



Kingdom of Bahrain  
Ministry of Health

# Ministry of Health Direction

POLICIES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- ACCESSIBILITY
- AFFORDABILITY
- APPROPRIATENESS
- ACCOUNTABILITY
- ACCREDITATION
- ACCEPTABILITY





His Majesty Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa  
King of the Kingdom of Bahrain



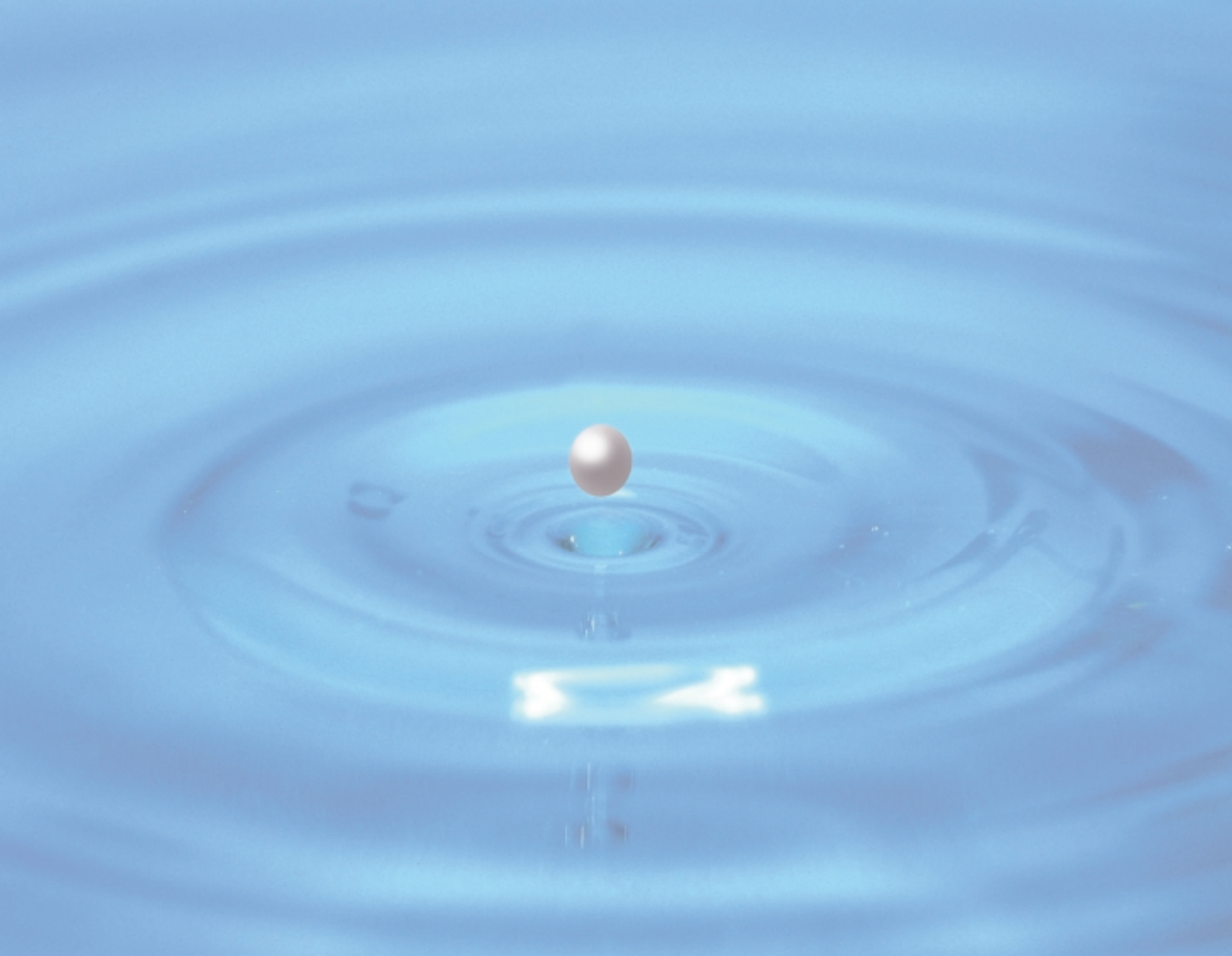
H.H. Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa  
The Prime Minister



H.H. Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa  
The Crown Prince and Commander-in-Chief of the  
Bahrain Defence Force

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# REACHING BEYOND TOMORROW

## VISION – COMMUNITY – COMMITMENT

*We must reach beyond tomorrow in designing our system of health, for our actions today are the foundation for our future success.*

