

State of Palestine



Ministry of Health

General directorate of Health Policies and Planning

National Health Strategy 2017-2022

DRAFT English Summary

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October 2016

National policy agenda

Policy priorities and interventions matrix

National priority	Policy priorities	Policy interventions
Comprehensive, quality and affordable health care for all.	Provide comprehensive health care services for all citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reform the public health insurance system.• Enhance the fiscal sustainability of the health care system (cost-effective approach of patients' referrals and services purchasing).• Improve the quality of health services (infrastructure, equipment, medicines, information technology, training and qualification of health workforce, standards).• Increase equitable access to health care services.
	Enhance citizens' health and well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen preventive health care, raise public awareness and promote healthy lifestyles.• Introduce the family practice approach.• Enhance and implement national policies on non-communicable diseases management and prevention.

Vision

Integrated comprehensive health system that contributes to improved quality health services, sustainable promotion of health status and addressing the key determinants of health in Palestine.

Values

1. **Justice and Equality:** fair opportunity for all citizens to attain health services without any hindrance or discrimination.
2. **Sustainability:** ensure the sustainability of the Palestinian health system in its different components (health services, human resources, health information, medicines and health technology, health finance, leadership and governance).
3. **Right to health:** the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and healthy environment for all citizens.
4. **Integration and partnership:** partnerships between different health providers and other sectors to achieve integrated health services.
5. **Financial Protection:** national commitment to work towards universal health coverage.
6. **Quality:** safe and high quality services matching the approved national standards that ensure continuous development.
7. **Palestinian Privacy:** considering the Palestinian private situation of the Israeli occupation obstacles, the growing community needs, and caring for the marginalized vulnerable groups.

National Health strategic objectives for the next six years 2017-2022:

1. Ensure the provision of comprehensive health services to all Palestinians, heading towards localization of health services in Palestine.
2. Promote the management of non-communicable diseases, preventive healthcare, community health awareness and gender related programs.
3. Institutionalize quality systems in all aspects of health services.
4. Promote and develop health workforce management system.
5. Strengthen health governance, including effective health sector management, laws and legislations development and enforcement, cross-sectoral coordination, intra-sectoral coordination and integration towards achieving the localization of services and universal health coverage.
6. Enhance health financing system and protection of citizens against financial hardship of paying healthcare costs.

First National Objective: Ensure the provision of comprehensive health services to all Palestinians, and working towards localization of health services in Palestine.

All partners and different health services providers seek to ensure the provision of comprehensive and integrated services for all citizens. This is in accordance with the national commitment to achieve universal health coverage (SDGs) and inclusive health care services for all citizens (National Policy Agenda), heading towards localization of health services in Palestine and rationalize the purchase of services from outside the country.

This objective includes the provision of all basic health services of different levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) within the available resources in the Palestinian health sector, including primary health care services (according to Essential Package of PHC Services), hospital services, emergency services and specialized medical services. It also includes services development to keep pace with scientific and medical progress in the region, the development of new services in governmental and non-governmental centers to meet the crucial needs, ensuring the availability of medicines and new treatments,

vaccines, advanced medical equipment, advanced diagnostic and rehabilitative techniques, and sufficient qualified working staff.

This goal aims to cover different population categories of different age and health needs, while also focusing on the vulnerable groups especially children, women, teenagers, the elderly and people with special need, as well as those living in isolated and marginalized geographically areas, particularly areas (c) and nearby areas affected by the separation wall and Israeli settlements, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

The Ministry of Health is working in collaboration with all partners to localize health services in Palestine based on integration between service providers and increased coordination and partnerships, development and support of specialized medical services in the Palestinian hospitals. This would highly contribute to achieve equity in services provision, increased patients' satisfaction and minimized patients treated outside the country.

The Ministry of Health focuses on improving the citizens' health and welfare through targeting his family, community and environmental health aspects. In this regard the MoH has adopted recently Family Medicine Practices in the Primary Health Care system. Family Medicine Approach is an integrated system that aims to develop PHC services, and focused towards the Palestinian individuals (Person-centred approach), including reproductive health services, maternal and child health, mental health, school health, community health and health education, chronic diseases, and communicable diseases.

Expected Results (outcomes) by 2022:

- Essential medicines and medical consumables and vaccines are constantly available in all governmental clinics and hospitals.
- Preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic, specialized and emergency health services are constantly available in clinics and health centers, governmental and non-governmental hospitals, within the available resources.
- Medical service purchasing from outside Palestine is rationalized to the minimum.
- The rate of malnutrition for children under 3 years of age is minimized by 60%.
- Improvement of maternal and child health and reproductive health indicators by 20-30%.
- The integration of community mental health services in primary health care clinics is implemented.
- School health programs are effectively implemented including optometry programs, medical screening, health education for students, vaccination, dental health, environmental health and safety in schools.

