of care across a broad range of services, but the first small steps in this publication are significant. We look forward to including more data on the quality of care in subsequent editions.

This report offers a comprehensive and user-friendly framework to inform the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of health care systems, and to promote evidence-based health policy making in the region. We hope you find it useful.

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