*Our vision for an integrated health service system and the journey we are taking to achieve it, is based upon our belief that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Looking beyond the walls of our facilities and blending services with the community and the education system, will change the way we perceive our health service. As we reach out to our partners in building this network of care, we create a force that will enable us to have an impact on our communities and our quality of life.*

*Like the gentle ripples created by a pearl that falls into a calm sea, it takes a single element to set in motion a chain of extraordinary events. The pearl is our Vision, the sea our Community, and the ripples that emanate across the surface are the Commitment to health delivered through the policies, services, and dedicated healthcare providers that work for the health and welfare of our community.*



# MINISTRY OF HEALTH POLICY DIRECTION

As we move forward with our continuous effort to provide the highest standard of health and care for our citizens and residents, we have committed the Ministry of Health to a process of open dialogue, partnership, and responsiveness. The Ministry of Health Policy Direction is presented in response to the constantly and rapidly changing health sector and environmental conditions. It provides the leadership, direction and guidelines for action to continuously refine, realign and refocus the National Health Plan.

The Policy and Strategic Direction as presented incorporates many of the ideas and recommendations outlined in the Bahrain Health Strategy – “Framework for Action”, a report resulting from a broad consultative process with health providers, the private sector, partner institutions and Government departments. It demonstrates our commitment to a collaborative process, responsive action and decisive, accountable leadership.

Health in its broadest context is essentially about the quality of life. Therefore the Health of the Bahrain population is and will always be at the center of our public policy agenda.

The mandate of the Ministry of Health is to regulate, guide, protect, maintain, restore and improve the health and quality of life of residents of Bahrain. This document is to provide a clear, concise, public communication of the Ministry of Health policy agenda for meeting the challenges of this mandate over the next decade.

To reflect the Ministry of Health intent we have titled this message:

A Community Partnership for Health  
“Health Services Without Walls”

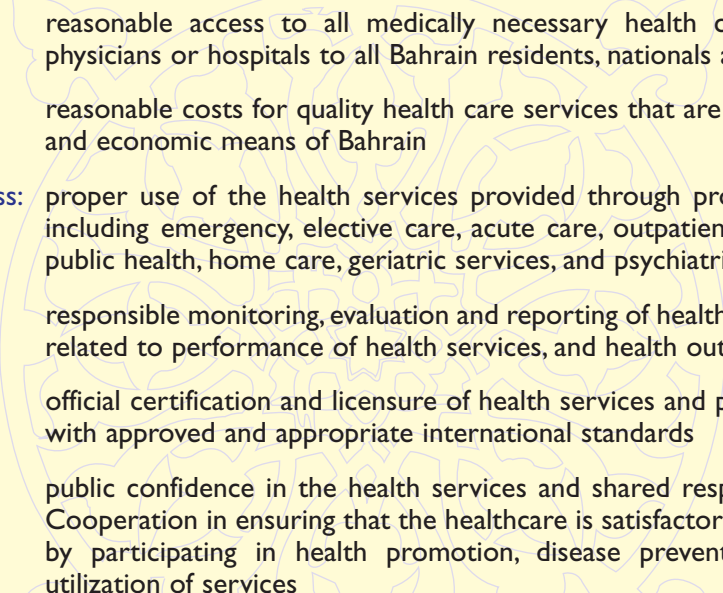
**Dr. Faisal Radhi Al Mousawi**  
**Minister of Health**

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH POLICY DIRECTION**

# BAHRAIN MINISTRY OF HEALTH POLICY DIRECTION

"Health Services Without Walls - A Community Partnership for Health" was a theme selected to highlight the need to focus the Ministry of Health's efforts towards reducing barriers to service and between services. By improving access and referrals the commitment to the six core principles that are the foundation of the Bahrain Health System can be realized.

## MINISTRY OF HEALTH PRINCIPLES

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- Accessibility:** reasonable access to all medically necessary health care services provided by physicians or hospitals to all Bahrain residents, nationals and non-nationals
  - Affordability:** reasonable costs for quality health care services that are within the fiscal resources and economic means of Bahrain
  - Appropriateness:** proper use of the health services provided through proven cost effective means, including emergency, elective care, acute care, outpatient services, primary health, public health, home care, geriatric services, and psychiatric programs
  - Accountability:** responsible monitoring, evaluation and reporting of healthcare resource expenditure related to performance of health services, and health outcomes
  - Accreditation:** official certification and licensure of health services and professionals in accordance with approved and appropriate international standards
  - Acceptability:** public confidence in the health services and shared responsibility for their health. Cooperation in ensuring that the healthcare is satisfactory, affordable, and accessible by participating in health promotion, disease prevention and the appropriate utilization of services

## MINISTRY OF HEALTH PHILOSOPHY

The Ministry of Health's philosophy and the primary goal of its National Health Plan is the vision of a more responsive, efficient and effective health system achieved through creation of a fully integrated seamless system of services, offering eligible beneficiaries direct access to a full continuum of care regardless of their point of entry.

