

# **PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTH SECTOR TASK FORCE**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**JUNE 19, 2013**

**Purpose of the Group:** To increase and improve relations between the public and private health sectors with the aim of increasing sustainable access to affordable, quality health care for all citizens of Antigua and Barbuda. To recommend to the Permanent Secretary of Health policy and regulatory actions and to support the Ministry of Health and other health system partners to coordinate efforts to implement health sector priorities related to the private health sector.

**Chair:** Chief Medical Officer

**Members:** Ministry of Health:

- Medical Officer of Health
- AIDS Program Manager
- Clinical Care Coordinator
- Head of Health Planning
- Head of Health Information Division

The head and/or other appointed representatives of:

- Central Board of Health
- Medical Benefits Scheme
- Mount St. John's Medical Centre

Representatives of the following provider groups:

- Pharmacy Association
- Medical Association
- Nurses Association
- Dental Association

Private health sector representatives:

- One NGO manager
- One representative of faith-based organizations
- One private medical practice manager
- One private laboratory services manager
- One other health service manager (nursing home, etc.)

## **Objectives:**

1. Facilitate ongoing dialogue to foster positive relations among the private and public health sector institutions, ensuring effective and transparent coordination, communication and collaboration of key stakeholders.
2. Provide a forum for assessing health sector priorities, agreeing on joint public and private sector responses, and establishing mechanisms for implementation.
3. Advocate for increased awareness and participation in health sector activities by key stakeholders, including the private sector and the general public.

## **Main Tasks:**

1. Review data, policies, and processes to establish priorities to best address barriers to more effective public and private health sector collaboration.
2. Monitor public and private sector partnerships and relations and suggest as a group policies, procedures and mechanisms to improve access to care through mechanisms of public-private collaboration. Identify and support the formalization of partnerships between public and private sector actors.
3. Advocate for financial and other resources from both the public and private sectors to address health priorities.

## **Operational Processes:**

1. The Public and Private Health Sector Task Force (a.k.a. “Task Force”) will determine the best organizational structure that will facilitate its work. This may include for example, an informal working group, a policy steering committee and/or technical working groups tasked to focus on technical areas such as contracting out, training, monitoring and evaluation (data and information sharing), quality or specific disease responses such as HIV/AIDS or non-communicable diseases. This organizational structure may change as more formal relations are achieved and the objectives of the Task Force evolve.
2. The Task Force will be chaired by the CMO or his/her designee. The public sector members will be appointed by the Permanent Secretary of Health. Heads of provider groups will be standing members. The remaining, private sector members of the Task Force will be selected by informal groups of their various contingencies – from NGO, faith based and the other above referenced private commercial sub-sectors. The Secretariat to the Task Force will consist of the Head of the Health Information Division (until a Health Planner is appointed), the head of one provider association, and the manager of one NGO. The private sector members of this secretariat will rotate on an annual basis.

3. The group will meet quarterly to identify priorities, receive updates from sub-groups, and discuss recommendations. If the Task Force feels it is necessary it can vote to meet more or less frequently. The Task Force will:
  - Ensure that the meetings serve as opportunities for sharing information and experience, problem-solving, and coordinating activities of health sector institutions from all sectors, including private sector and NGOs, and international partners.
  - Review, revise and update health sector action plans to better address identified priorities as they relate to the private sector.
4. The Task Force will, on an annual basis, review goals and objectives for the health sector, including the health sector strategy and National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS. During this review the Task Force will:
  - identify areas where policy changes and/or other further action are needed as they relate to maximizing quality participation of the private sector.
  - identify opportunities to collaborate and partner with the private sector and international partners to achieve health sector strategic objectives.
  - develop plans to advocate for additional public and private sector resources to address health priorities.
4. The Task Force will identify additional information needs to support evidence-based policy development and decision-making, and work with Health Information Division and international partners as appropriate to meet those needs.