- Environmental health programs are effectively implemented, including water and food safety and medical waste management, and combating environmental pollutants.
- Family Medicine (Family Practice) Approach is adopted and implemented in all districts health directorates.

Indicators for M&E:

- Immunization coverage (National extended program of Immunization).
- Average number of patients' daily visits to GP at PHC/ physician.
- Average population number/ PHC center.
- Occupancy rate in MOH hospitals.
- Occupancy rate in East Jerusalem Hospitals.
- Average hospitals beds/ 10,000 population. Average number of drug items that are less than emergency stock rate.
- Percentage of women with a live birth who were attended by skilled health personnel.
- Percentage of unmet need for family planning.
- Percentage of women using modern family planning techniques.
- Percentage of PHC clinics that provides community mental health services out of eligible clinics.
- Percentage of PHC clinics that implements Family Practice Approach out of eligible clinics.
- Percentage of services purchased from outside Palestine.
- Percentage of Leishmeniasis foci and active vectors treated with pesticides.

Second National Objective: Promote the management of non-communicable diseases, preventive healthcare, community health awareness and gender related programs.

The Ministry of Health and in collaboration with all partners emphasizes further efforts on strengthening the management of non-communicable diseases programs. This includes preventive health programs and early detection, community awareness about healthy behaviors and healthy lifestyles, implementation of protocols and guidelines for the management and treatment of different NCDs aiming to reduce morbidity and mortality rates through WHO program for chronic diseases (PEN Approach), strengthening palliative care services, joint work with different sectors towards healthy and safe environment (healthy environment at work, schools, roads and homes), as well as free environment of drugs and environmental contaminants and violence.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Health emphasizes on the necessity of the cross-sectoral collaboration in the areas related to gender and youth health, including sexual awareness, adolescents and youth health, sexually transmitted diseases, women's empowerment and health care for women and men at different stages of life.

This goal is coherent with the national trend of enhancing citizens' health and well-being by focusing on chronic disease prevention which becomes a major health challenge in the Palestinian community; promote healthy behaviors and health knowledge among the Palestinian citizens, and to provide a healthy safe environment free of contaminants specially drugs and violence. This goal also is in line with the goals and objectives of sustainable development in subjects as combat drugs and promote the implementation of the Framework Convention for the WHO tobacco control work to reduce premature deaths from non-communicable diseases.

Expected Results (outcomes) by 2022:

- The WHO program for NCDs (PEN approach) is effectively implemented in governmental and non-governmental sector.
- Community awareness campaigns addressing major health issues including healthy life style, gender awareness, maternal and sexual health and social violence.
- Reduction of salt content in bread gradually from 1.3gm. of salt /100gm bread to 1.0gm salt/100gm bread.
- Bylaws and regulations of smoking Law are implemented.
- Early detection programs are implemented effectively including programs of cancer early detection (breast cancer, colon cancer), NCDs screening programs (Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, and others...), and improved diagnostic services.
- National Center for Addiction Treatment and Rehabilitation is functional; and Heroin Treatment center is providing its free services.
- National Protocols for Disabilities Early Detection is approved and implemented.
- High Quality Oral healthcare including preventive oral care is effectively available for all vulnerable and targeted groups.
- Control system for Emerging Infectious Diseases is effectively implemented.
- Vector-Control management program is effectively implemented against targeted diseases (water-borne diseases, food-borne diseases, and animal-borne diseases).
- National Referral system for women victims of violence is actively implemented in cooperation with different partners.

Indicators for M&E:

- Step-wise surveillance indicators.
- Incidence rate for cancer (new cases/ 100,000 population).
- Salt content in 100gm of bread.
- The percentage of implementation of the National protocols for early detection of Disabilities.

Third National Objective: Institutionalize quality systems in all aspects of health services.

The Ministry of Health works with all partners in the health sector to improve the quality of health services at all levels and in all facilities to be able to perform its functions effectively and efficiently in response to citizens' needs in providing high quality safe health services for all citizen.

This goal focuses on the institutionalization of quality and patient safety systems in the health sector, raising awareness about patient safety culture, implementation of the approved standards, institutionalizing monitoring and evaluation process, contribute to change attitudes and practices of health service providers, and encourage accountability and demand for better quality services.

