GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA

Ministry of Health, Wellness and Elderly Affairs

Terms of Reference

Development of a Registration Policy for Universal Health Coverage

1.0 Background

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) represents the government's commitment to enhancing the accessibility of essential healthcare services to its populace, ensuring fairness in distribution, and establishing sustainable funding mechanisms for these services. It builds upon the principle of solidarity outlined in the Primary Health Care Approach and the National Strategic Plan, recognizing that the well-being of individuals contributes to the overall health of communities.

Public health takes center stage in any nation, as exemplified by events such as the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Ebola crisis, Chikungunya outbreak, and instances of inadequate access to crucial childhood vaccines. In situations where one person cannot access timely care due to healthcare service unavailability and financial constraints during high-risk health crises, there are cascading consequences for the entire population, akin to a domino effect.

Recognizing the significance of UHC, the government of Saint Lucia has been proactive in laying the groundwork for its implementation. Central to this effort is the establishment of a robust Registration Policy for UHC tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of the island's population. This policy is essential as it serves as the cornerstone for identifying and enrolling individuals into the UHC system, thus ensuring that every citizen can benefit from comprehensive healthcare coverage.

Over the past years, Saint Lucia's healthcare landscape has witnessed a growing demand for accessible, affordable, and high-quality healthcare services. The impact of global health crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, has underscored the urgency of ensuring healthcare access for all residents. Moreover, the challenges posed by outbreaks of diseases such as Chikungunya and the Ebola crisis have highlighted the vulnerabilities in the existing healthcare infrastructure.

In response to these challenges, Saint Lucia has recognized the imperative need to develop a healthcare Registration Policy that streamlines the enrollment process, defines eligibility criteria, directly links to financing and provision of health services, safeguards individual data privacy, and facilitates seamless data sharing among relevant government agencies and healthcare providers. This Policy aims to establish a comprehensive registration system that not only captures basic demographic information but also considers factors such as vulnerability, employment status, and dependencies, which are essential for equitable resource allocation and effective healthcare planning for all citizens.

The government has initiated efforts to promote interoperability among existing registration systems, such as the Saint Lucia Health Information System (SLUHIS) and the CELLMA System. However, these efforts represent only the beginning of a comprehensive registration strategy necessary for the successful rollout of UHC in Saint Lucia.

In light of these considerations, the development of a Registration Policy for UHC is of paramount importance to the government and people of Saint Lucia. It reflects the nation's commitment to improving healthcare accessibility, ensuring financial protection, and ultimately enhancing the well-being of its citizens. By establishing clear guidelines and mechanisms for registration, this policy will play a pivotal role in realizing the vision of Universal Health Coverage, where every Saint Lucian

resident can access the healthcare they need, when they need it, without facing undue financial burdens.

2.0 Objectives of the Consultancy

The purpose of the development of the Registration Policy for UHC (the Policy) is to improve population registration, a critical step toward patient-centered care for UHC. Patients need unique identification to access care and healthcare system needs common connector to make health records patient-centric and interoperable with other systems.

The primary objective of this consultancy is to facilitate the development of a Registration Policy for UHC that aligns with the unique context and needs of Saint Lucia, supporting the successful implementation of UHC. This policy will guide the registration processes, links to financing and provision of health services, data management, and privacy protocols to ensure an inclusive and efficient healthcare system.

The Policy aims not only to synchronize with the local landscape but also to place the patient at the forefront. By doing so, it will contribute significantly to the seamless implementation of Universal Healthcare (UHC). The envisioned policy will play a pivotal role in directing registration procedures, managing healthcare data, and establishing privacy protocols. The policy will also provide actionable activities to effect the necessary changes to business rules and operating procedures for health financing including PHC per capita payment and between health care providers at the primary and secondary levels of care. Its core mission is to foster an inclusive and patient-friendly healthcare system that prioritizes efficiency and respects the individual needs of every patient through their journey of care at every level.

The UHC requires all citizens to be covered (or eligible for coverage) which requires unique identification of all citizens, not only patients, for health purposes.

