



The Medical Credit Fund quality improvement project

Quality of health services is of utmost importance for your clients. Maintaining or improving a certain quality level, requires continuous attention. With limited resources available many providers find it difficult to keep their quality level up to standard.

The objective of the MCF is to improve access to investment capital for private medical facilities and increase the quality level of health care. The MCF quality improvement project aims to help Ghanaian health care providers to reach the required quality level which is needed for accreditation by the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA). This accreditation is needed to participate in the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS).

Accreditation

The National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), responsible for the exploitation of the NHIS, recently introduced the quality standards for accreditation of providers contracted for service provision under the NHIS. The NHIA has plans to stimulate quality improvement by introducing pay for performance schemes; i.e. higher quality of services will be rewarded with higher payments. Formal accreditation of health care providers (HCP) is yet to start in 2009. For private HCPs it is essential to be able to participate in the NHIS scheme and thus to meet the required quality criteria for accreditation.

A first survey on the current level of quality of the HCPs has demonstrated that most providers are facing difficulties to meet these quality criteria and are eager to improve this. Professional provider associations in Ghana are aware of this quality problem and have commenced organising seminars and training to upgrade skills of health staff. The MCF quality improvement project is being supported by these stakeholders as well as by the NHIA.

The MCF quality program will help you meeting the required quality level needed for accreditation by the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) and thus allowing participation in the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS).

PharmAccess and the MCF

PharmAccess Foundation is, just like the MCF, a Dutch not-for-profit organization dedicated to the strengthening of health systems in sub-Saharan Africa ('Africa'). Its ultimate goal is to improve access to quality basic health care. PharmAccess has a wide experience in quality upgrading programs and has amongst others, been supporting the NHIA the past year in developing the accreditation process and tools, and has also developed the MCF and will be implementing its programs. The MCF aims at quickly and visibly improving the medical service quality of (private) health care providers through the provision of credit (loans) combined with Technical Assistance and a quality review program.

CHAG and the MCF program

This quality improvement program will be made available to the CHAG members by starting a project in September 2009. This will be done in coordination with Business Planning program of the CHAG. The CHAG will be coordinating the implementation of the MCF pilot project.

The (pilot) project

30-40 primary health care providers will be selected as pilot candidates for the MCF project in collaboration with the CHAG. The focus will be on community health posts, maternity homes, and health centres / small clinics.

The project follows a stepwise approach:

1. The health care provider is requested to fill-in a self assessment which will provide information on the facility and help identify improvement area's in relation to the NHIA accreditation criteria. This self assessment tool contains questions on background, staffing, social relevance, medical care, environment and infrastructure, organization and management, safety and quality management, financial situation and plans for upgrading the facility. The outcome of this self assessment will provide an indication on the current quality level of care of your facility.
2. The submitted information will be reviewed by a PharmAccess quality audit team and will be treated confidentially. PharmAccess will randomly perform visits to participating health providers to verify the submitted information. Four to six weeks later you will receive a standard quality score form which will provide you an insight into the sores of your facility on the various modules and identify the areas of improvement. The strong areas will be pointed out as well as the areas of concern. It will also provide you an indication of your score in relation to the NHIA accreditation standards.
3. Depending on the outcome of the self assessment, a performance based grant up-to € 2.500 will be provided to be used for a concise up-grading plan. The up-grade plan will be a combination of medical equipment purchasing, infrastructure improvement, and/or skills and procedure training. This will be discussed with the health care provider during a visit by a member of the CHAG and PharmAccess quality team. The grant and the expected performance of the health care provider on the up-grade plan are interlinked.
4. After 3-5 months, a quality review assessment will be held by PharmAccess to assess the level of quality of care and evaluate the results of the implementation of the up-grading plan. Depending on these results, the possibility of providing a next step in financing to further improve or expand the facility through a loan at affordable conditions from the MCF will be evaluated.

What does it mean for you?

If you are interested to participate in the project, please register yourself before August 1st. You will then receive the self assessment tool including further guidelines. You will receive € 100 upon completion and submittal of the self assessment. The submitted information in the self assessment will be treated confidentially.

For questions and /or registrations please contact:

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