The Ministry has taken active steps with regard to the institutionalization of the quality system in governmental hospitals through the institutionalization of Patient Safety Initiative of the World Health Organization in all governmental hospitals. On the other hand, the ministry aims to institutionalize quality system in the Palestinian health sector in all government and non-governmental institutions based on the approved national standards in line with international and WHO standards. As well as the unification of all the policies and procedures to ensure an effective system for monitoring and evaluation and accountability.

This goal also includes developing a national Accreditation System for health facilities through the establishment of a national certified independent entity and system for the accreditation to all Palestinian hospitals and health facilities.

The application of the national health accreditation approach aims to guarantee the continuous improvement of the quality systems and practices, as the accreditation standards seem to be more ambitious but achievable. The accreditation standards aim to improve and sustain the results of quality system and improve the diagnosis and treatment outcomes, which leads to improving the citizen's quality life.

Accreditation Certificate is an honor for workers because they all took part in achieving it, which creates affiliation to institutions and will reflect positively on the reputation of the institution and increase its credibility in the community.

This objective is closely linked with the National Policy Agenda in terms of the need to raise the standard and quality of health services (infrastructure, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, information technology, staff training and national standards).

Expected Results by 2022:

- National Quality Standards are implemented in all primary Health Care Centers.
- Patient Safety Initiative standards are fully implemented in governmental and participating hospitals.
- Monitoring and evaluation system for quality standards is implemented and activated.
- At least 15 laboratories are implementing ISO standards in MOH hospitals and PHC centers.
- National policies and regulations for Infection Control are fully implemented in MOH hospitals.
- All Hospitals that provide maternal care are endorsed as Baby-friendly hospitals.
- 50% of maternal healthcare centers are endorsed as baby-friendly centers.
- National Independent Accreditation Body and system is effectively working by 2022.

Indicators for M&E:

- The provision and implementation of effective M&E system for quality indicators and standards in different health facilities.
- Number of hospitals that implement Patient Safety Initiative.
- Number of hospitals certified as Baby-friendly Hospital.
- Number of laboratories certified by ISO 15189.
- The implementation of the National system for Health Accreditation.

Fourth National Objective: Promote and develop health workforce management systems.

This goal focuses on ensuring the availability of adequate and qualified human resources that are efficiently able to provide high quality health services. This is in line with the rapid population growth and increased workload and increased needs of efficient health

workforce in various fields to achieve localization of health services and institutionalization of high quality services and thus reduce services purchasing from outside Palestine.

The ministry is seeking to adopt and implement a national system and a national strategy for Continuing Professional Development of health cadres and link it to licensing and personnel accreditation. This includes the development and institutionalization of continuing education and e-learning programs for all health workforce categories, the establishment of electronic libraries in MOH hospitals and health governorates.

The academic institutions, national universities, institutes and research center, as well as the Ministry of Higher Education and various unions / associations are working in partnership with the Ministry of Health to achieve this goal. The private and civil sectors are also playing a key role in attracting competent human resources especially those Palestinians who work outside the country in order to reduce the brain drain abroad.

This objective goes in line with the strategic goal of the National Policy Agenda to raise the standard and quality of health services through the provision of qualified and trained workers, and in line with the objectives of SDGs in terms of working to increase manpower recruitment, development and training.

Expected Results (outcomes) by 2022:

- Sufficient qualified and trained health workforce is available to cover the growing health and population needs.
- Job Description system is fully approved and implemented.
- Continuous Professional Development system is approved and implemented.
- National Human Resources Observatory for Health is effectively functioning to guide and serve decision makers.

Indicators for M&E:

- Implementation percentage for Job Description.
- Number of continuous education programs/ online programs.
- Percentage of implementation of Continuous Professional Development Strategy.
- Number of electronic libraries in MOH facilities.

Fifth National Objective: Strengthen health governance, including effective management of health sector, promote laws and legislations development and implementation, cross-sectoral coordination, intra-sectoral coordination and integration towards achieving the localization of services and universal health coverage.

This objective seeks to enhance the leadership role of the Ministry of Health through institutional development and effective management of the health sector, including the development and updating of health professions accreditation system and health facilities licensing, enhancing of health planning and implementation of public policies and health legislations, promotion of legal and regulatory environment in the health sector to comply with the health developments and the international commitments in line with the United Nations recognition of the State of Palestine, which may require significant changes in the health systems and legislation. In addition to supporting and building the capacities of the pharmaceutical sector and good governance for medicines, supporting health information systems and health monitoring and completing the computerization of health centers (hospitals and care centers).

