Primary Health Care Performance in Uganda  
Preliminary Findings from a 2019 National Survey

The current state of primary health care in Uganda

- Over two-thirds of people sought care in the previous six months, mostly for acute problems.
- Nearly no one has health insurance while people report significant financial barriers to accessing health care.
- Most patients lack continuous relationships with a care provider while providers lack access to patient information.
- Many Ugandans were satisfied with their care but felt that facility resources were lacking.

Is primary health care financially accessible to everyone?

- 99% of Ugandans report not having health insurance.
- 51% found it difficult to pay for their visit.
- 44% had to borrow money or sell something in order to afford their visit, particularly in rural regions.

How satisfied are people with their care?

- Most ratings of “good” or better:
  1. Provider’s knowledge (92%)
  2. Provider listened to patient’s concerns (90%)
  3. Provider’s ability to explain (88%)
- Least ratings of “good” or better:
  1. Wait time (60%)
  2. Patient’s input into medical decisions (70%)
  3. Choice of provider (72%)
- Most important areas for improvement

How do Ugandans seek care?

- 68% sought care in the past 6 months.
- Top 3 reasons for seeking care:
  1. Fever
  2. Feeling generally sick
  3. Abdominal pain
- 59% went to a public facility, 27% went to a private facility.

Do people have continuous relationships with health care providers?

- How often do you see the same health care provider?
  - Rarely or Never: 20%
  - Always or Frequently: 80%
- Did the provider have your information from prior visits?
  - No: 40%
  - Yes: 60%

Individual Survey

- 4,373 respondents
- 76% under age 45 (surveyed ages 15+)
- 60% female
- 68% with primary or no education
- 80% living in rural areas
- 60% married or living with a partner

Primary health care is the bedrock of universal health coverage, and must be the focus of action in all our countries.

Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus  
WHO Director-General

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Primary Health Care Facilities in Uganda

398 facilities surveyed | 57% public, 36% private facilities | 12% hospitals, 26% chemists or drug shops

How many facilities have systems for quality and budgeting?

- % with annual budget for running costs
- % with quality improvement activities

What is the level of supervision and training for staff?

- % with supervisors who reviewed staff performance in the past 12 months
- % offering trainings to staff

What is the state of basic infrastructure at facilities?

- % with water at this time
- % with electricity at this time

How much surveillance exists at primary health care facilities?

- % reporting new disease outbreaks

About the Survey

PMA-PHC Uganda collected information on primary health care performance at the individual and facility level in 110 enumeration areas to produce nationally representative data. Data were collected from March to May 2019. The survey was led by the Makerere University School of Public Health in Kampala, Uganda with support from Ariadne Labs at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Funding was provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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