The Policy shall ensure use of unique population identification in all healthcare domains, at least:

- Healthcare financing (population registration that ensures its connection to institutionalizing the Performance Based Financing (PBF), Phase I of the HFPS' national implementation of PHC per capita payment system, and other health/social insurance, payment and budgeting mechanisms).
- Health service delivery (primary care and community care systems, hospital systems, pharmaceutical systems, patient portals, e-prescribing, e-referrals, laboratory information system (LIS), radiology information system (RIS), etc.).
- Self-managing care (online patient networks, mobile apps for medication adherence, medical wearables, mobile health apps, online symptom checkers and assessment tools, online service directories, etc.).
- Public health and health data analytics (public health statistics; health data warehouses and BI analysis; epidemiological surveillance; non-communicable disease registries; international health reporting/monitoring; quarantine management; epidemic containment surveillance; health education; etc.).

- Governance (annual budgeting and planning; monitoring budget utilization; procurement monitoring; supplier performance monitoring; contract management; monitoring compliance with health laws and standards; health program development; service quality monitoring; emergency response monitoring; international health cooperation; etc.).

Specific Objectives:

- **Tailored Policy Creation:** Actively engage and facilitate development of a Registration Policy for UHC, specifically tailored to the unique context and requirements of Saint Lucia.
- **Population-based and Patient-Centric Approach:** Place people and patients at the forefront, ensuring the policy aligns with patient needs and enhances their experience within the healthcare system.
- **Direct link to health financing:** Enable policy and operations of health purchasing and provider payment systems as well as public finance management (PFM) including accounting and auditing.
- **Local Landscape Synchronization:** Ensure the policy is in sync with the local healthcare landscape and addresses specific challenges and needs in Saint Lucia.
- **Unified Identification Methods:** Address the issue of patients having multiple forms of IDs (driver's license, National ID Card, passport) and streamline this for easier healthcare access.
- **Directive Role in Healthcare:** The policy will guide registration procedures, healthcare data management, and establish robust privacy protocols.
- **Actionable Activities for Healthcare Providers:** Provide clear actions to modify business rules and operating procedures among healthcare providers at both primary and secondary levels.
- **Inclusive and Efficient Healthcare System:** Aim to create an inclusive healthcare system that prioritizes efficiency and is responsive to the diverse needs of all patients.
- **Respect for Individual Patient Journeys:** Respect and cater to the individual needs of every patient throughout their journey of care at all healthcare levels.
- **Enhancing UHC Implementation:** Contribute significantly to the seamless implementation of Universal Healthcare (UHC) in Saint Lucia, making it more effective and patient friendly.

3.0 Scope of Services

The Consultant shall work collaboratively with all stakeholders towards the Registration of the Population for UHC and facilitate the development of a policy document for guiding the registration process. The selected consultant will be responsible for:

a. Conducting a thorough review of existing registration processes and systems related to healthcare and social services in Saint Lucia including but not limited to National Identification/Voter Registration Process and Social Security. Specifically, examine registration processes of the birth registration within the Ministry of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs, the digi.gov registration, as well as registration processes in existing healthcare information systems such as SLUHIS and CELLMA. This will also include the examination of existing legal frameworks and data protection measures related to these processes to ensure they align with patient rights and international best practices.

b. Analyzing regional and international best practices and standards for healthcare registration policies, with a focus on interoperability, data sharing, and privacy for financing and provision of health services. This will also include lessons learnt from a similar registration process to address potential challenges. Analyze best practices specifically focusing on models that excel in population-based and patient-centered approaches.

c. Identify and recommend best practices that can be adapted to Saint Lucia's context emphasizing ease of access, patient privacy, and data security.

d. Engaging with stakeholders, including government agencies, healthcare providers, civil society organizations, patients, and relevant experts, through consultations, workshops, and interviews to gather input and requirements for the Policy.

e. Drafting Registration Policy for UHC that includes key components such as policy purpose, eligibility criteria, streamlined registration procedures, data management, privacy safeguards, governance structures, ethical considerations, and appeals processes.

f. Ensure the policy reflects a population-based and patient-centered approach, addressing specific patient needs and preferences identified during the stakeholder engagement process.