Strengthen partnerships and coordination within the health sector and with other sectors

This objective seeks to promote partnership, cooperation and coordination between the various partners in the Palestinian health sector, including coordination between different health service providers on the basis of integration and bridging gaps and building partnerships between the public and private sector in order to achieve the universal health coverage and localization of health services. In this context, it is necessary to develop long-term plans for the development of health services in Palestine to reach universal health coverage based on the growing needs due to increasing population and health needs, like master plan for the hospitals and ensure the commitment of all parties to work on its implementation.

As well as strengthening coordination with universities, National Institute of Public Health and other health research centers in an effort to promote scientific research in the health and medical various fields to support evidence-based planning and decision-making. In the same context, to strengthen cooperation with universities and academic institutions in order to raise the level of academic education of different health and medical specialties, provide training, advanced scientific curriculum and continuing education programs for students and health workers.

This objective also ensures to promote partnerships with other sectors and increase coordination with different ministries, related institutions and civil society institutions, especially in the area of emergency and disasters preparedness, environmental health, reduce violence and violence based on gender, and various cross-sectoral national strategies (youth, gender, environment and social development strategy).

Expected Results by 2022:

- Effectively functioning health surveillance system in several areas: NCDs, Cancer Registry, Infectious diseases, nutrition surveillance system, road accidents, mother and child health, mammography, disabilities.
- Computerized health system is fully and effectively implemented in all MOH hospitals, and planned PHC centers (9 governorates).
- Health laws and regulations that highly contribute for better performance in the Palestinian health sector and addressing the health development and the national inquiries.
- Palestine is a member state is committed to WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC).
- Functional legislative framework regulates marketing of foods containing trans-fats and saturated fatty acids.
- Health Information system is effectively functioning to provide efficient health data and health indicators for monitoring sector performance and health situation.
- National Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan is updated and approved.
- National Plans for achieving Universal Health Coverage are developed and implemented.
- Harmonized aid and financial resources with national priorities and plans.
- Pharmaceutical sector provides high quality medicines and pharmaceuticals addressing local needs through national developed systems of pharmaceutical registry, quality, inspection and control, manufacturing, marketing, importing and exporting.
- Cross-sectoral interventions and policies are well implemented and coordinated in different areas including Youth, women, gender, children and environment.

Indicators for M&E:

- Number of hospitals/ clinics using computerized information system.
- Number of regulations of health professions reviewed and adopted.
- Implementation rate of national plans towards Universal Health Coverage.
- Percentage of external aid implemented according to plans.
- Implementation percentage for Complains System in health facilities.
- The implementation rate for different Pharmaceutical registration systems.
- The implementation rate for the third stage of Good Governance for Medicines GGM.
- The implementation rate for different health surveillance systems.

Sixth National Objective: Enhance health financing system and protection of citizens against financial hardship of paying healthcare costs.

The Ministry of Health in collaboration with partners and relevant governmental bodies seeking to strengthen health financing mechanisms to ensure the continuity of the Palestinian health sector, ensure the provision of health services and medical treatment to all citizens without causing their exposure to financial catastrophe, including the poor, the unemployed and marginalized groups or those that cannot pay for treatment for health services.

This objective includes improving the efficiency of health spending, including the rationalization of expenditure, reduce duplication, and ensure the optimal use of available resources. In addition to review the pricing system, the procurement and contracting mechanisms for services, as well as review and update the health insurance system, improve governmental and non-governmental management of financial resources (through donors and local aid coordination), and ensure that the support to the health sector is in line with the strategic plans and the developmental and humanitarian priorities.

Thus, this goal is in line with national priorities in the reform of the public health insurance system, enhance the financial sustainability of the health care system, and to increase equal access and to obtain health care services. Also in line with the international agenda through an increase in funding in the health sector and work to achieve universal health coverage.

Expected results (outcomes) by 2022:

- Governmental health insurance system is updated and developed reflecting improved justice and financial protection towards achieving Universal Health Coverage.
- Health financing and pooling system is consistent for achieving Universal Health Coverage.
- Health services purchasing system and payment mechanisms are consistent for achieving Universal Health Coverage.

Indicators for M&E:

- Percentage of health expenditure of GDP.
- Percentage of governmental expenditure out of total health expenditure.

- The provision and implementation of updated governmental health insurance system.
- Percentage of population covered by a verified health insurance system.
- Percentage of expenditure on medications and vaccines out of MOH budget.