To support a healthier population, programmes of health promotion, public health, environmental health and primary community based care will receive increased priority. These are proactive services that can reduce the requirement for active acute interventions, which often result in lost time, productivity, and a reduced quality of life.

To meet the challenges of this new agenda, the Ministry of Health must strengthen its strategic participation with other Government services, private industry and most importantly communities, families and individuals. The Ministry of Health will provide the leadership and guidance for an improved health status, but it will need consultation, cooperation, and commitment from all its partners. It takes more than an individual with an idea or a small group with a single focus to make effective change. Health is a collective responsibility not only of Government, but also communities and individual citizens. One Vision, many hands, coming together will make the difference.



# THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH POLICY FRAMEWORK

To provide a focus and structure for key policy initiatives, it is helpful to establish a framework for organizing strategies. A useful framework is derived from a simplified model of the Ministry of Health's service matrix. By incorporating directional indicators in the model it illustrates the required shift in policy emphasis by type of service. The model portrays a comprehensive approach for change, while maintaining a balance with existing services.

The Policy Framework is also an important reference for service providers and partners in determining detailed strategies and recommendations for best fit and relevance to Ministry of Health policy objectives. This will encourage improved collaborative effort and provide a focus towards a common goal.

The framework is composed of five elements that when consolidated represent the basic management responsibilities of the Ministry of Health. These five elements or areas of policy are:

1. Philosophy and Service Policy
2. Planning Policy
3. Resource Allocation Policy
4. Health Service Delivery Policy
5. Performance Management Policy

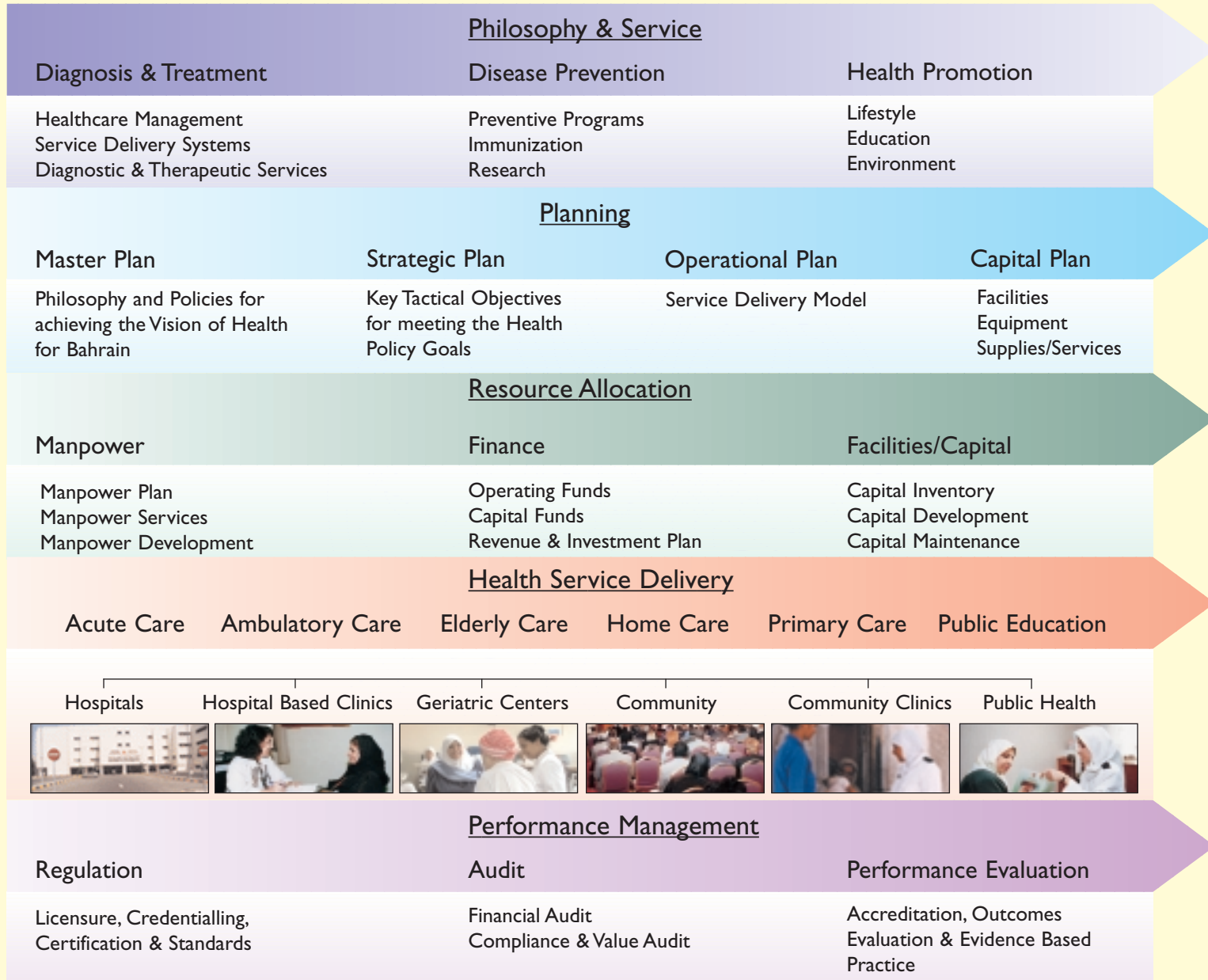
The divisions, subcategories and content focus of these policy areas are delineated to highlight the comprehensive nature of the policy framework and the need to maintain a balanced approach to policy direction and development respecting always the need to sustain critical infrastructure services during periods of transition and change.

