



KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (KNUST)

Policy Dialogue on Strategic Health Purchasing in Ghana

Organized in partnership with Strategic Purchasing Africa Resource Center (SPARC)

Concept note

Background

Strategic Health Purchasing is critical for the achievement of universal health coverage which is a target of the third Sustainable development goal. Healthcare purchasing is strategic if pooled funds allocated to providers for the purchasing of healthcare are linked to provider performance. Strategic health purchasing then is an important tool to the achievement of efficiency gains, equitable distribution of resources and control of cost increment. The three functions of strategic health purchasing are: what to purchase, from whom to purchase, and how to purchase.

Ghana has fairly pursued strategic purchasing in providing healthcare to its population. Over the years Ghana has allocated significant resources to the provision of healthcare services needed to treat diseases that commonly affects the population. Attention has been on the diseases that affect most of the population. For example, treatment and prevention of certain diseases such as malaria, guinea worm, HIV, and currently Covid 19 have been targeted in health budgets to provide the needed resources to combat the diseases. Over the years the Ministry of health has introduced guidelines to ensure that healthcare providers have the capacity to operate. Such guidelines set the standard for operation and also provide the institutional and governance arrangements that support strategic health purchasing. In the case of 'how to purchase', provider payment for services has been in the form of subsidies and salaries which are not linked to provider performance and hence not strategic. However, the introduction of the National Health Insurance Scheme in 2003 initiated more strategic purchasing methods of provider payments such as capitation and diagnostic related group, after the realization that the initial fee-paying method was not cost saving. The National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) has made significant effort to improve the efficiency of its

operations and to contain cost by even introducing digitization (e.g., electronic claims management, membership enrolment by mobile phone, etc) as a means to achieving the objectives of strategic purchasing.

Despite all the progress made, the health system and the NHIA still struggle to contain cost. Among the existing challenges are provider monitoring, claims management, and provider payment methods. The inability of a health system to deal with such issues can make healthcare provision a burden to healthcare providers. The extent to which a health system has advanced in strategic purchasing affects the health system's ability to minimize the burden of a pandemic such as Covid 19. In collaboration with its technical partners from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, the Strategic Purchasing Africa Resource Center (SPARC) has studied the strategic purchasing practices in the Ghanaian health system and is organizing a policy dialogue on strategic health purchasing process and the way forward.

SPARC – a resource hub hosted by Amref Health Africa with technical support from Results for Development (R4D) – is aimed at strengthening strategic purchasing capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa by connecting existing regional knowledge and expertise and matching it with country demand to make better use of resources for health.

SPARC has partnered with a consortium of Africa-based Anglophone and Francophone technical partners to document country policies and actions on strategic purchasing and measure and track progress of strategic purchasing in sub-Saharan Africa to facilitate regional learning and continued progress. Over the past year, the technical partners have used a common SHP progress mapping framework to document a baseline description of purchasing functions, capacities, governance arrangements, and health system results in the countries they are based. The baseline information will inform the learning agenda for the SPARC technical consortium and future, more in-depth engagements, for the technical partners.

The Ghana technical partners are currently organizing a national stakeholder policy dialogue. The dialogue will discuss lessons on strategic purchasing in Ghana as well as prospects for the future. Details of the one-day engagement is presented below.

Proposed date: December 10, 2021

Venue: University of Ghana

Time: 9 am

List of Participants:

1. Ministry of Health
 - The Minister of Health
 - Director of Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
2. National Health Insurance Authority
 - The Chief Executive Officer
 - A representative from the Department of Quality Assurance
 - A representative from the department of Provider Payment
 - A represent from the Department of Claims Management
3. Ghana Health Service
 - The Director General
 - A representative from Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
 - A representative from Institutional Care
 - A representative from Family Health
4. Christian Health Service Association of Ghana
 - The Chief Executive Officer
 - A representative
5. Private Health Facilities Association of Ghana
 - The President
 - A representative
6. Academia
 - A representative from Department of Economics, UG
 - A representative from ISSER
 - A representative from Central University College

SPARC Ghana Team

SN	Name	Affiliation	Role
1	XXXXX	Department of Economics, KNUST	Lead
2	XXXXX	Department of Occupational and Environmental Health, School of Public Health, KNUST	Member
3	XXXXX	Department of Health Policy Management and Economics	Member

4	XXXXX	Department of Economics, KNUST	Member
5	XXXXX	Department of Economics, KNUST	Member

FOR REFERENCE ONLY