

Health Providers

Clinics and Hospitals



Introduction

Private health providers are the backbone of the private health sector, so visits to private health facilities, and interviews with owners and practitioners, are critical to a private sector assessment. This set of questions is intended for larger practices, primarily clinics and hospitals. Key informants typically include the owner of the facility, as well as one or more practitioners. If there are both male and female practitioners, interview both and probe for gender differences. The interview should capture information about health services offered and fees charged, provider and client characteristics (including sex), and business practices and constraints.

Questions

- What types of [health services] do you provide? [PROBE for services of interest, such as family planning or HIV]
- How many clients do you see per day? [This could be per week or month as well, whichever is easiest for the respondent] How many are women? Men? What type of services do you provide to each?
- Is your facility adequately equipped (in terms of staff, space and equipment) to serve the needs of your clients?
- Are you interested in expanding the services you provide, or volume of patients you see? In which ways? [Example: Inclusion of HIV/AIDS or reproductive health services]
- What are the barriers to expansion? Probe for gender differences here if there are male and female providers.
- Are private health providers able to access training comparable to the training for public health workers? Does this access differ for different kinds of providers? For men? For women?
- What other opportunities do you have for continuing medical education?
- Where do you procure your supplies?
- Are you ever visited by medical detailers? If so, how often?
- Do you have any educational materials to share information with your clients? [If so] Where did you get those materials?
- Do you report any health service statistics to the Ministry of Health? If so, what information do you report and with what frequency? If not, why not?
- What are the challenges or barriers you face in delivering [type of health service] to your clients? [Examples: payment, access to supplies, equipment, credit] Are there any special challenges that you believe you face because you are a man/woman?
- What do you see as potential solutions to these challenges? [PROBE: licensing or registration, training, payment/reimbursement, etc.]

Questions – Administrative/Business

Be sure to note if business owner is a man/woman. Try to get both male and female business owner's perspectives if possible.

- How long have you been in operation?
- How long did the registration process take?
- Are there ongoing requirements you must meet in order to maintain your practice?
- How was the practice originally financed?
- What are your hours of operation?
- How do you recruit health workers? Are they graduates from public or private training institutions? Do they include both men and women? Are your recruitment strategies the same for men and women?
- What are the challenges you face in recruiting or retaining staff in your clinic or hospital? Do these challenges vary between male and female health workers? If so, how?
- Are these challenges unique to the private sector?
- Are you a participating provider in any government or private health insurance coverage scheme? Probe for differences for the opposite sex.
- If so, what led you to be contracted for health services? Which services are contracted?
- Have you experienced any challenges, and if so, what do you see as critical to improving the contracting arrangement?
- Has your facility ever been visited by the Ministry of Health? For what purpose?
- Do you currently have a need for financing? If not, why not? For what purpose? How likely is it that you will be approved for a loan?

Questions – Practitioner Characteristics

Note sex and age of practitioner.

- What is your degree?
- How many years have you been in practice?
- Have you received training since graduation?
- Have you received training in [health area of interest] recently? If so, who provided that training? What was the content? Did you have to pay for it? How helpful was it?
- Have you experienced any obstacles in accessing training opportunities? If so, what were they?
- What training do you see as lacking for private health providers?
- If you have not attended a training recently, why not? [PROBE: none offered, inconvenient hours, inability to pay, etc.]
- Do you belong to a professional association? If so, which one? Is it serving your needs?
- Do you also work for the public sector? [Explain dual practice – working in the public sector while also maintaining a private practice] If so, what are the hours you are present at this [private] facility?
- How common is dual practice?
- OBSERVE: Patient information/posters, waiting area, patient volume and characteristics, number of exam or operating rooms.