The directional nature of the framework is to illustrate policy direction and/or ordering of tasks within policy areas. It also provides a simple perspective of interconnectivity, interdependency, and dynamic interaction in policy decision-making at the National level.

The document is formatted to discuss each of the five policy elements separately but concisely in statement form and to translate the Policy Direction into an action agenda by presenting corresponding Strategic Directives. The Ministry of Health has already initiated the process of change by creating the appropriate open, collaborative, partnership style of management and by conducting educational forums on targeted program initiatives.

# THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH POLICY FRAMEWORK

Information



# POLICY DIRECTION

## KEY POLICY INITIATIVE # 1 - PHILOSOPHY AND SERVICE POLICY

<u>Philosophy &amp; Service</u>		
Diagnosis & Treatment	Disease Prevention	Health Promotion
Healthcare Management Service Delivery Systems Diagnostic & Therapeutic Services	Preventive Programs Immunization Research	Lifestyle Education Environment

- The Ministry of Health as a global policy direction will work towards development of a more responsive, accessible system of services that provides for a seamless referral network across a fully integrated continuum of care. To improve responsiveness there will be a more open system of public consultation, program evaluation, and accountability. The Ministry of Health will undergo a restructuring of services to simplify and improve efficiencies of service delivery, management and decision making and to reduce unnecessary barriers or delays to appropriate care, service or information.
- The Ministry of Health as a priority will develop policies, programs and services that support promotion of health and prevention of disease. These initiatives combined with early detection and intervention at the level of primary care will reduce the burden on costly acute care services. This policy focus will concentrate efforts on what is euphemistically referred to as “getting it right”, that is providing the right service at the right time in the right place, by the right skilled professional. Access to specialty and subspecialty services other than for emergency care will require referral from a community based primary care service structured on a family practice model. Post acute phase follow-up care will be referred back to community based services utilizing a single comprehensive system of patient identification, records, and appointments.

This first level policy direction has a number of strategies required to support change. These strategies will be developed collaboratively with service area providers who are directly responsible and will be reviewed and authorized by the Office of the Minister of Health. Areas identified for priority strategy specification under Initiative #1 are as follows:

- Life Style Related Programs
- Environmental Health and Awareness
- Healthier Communities Initiatives
- Childrens Health, Safety, and Security
- Women’s Health Programs

## KEY POLICY INITIATIVE #2 - PLANNING POLICY

Planning			
Master Plan	Strategic Plan	Operational Plan	Capital Plan
Philosophy and Policies for achieving the Vision of Health for Bahrain	Key Tactical Objectives for meeting the Health Policy Goals	Service Delivery Model	Facilities Equipment Supplies/Services

The responsibilities of the Ministry of Health are extensive, and its resources while substantial, are scarce, costly and constrained in relation to delivering its mandate.

