

Appendix 2: Conference Concept

1. Introduction

Quality healthcare is fundamental to effective health systems and achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). High quality care must be safe, timely, equitable, efficient, and people centered, fostering improved health outcomes and public trust. Quality in health care includes clinical effectiveness and safety, patient experience, operational performance, regulatory compliance, workforce competence, and pharmaceutical integrity.

Globally, evidence indicates that poor quality care causes more deaths than lack of access. According to the *Lancet Global Health Commission (2018)*, an estimated 5 million deaths annually in low and middle income countries result from poor quality care, compared to 3.6 million deaths due to lack of access. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that one in ten patients is harmed during hospital care, with at least 2.6 million deaths linked to unsafe care each year. Additionally, around 15% of global hospital spending is lost to inefficiency and poor quality.

As countries pursue universal health coverage, improving quality across all sectors is essential to achieve better, equitable health outcomes. In Tanzania, private health facilities are vital to expanding access and complementing public services, making their effective engagement and alignment with national quality and financing frameworks critical.

Under the **Private Hospitals (Regulation) Act, Cap 51**, the *Private Hospitals Advisory Board (PHAB)* is mandated to register, inspect, regulate, and supervise private health facilities to ensure compliance with national quality and patient safety standards. In this meeting PHAB and *PharmAccess* intend to convene key stakeholders, including training institutions, Health Care providers, the pharmaceutical industries, Regulators, Health insurers and Policy makers

2. Rationale

The private health sector in Tanzania is expanding rapidly, with a growing number of newly registered facilities. However, this growth has revealed significant quality inconsistencies that concern government, partners, and the public. Facilities operating at similar levels often deliver markedly different standards of care, underscoring systemic weaknesses.

Recent oversight assessments by PHAB and the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) for 2024/2025 show critical gaps in private health facilities:

- **88%** face governance and management challenges (weak oversight, limited professional development, inadequate patient feedback, poor data governance).
- **75%** exhibit clinical deficiencies (limited diagnostics, weak referral systems, inconsistent guideline adherence, inadequate sterilization & equipment maintenance).
- **63%** have clinical support challenges (variable laboratory quality, poor radiology clinician communication, lack of imaging protocols).
- **56%** struggle with essential support services (equipment maintenance, infection prevention, supply chain weak links, and quality monitoring gaps).

Gaps in quality and institutional capacity threaten patient safety, public trust, and equity, particularly as the private health sector expands, posing risks to the national health system. Quality and safety standards are essential as Tanzania advances in primary health care, insurance coverage, service delivery, and medical tourism. Therefore, a coordinated, multi-stakeholder effort to strengthen standards, build capacity, and improve accountability in private facilities is urgently needed to ensure that private sector growth supports national health goals and broader health system strengthening.

3. Objectives

Main Objective:

To strengthen stakeholder collaboration and develop actionable strategies to improve quality, safety, and efficiency of health service delivery in private health facilities, accelerating progress toward UHC in Tanzania.

Specific Objectives:

- i. Build consensus on priority quality standards for private facilities aligned with national and global benchmarks.
- ii. Share best practices that enhance patient safety, clinical governance, and service delivery.
- iii. Promote stakeholder collaboration on digital health tool integration to improve efficiency and outcomes.
- iv. Analyse how private health facilities can expand access, quality, and financial protection in line with UHC goals.
- v. Develop joint recommendations to promote accountability, compliance, and consistent service delivery.

4. Implementation Plan

PHAB, in collaboration with PharmAccess, will organize a **national quality improvement meeting** in Dar es Salaam from **12th to 14th March 2026**, preceded by an **exhibition from 9th to 13th March 2026**. The meeting will be officiated by the Minister for Health, with approximately **800 delegates** expected, including the Permanent Secretary and Chief Medical Officer.