Program One: High Quality Primary Health Care services and healthy life style promotion

Program Policy Goals and Objectives:

Goal One: Ensure the sustainability and development of primary health care services according to Essential Package of services, confirming comprehensive services provision to all citizens and universal health coverage.

- Ensure good and permanent provision of medicines, medical supplies and disposables and vaccines in all PHC centers.
- Ensure the provision of sufficient qualified and trained health workforce contributing to high quality services provision.
- Ensure the provision of nutritional services in PHC centers.
- Ensure the provision of School health services and preventive care.
- Support and develop the NCDs management and prevention programs.
- Support and develop mother and child care services, maternal care, postnatal care and family planning services.
- Ensure the provision of environmental health services including pesticides, licensing trades and industries, water and food safety control, epidemic control and public health.
- Ensure the provision of community mental health services in PHC centers delivering the proper mental health services and reducing complications.

Goal Two: Reduce the risk of communicable and infectious diseases.

Goal Three: Adopt and implement Family Medicine approach in all PHC centers towards developed and comprehensive PHC services.

Goal Four: support and develop preventive health programs and screening | early detection programs focusing on NCDs and disabilities:

- Promote healthy life styles and healthy behaviors through awareness campaigns and health education and national strategies and policies implementation.
- Support and activate screening and early detection programs for cancer disease.
- Support and develop NCDs prevention and management programs.
- Ensure the provision of preventive school health and preventive oral health programs for school children.

Goal Five: develop and support health surveillance and registry programs in different areas (NCDs, cancer, disabilities, epidemics, nutrition, mother child health, mammography, road accidents.)

Goal Six: institutionalize quality and patient safety system at PHC levels and implement different supporting initiatives (Baby-friendly clinics, Youth- Friendly clinics).

Goal Seven: develop PHC infrastructure supporting services sustainability and safe comprehensive access to all citizens.

Goal Eight: Implement computerized information system in PHC centers according to planned schedule.

Program Two: High Quality Secondary and Tertiary Health Care services

Program Policy Goals and Objectives:

Goal One: Ensure the sustainability and development of hospital care services including emergency services, outpatient and in-patient services.

- Ensure permanent provision of medicines, medical supplies and disposables in all governmental hospitals.
- Ensure the provision of sufficient qualified and trained health workforce contributing to high quality services provision.
- Support and develop diagnostic and curative services at different levels in hospitals.
- Support and develop Allied medical services in hospitals.
- Support and develop hospitality services.

Goal Two: Institutionalize and implement quality and patient safety system in all hospitals.

Goal Three: develop the infrastructure of hospitals sector.

Goal Four: Implement computerized information system in all hospitals.

Program Three: Governance and Administration.

Program Policy Goals and Objectives:

Goal One: Ensure the provision of sufficient qualified health workforce contributing to high quality services provision.

Goal Two: Strengthen good governance and performance of the Palestinian health sector.

- Enhance strategic planning and policies development and monitor its implementation.
- Develop and establish National Health Accreditation system.
- Enhance Pharmaceutical sector performance and ensure the implementation of national pharmaceutical policies.
- Strengthen the supervisory and regulatory role of the Ministry of Health.
- Develop infrastructure for administrative central centers and implementing computerized system in all centers.

Goal Three: Enhance sustainable health financing and funding sources.

Goal Four: Strengthen financial protection for all citizens against health costs.

Goal Five: Enhance partnerships and integration between service providers and stakeholders, and strengthen cross- sectoral collaboration and coordination.

National Health Indicators for Monitoring Health Status and developmental progress:

Monitoring and Evaluation includes a set of indicators for each objective (mentioned above) to reflect the achievements of each national objective, and also a set of indicators to monitor the health status improvements and the impact of different achievements on health status, including the following indicators.

- Life Expectancy.
- Fertility rate.
- Maternal Mortality Rate.
- Neonatal Mortality rate.
- Infant Mortality rate.
- Children under 5 years old mortality rate.
- Exclusive Breast Feeding rate.
- Underweight and stunting prevalence in children under 5 years.
- Percentages of premature deaths caused by NCDs.
- Smoking rates (among youth).
- Density of different health specialists (physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacies....)
- Patient satisfaction for governmental health services.
- Prevalence of Hepatitis B.
- Prevalence of Tuberculosis, Malaria, HIV.
- Number of health facilities certified by the national Accreditation system.
- Percentage of health expenditure of GDP.
- Percentage of governmental expenditure out of total health expenditure.
- Percentage of household out-of-pocket expenditure out of total health expenditure.