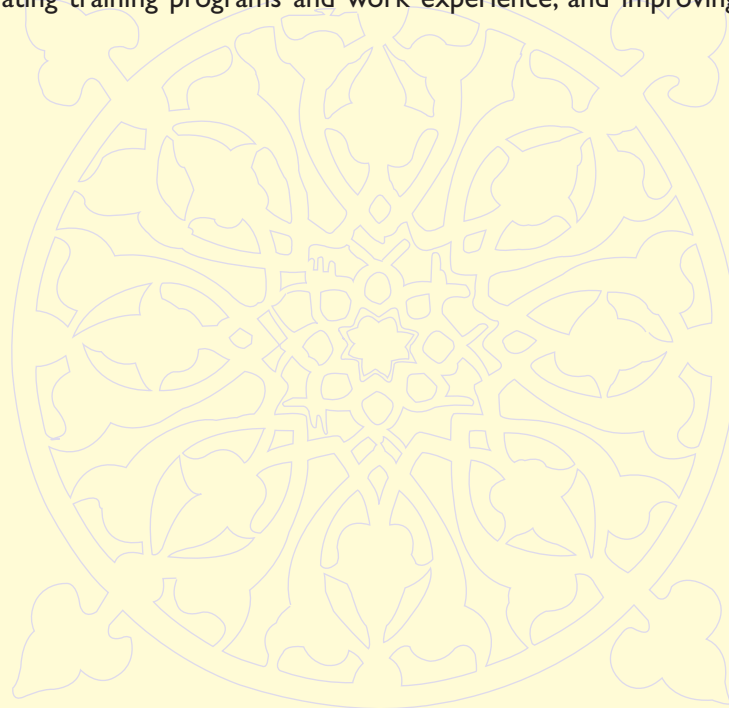
The Ministry's challenge is analogous to a large ship that is chartered to reach a required destination within a given timeframe, at a set value, and with a quality of service that provides for the comfort, safety and security of its passengers while meeting their expectations of a satisfactory or exemplary service. A course must be charted, provisions and resources secured and allocated. A strategy for starting and completing the journey must be detailed and communicated to a well trained crew, who under the leadership of the captain must work together efficiently and effectively to reach port on time.

For the Ministry of Health there is an additional complexity to the journey with the added constraint that it is already under sail and needs to alter course to reach port. It must reorganize its charter, plot a new course and adjust its tactics. Excellent planning is therefore the cornerstone of its' leadership ability and success.

- Policy Initiative #2 therefore is directed towards the process of a "Health Plan" design and the progressive specification of strategic initiatives. This Policy initiative is a decisive move away from a short term, limited approach to planning.
- The Ministry of Health will, as a priority, develop a dynamic master development plan that will provide the blueprint for achieving Bahrain's Health Goals over the next decade. The Bahrain National Health Plan (BNHP) will incorporate not only the health system design but it will articulate the key strategies, tactics, and resources necessary for reaching the goals. It will outline a clear operational intent and investment strategy for providing the capital resources (facilities, equipment and supplies) to provide the quality practice environment and technological tools for service providers.
- The BNHP will be delegated as a lead responsibility of the Ministry of Health Office of Plans and Programmes, who will work collaboratively with other Government Ministries, the Private Sector, Communities and individuals.



- The BNHP will build upon the foundation of the current system providing for enhancement or change only where there is a demonstrated added value towards achieving the policy goals or improving performance and service.
- A major focus of the BNHP will be manpower planning, and development. The Health Industry is a people industry. A highly skilled professional workforce is the most valuable asset. Recruitment, employment, deployment, continuous education and training strategies are key factors in the continued success and ability to sustain the health system. Over time these strategies should result in a Bahrain national workforce that will evolve by targeting of educational opportunities, integrating training programs and work experience, and improving scholarship incentives and contracted service obligations.



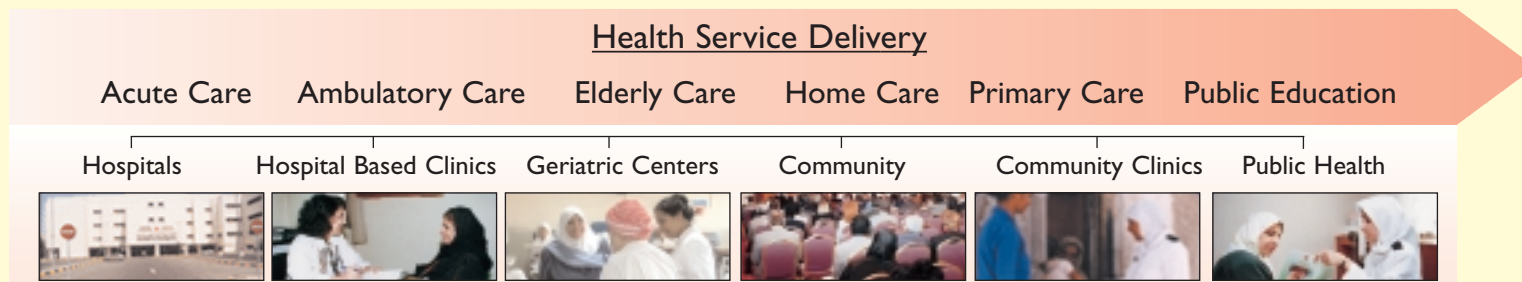
## KEY POLICY INITIATIVE #3 - RESOURCE ALLOCATION POLICY