5. Expected Output

Expected outcomes of the meeting include:

- A thorough analysis of quality and service delivery gaps in private health facilities.
- A compendium of best practices and evidence based approaches for patient safety and service standards.
- Prioritized, actionable recommendations for improving quality, safety, and efficiency.
- A digital health strengthening roadmap for EMR adoption and interoperability with national health information systems.
- A clear definition of the private sector's role in advancing UHC, including contributions to access, quality, and financial protection.
- Identified opportunities and mechanisms for enhanced public–private collaboration.

These outputs will guide coordinated efforts to raise the quality and reliability of Tanzania's private health services.

Appendix 3: Conference Sessions Overview

SESSION 1: From Standards to Excellence: Strengthening Quality Improvement, Patient Safety, and Clinical Governance in Private Health Care.

Session Overview

This session will explore how quality standards can be effectively used as practical tools to strengthen private health service delivery and advance excellence in care. Discussions will focus on the role of accreditation and licensing in promoting continuous quality improvement, standardization of care, and accountability within the private health sector. Speakers will highlight how structured quality frameworks support consistent clinical practice, improve service reliability, and align private providers with national health priorities toward Universal Health Coverage.

The session will also examine strategies for improving patient safety and clinical governance through strong leadership and systems-based approaches. Emphasis will be placed on translating standards into everyday practice, fostering a culture of quality and safety, and reinforcing leadership roles at facility and organizational levels. By sharing experiences and best practices, the session aims to demonstrate how applying quality standards can drive measurable improvements in care outcomes, patient trust, and overall health system performance.

SESSION 2: Transforming Healthcare Delivery through Digital Systems, Data and AI: Opportunities and Challenges in the Private Health Sector.

Session overview:

This session will examine the growing role of digital technologies in strengthening healthcare service delivery within the private health sector. It will provide an overview of how tools such as electronic medical records (EMRs), digital administrative systems, health data platforms, machine learning and artificial intelligence can enhance service efficiency, support clinical decision-making, and improve the overall patient experience.

In addition, the session will address the importance of responsible and lawful use of digital health solutions. Participants will discuss data governance, patient privacy, and compliance with personal data protection requirements, as well as practical approaches to minimizing data security risks. The discussion aims to support private healthcare providers in adopting digital innovations that are safe, compliant, and aligned with national health system priorities.

SESSION 3: The Role of the Private Health Sector in Advancing Universal Health Coverage: Quality Care, Innovation, and Inclusive Access

Session Overview:

This session will explore the practical role of the private health sector in supporting the country's progress toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC). It will focus on how private providers contribute to expanding access to essential health services while ensuring quality, safety, and continuity of care. The discussion will highlight the strengths of the private sector in service delivery, innovation, and responsiveness to community needs, and how these can complement public health efforts to improve overall system performance.

The session will also examine how technology and innovation from private sector can be used to enhance the healthcare service reach to underserved and remote populations. It will discuss how private health providers, technology companies, and other health-focused enterprises work together to expand access to essential services and strengthen health system performance. The discussion will emphasize the importance of collaboration, innovation, and the integration of new solutions to meet the evolving health needs of populations, including those in underserved and remote areas. By sharing experiences and practical approaches, the session aims to demonstrate how the private health sector can play a critical role in delivering high quality, accessible, and sustainable health services for all.

SESSION 4: Strengthening Clinical Care: Innovative Practices for Effective Health Delivery

Session Overview

This session will explore practical strategies for excellence in clinical service delivery, focusing on the optimization of primary health care, effective task shifting, capacity building, and staff retention. Participants will engage with evidence based practices that demonstrate how health facilities can enhance quality of care, improve efficiency, and ensure continuity of services. Emphasis will be placed on translating health policies into actionable practices that strengthen service delivery at private facilities.

The session will also highlight the importance of integrated referral systems, showcasing successful approaches to coordination between private and public health sectors. Participants will discuss how to build and retain a motivated workforce, implement task-sharing models, and foster organizational environments that support sustainable improvements in patient care. Through interactive discussions and case studies, attendees will gain insights into replicable strategies that can elevate clinical service delivery and create measurable impact in primary health care settings.