



Nonprofit Sector

Professional Health Associations



Introduction

Professional health associations represent health care professionals, whether they practice in the public or private sector. Associations are typically established by cadre (such as physicians, nurses, or pharmacists) but sometimes represent health workers as a whole. While this is not the case in every country, there are a growing number of associations representing solely private health providers. Speaking to professional associations can provide useful information on the overall health sector, understanding of the various cadres and their unique challenges, as well as insights into how public and private health providers relate to one another. Private professional health associations will be particularly helpful in understanding the private health sector, its key actors and its constraints.

Questions

- How many members does your organization have? How many men and how many women?
- How are leaders of the organization selected? How many are men and how many are women?
- Is there an organization that is exclusively of providers operating in the private sector?
- Do you keep a directory? Is it up to date?
- Do you charge fees?
- What percentage of your members are up to date with their fee payments?
- What services do you provide?
- What activities does the association organize? CME training? Advocacy events? How do you decide on the advocacy agenda?
- What are your challenges as an organization?
- What percentage of all [providers, e.g., physicians] are members in your organization?
- What percentage work in the private sector?
- Who are the key actors in the private health sector?
- What are the challenges facing your private sector members?
- Do they differ from concerns of those practicing in the public sector?
- What are the potential solutions to these challenges? [PROBE: licensing/registration, training, payment/reimbursement, etc.]
- Is there a need to develop or enforce quality of care standards?
- Is there a need for licensing or certification of any health care providers or facilities?
- Does your association collaborate with other professional associations? Are there sometimes conflicts between associations on government health policies or advocacy issues?

- Does your organization provide any of these services for members?
- Does the government have any strategies or long-term plans to address key health challenges?
- Are there existing partnerships that could serve as a model?
- In what ways could your organization contribute to a partnership in [health area of interest]?
- What types of health-related information does your organization disseminate?
- What are the challenges you face in sharing information with your members?
- What is required to bridge these gaps? [PROBE: use of technology, mHealth, etc.]

Specific Questions on Dual Practice [if indicated]

- Are health providers [doctors/midwives] that work for the public sector allowed to OPEN a private practice?
- Are health providers [doctors/midwives] that work for the public sector allowed to WORK IN a private clinic or hospital?
- [If yes] In what capacity? Employees? Fee-split arrangements? Flat fee for performing a hospital shift?
- Are there other guidelines regarding dual practice? [Obtain copies of legislation that pertain to dual practice if possible.]
- What is happening in practice? Why?
- Are there any consequences for those infringing upon the law?
- What are the changes in legislation that are needed to make dual practice more beneficial to the public?