Resource Allocation		
Manpower	Finance	Facilities/Capital
Manpower Plan Manpower Services Manpower Development	Operating Funds Capital Funds Revenue & Investment Plan	Capital Inventory Capital Development Capital Maintenance

- The Ministry of Health will undertake a comprehensive review of its current resource allocation policy with the intent to ensure allocation and investment decisions support the achievement of the approved Policy Direction and the BNHP.
- The Ministry of Health will identify opportunities for increased investment, revenue generation and reallocation of resources to provide targeted development of priority services and programs. As well, re-tooling and upgrading of the existing capital infrastructure to keep pace with advances in practice and new standards will be a priority.
- To introduce a system of accountability and evidence based management practice, the Ministry of Health will review the current service delivery organization with a view to devoting more of its time and effort to policy, planning, strategic development and performance management. To redirect its efforts, it will divest itself of direct operating responsibility for major programs and services. New mandated operating authorities will be established with delegated responsibility for service delivery based upon performance criteria that achieve policy goals. Facility and Program budgeting will be introduced with annual global fund allocations based upon a system of accountability tracked by activity based costing, clinical practice guidelines and case cost management.
- Revenue generation and cost recovery programs will be an integral part of a balanced financial strategy to alleviate the growing financial pressure on the current expenditure system of funding.
- The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance and National Economy will work collaboratively to develop policy that will support and recognize revenue generation and cost recovery as an important element in a comprehensive health service funding strategy. This policy review will include opportunities for private sector partnership in program development and service delivery and joint venture initiatives based upon revenue sharing formulae.
- The Ministry of Health will continue to examine Health Insurance strategies as a means for offsetting current resource constraints and improving service accessibility to all residents of Bahrain.

- The Ministry of Health as a supplemental strategy to the manpower priorities stated in the BNHP will undertake a review of the manpower plan and skills inventory for the Health Sector to ensure relevance with the service development policies and practice.
- The focus of this Manpower services review will be:
  - To improve recruitment processes and retention performance
  - To adjust Compensation Programs and policies to ensure market competitiveness and internal relative value appropriateness
  - To restructure Personnel Services and performance incentive programs to improve responsiveness and recognition for employees
  - To implement Manpower development strategies that correlate skill requirements with the skills inventory so that training and development programs are targeted towards priorities

## KEY POLICY INITIATIVE #4 - HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY



To encourage decentralization of service, and improved efficiency of practice, the Ministry of Health will support policies that:

- Encourage development of a more self directed work environment where the individual is directly accountable for his practice and has more latitude to exercise his/her professional skills. Two key initiatives will support this change:
  - The individual professional will have a reduced reliance on rules and procedures that allow him to become anonymous within the system. The Providers of service will become more directly accountable to the client.
  - The organization of service delivery will focus on functional roles and be more accessible by reducing job categories and layers that solely manage other people. Employees will have an increased functional role with direct health service content. This change will occur at all levels of management, with the exception of designated executive posts.
- The consistency and quality of practice in the service delivery system will derive from development of an extensive system of networked policies that provide the practice expectations and guidelines to the service providers. This Health Policy Network (HPN) will be available online and will be developed and maintained at the service provider level, based upon international standards and accreditation guidelines. The Policy Network will become a mandatory part of professional practice orientation with formal signoff on compliance. There will be a mandatory annual review and compliance certification.
- The Ministry of Health will implement global and program budgets, for all service providers. Operating under Boards of Management, the institutions and programs will have more autonomy yet be more accountable and compliant to performance standards. This will encourage innovation and improve practice as they work to balance quality service with cost.
- The Ministry of Health policy shift to programs of promotion, prevention, and early intervention will alleviate pressure on costly acute services and provide the incentives to remove the walls and establish more comprehensive program models that integrate institutional and community services. Service Providers will have the incentive to provide service in the right place, at the right time with the appropriate resource. Evidence based performance evaluation with funding incentives based on case costing will promote the appropriate management practice.

## KEY POLICY INITIATIVE #5 - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

<u>Performance Management</u>		
Regulation	Audit	Performance Evaluation
Licensure, Credentialling, Certification & Standards	Financial Audit Compliance & Value Audit	Accreditation, Outcomes Evaluation & Evidence Based Practice

- The Ministry of Health will direct the implementation of a comprehensive Performance Management system to monitor and control standards of practice, audit compliance and value, and provide for evidence based practice evaluation and change. The Performance System will be organized into three sections:
  - Regulatory and Licensing Authority
  - Internal Audit Services
  - Performance Evaluation
- The Ministry of Health will establish through appropriate legislation:
  - A Regulatory and Licensing Authority that will operate under the auspices of a Board of Directors and will have a quasi judicial mandate for all Health Regulatory Practices, Licensing, Discipline, and Standards. The Authority will be accountable to the Ministry by legislated mandate and will operate as a self financed program through revenue generation from fees and services. The Board will be appointed and include representation from other professional practice authorities.
- The Ministry of Health will institute an Internal Audit program that will provide a comprehensive, internationally recognized system of financial audit, compliance audit, operational audit and value audit. The Office of Internal Audit will be directly accountable to the Minister for ensuring the management practices and service performance are compliant with Ministry Policy and operated in a manner that is consistent with a value added approach to achieving efficiency and effectiveness.
- The Ministry of Health will implement a system of Performance Evaluation that is designed to capture data from all levels of the system and generate information that will support an evidence based management and evaluation practice. Experience has shown that perception and fact can vary significantly. The new information age allows real time access to the evidence and by utilizing this for performance evaluation, the Ministry of Health can base strategic decision on a more accurate picture of results, permitting a proactive approach to new development and performance enhancement.

- The Performance Systems for clinical practice will focus on outcomes for the patient that demonstrate genuine sustainable improvement in their health status and maximize their health potential for an improved quality of life. The long established health creed to "above all do no harm" can be improved by a system of performance evaluation that offers the opportunity to understand the true impact of practice and redirect efforts, resources and skills to practice and service that "make a difference".



# STRATEGIC DIRECTION

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The philosophy and policy agenda articulated by the Ministry of Health establishes the Health Vision for the early decades of the 21st Century. The Ministry of Health has accelerated the program for change by setting the stage and creating the environment for:

- more open dialogue
- regular public consultation
- initiation of key tasks that will strengthen and support its strategic direction
- invitations to partnership and collaboration with its colleagues in the public and private sectors

### Health Service Philosophy Directives

The following are key strategic directives that are part of the action plan for change:

#### Partnership and Collaboration

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Provide a model to initiate, promote and support collaborative efforts with other government and non-government organizations that work towards improving the health status in Bahrain
- Work with other Ministries and Education facilities to incorporate healthy living practices in the workplace, schools, and environment
- Promote and support collaborative efforts with other Gulf Cooperation Council Countries in order to improve the health status in the Region
- Promote and support collaborative efforts with regional and international agencies and organizations, including but not limited to the World Health Organization and the World Bank
- Structure Advisory Boards and Management Authorities to include external appointments and cross appointments



## Bahrain Health Services

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Maintain and improve equality and accessibility of the population to comprehensive healthcare services
- Provide incentives encouraging the utilization of primary health services as a cornerstone to the health services delivery system
- Support the creation of a seamless health service incorporating programs of health promotion, prevention, curative and palliative care
- Develop and promote policies that address the core principles of accessibility, affordability, appropriateness, accountability, accreditation and acceptability
- Restructure services to simplify and improve efficiencies of service delivery management and decision making thereby removing barriers to service, appropriate care or information
- Reinforce policies that require adherence to appropriate referral to specialty and subspecialty services from a community based primary care service that is structured on a family practice model
- Reinforce policies that support referral of follow-up care to the family physician and community services
- Establish priority development of an electronic patient documentation system that utilizes a universal and unique identifier and a single patient registry and record system

## Shared Responsibility

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Design, implement, and evaluate a process for communicating with and encouraging input from the community for the development of new programs and the improvement of current programs, including direct consultation on health service evaluation

- Provide a forum for gathering input in prioritising programs that encourage:
  - lifestyle choices and health promotion activities in the community
  - disease prevention and treatment activities in health centers
  - individual responsibilities in seeking and utilizing acute disease treatment
- Monitor, report and communicate statistics and trends to the public with recommendations for future planning.
- Incorporate consultation with the public into the design of future programs through participation of the partners and public in development and monitoring of the BNHP

## Planning Directives

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Direct the production of a dynamic Bahrain National Health Plan to provide the blueprint for achieving Bahrain's health goals for the next decade
- Delegate lead responsibility for the BNHP to the Ministry of Health - Office of Plans and Programmes, and specify the terms of reference for their charge
- Balance the expected increase in demand for health services with available resources ensuring that the principles of affordability, accessibility and in particular the acceptability of health services are not compromised.
- Direct in consultation with the Civil Service Bureau a comprehensive review of the Health Sector Manpower Plan, Training and Manpower Development Programs to ensure relevance and support of the BNHP
- Evaluate the outcomes of existing health programs and adjust service content to meet changing health system priorities and demands while continuously improving the quality of care in Bahrain

## Resource Allocation Directives

### Manpower Resources

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Direct the development and implementation of a comprehensive Health Policy Network (HPN) to provide standards of practice, guidelines and service expectations for the Ministry of Health
- Review the current organization structure and personnel policies with the intent of a progressive development of a self directed work environment with increased emphasis on direct functional practice for all job categories
- Maintain appropriate level and skill mix of healthcare manpower according to the national demand for health services
- Optimize the proportion of workforce providing non-direct patient care to improve productivity
- Develop, support and promote effective educational and employment policies to improve opportunities for Bahrainis to work in healthcare service areas
- Support and promote efforts to diversify and rehabilitate skills of Ministry of Health personnel who might be affected as a result of a new automated work environment

### Financial Resources

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Conduct a comprehensive review of resource allocation policy to ensure allocation and investment decisions support the Ministry of Health Policy Plan
- Develop a balanced financing strategy for Health that recognizes not only expenditure programs but revenue generation and cost recovery
- Identify opportunities for increased investment, revenue generation and re-allocation to provide targeted development of priority services and programs and upgrading and re-tooling of the existing capital infrastructure

- Promote and encourage the private sector to increase its investment in the health services areas, particularly in areas of private hospitals, dental and medical clinics
- Develop and promote alternative healthcare financing for its health services
- Introduce programs that aim at cost sharing of health services. This includes the commencement of a compulsory system of health insurance in Bahrain
- Develop a plan and structure for establishment of Health Management Authorities to assume operational responsibility and accountability for facilities and programs of the Ministry of Health
- Establish a system for implementation of a Ministry of Health global budget, based upon the concept of Performance Based Budgeting System (PBBS) for all Health Management Authorities
- Consult with Private Sector service providers and the vendor community to examine opportunities for partnership and joint venture participation that strengthen the service model and support achievement of the health goals

## Health Services Directives

### Program implementation

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Identify opportunities for improving programs designed for the specific needs of Bahrainis. Population trends indicate increasing numbers of children, women, and elderly. Specific hereditary and genetic diseases require study and treatment. Lack of healthy lifestyle and bad health habits constitute major causes of chronic diseases. Mental illness, disorders and psychosomatic illnesses require treatment and prevention
- Promote and support programs aimed at improving the health of the mother and child, school health services and increasing resources to meet the demands for gerontology, oncology, endocrinology and cardiovascular specialties
- Sustain and improve the physical well-being of the population with the support and promotion of programs directed to reduce the incidence, morbidity and mortality related to the workplace, cancer, national disasters and emergencies, diabetes, infectious diseases, respiratory, gastrointestinal and genitourinary diseases

- Provide research and treatment resources to reduce the incidence and impact of congenital and hereditary diseases, with special emphasis on sickle cell disease, thalassemia and other haemolytic blood diseases
- Promote policies and programs that aim at improving the nutritional status, physical fitness, and healthy lifestyle changes by the individual
- Promote and support programs that reduce stress, depression, and the misuse of alcohol. In addition, programs will aim at reducing the impact of dementia

## Performance Directives

### ● Regulation

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Formulate and support policies that regulate professional activities of health care employees of different categories
- Seek accreditation and recognition of healthcare facilities in Bahrain according to relevant international accreditation systems and protocols
- Establish a Regulatory and Licensing Authority with a quasi-judicial authority and mandate for all Health regulatory, licensing, discipline and standards practices
- Establish and implement a comprehensive Internal Audit Program that incorporates internationally recognized standards and systems for financial audit, compliance audit, value audit, and operational program audit

### ● Performance Management

*The Ministry of Health will:*

- Monitor and evaluate the determinants of health such as environment, age, gender, ethnicity, income, education, employment, a sense of control, housing, and access to healthcare services

- Direct the development and implementation of a comprehensive evidence-based Performance Management System to regulate, audit, and evaluate all Ministry of Health functions and practices
- Establish and implement a comprehensive Performance Evaluation System that is evidence based and focused on outcome evaluation
- Formulate, promote and implement quality management programs that aim at improving service utilization, customer satisfaction and optimise the use of resources
- Promote and develop comprehensive quality management programs that aim at optimising the use of available resources, reduce the duplication of services, and improve productivity in the healthcare facilities