g. Develop implementation guidelines for the policy implementation, for example: (i) where and how to register - what systems needs to be developed and/or adjusted, and in what dynamics, (ii) guidelines for standardized registration forms and data collection tools to capture accurate demographic and health-related data from registered individuals that inclusive, catering to individuals with varying levels of literacy and technological proficiency, (iii) proposed standards and mechanisms for interoperability among different registration agencies and systems, (iv) guidelines and protocols for responsible collection, storage, security, and privacy protection of personal health information, (v) how to promote the importance of UHC and registration to the population, (vi) how implement health financing, purchasing and provider payment and to use the PBF scheme and the national implementation of capitation payment at the primary health care level as an initial registration channel, (vii) how to dynamically address key and well-known problems such as duplicate registration, data becoming obsolete quickly, population mobility/changing registration etc., and (viii) the other operational aspects.

h. Preparation of a detailed implementation plan that outlines the key activities, timelines, and resource requirements for the implementation of the UHC registration system. The plan should provide a clear roadmap for the entire implementation process.

i. Incude specific steps to ensure the system is patient-friendly and accessible, with provisions for ongoing patient feedback and sytem adjustments.

j. Preparation of a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for monitoring the implementation of the Policy.

4.0 Deliverables

1. Report 1 - Inception Report outlining the approach, stakeholder engagement plan, work plan and methodology.
2. Report 2 – Background report on comprehensive assessment of the country's registration processes, gap analysis, best practices and benchmarking previous registration policies and processes that can be applied to the Saint Lucia's registration policy.
3. Report 3 – Draft Registration Policy, Implementation Guidelines and Implementation Plan for Stakeholder consultation.
4. Report 4 – Consultation Report and finalized Registration Policy, Implementation Guidelines and Implementation Plan after incorporation of Stakeholder feedback.
5. Presentation of all deliverables to MOHWEA
6. Final Report

5.0 Reporting Requirements

The Project Implementation Unit of the MOHWEA will be responsible for overseeing and supervising the Consultant's work. This Unit, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Wellness, and Elderly Affairs Technical Officers from the offices of the HMIU and UHC Director, will offer technical guidance, advice, and operational oversight to assist the Consultant in achieving the assigned tasks.

6.0 Proprietary Rights

The consultant is required to grant full ownership rights to the MOHWEA for all documents and reports generated during this consultancy. Furthermore, both during and after the agreement with the MOHWEA, the consultant shall refrain from using or divulging any confidential information pertaining to the department's business or operations.

7.0 Required Skills, Experience and Qualification

A. For the firm
   i. Minimum of 7 years of proven experience in policy development in the healthcare sector. -30%
   ii. Experience in developing registration policies or similar documents for healthcare systems or public services. – 30%
   iii. In-depth knowledge of healthcare policies, regulations and systems both nationally and internationally. – 20%
   iv. Knowledge of principles and practices of Universal Health Coverage. – 20%

B. For the individual team members

i. <u>Team Leader (Health Policy Analyst)</u>

A master's degree or higher in public health, health policy, or related field. At least 7 years' experience in the development of health policies preferably in the region or countries similar to Saint Lucia. Strong understanding of healthcare policy development, UHC principles, and international best practices in health policy and registration/national ID systems.

ii. <u>System</u> Architect

A master's degree or higher in information systems development or related field. At least 5 years' experience in the development of digital health policies and architectural solutions, preferably in the region or countries similar to Saint Lucia. Strong understanding of various information systems and databases' architectures. Experience with international best practices in digitalization of registration/national ID systems would be considered an advantage.

iii. <u>Data Management Specialist</u>

A degree in data management, information systems, or a related field. Experience in at least 2 assignments similar to the proposed assignment. At least 5 years post qualification experience. Proficiency in data collection, storage, security, and privacy protection. Knowledge of data interoperability standards.

iv. <u>Legal Expert</u>

Legal background with expertise in data privacy laws and regulations. Experience of at least 3 related assignments. At least 5 years post qualification experience.

v. <u>Healthcare Economist</u>

A degree in health economics or a related field. At least 2 similar assignments in conducting economic analysis to determine cost implications, resource allocation and financial sustainability of the Registration Policy.

8.0 Duration of the Assignment

The assignment is expected to be undertaken over a period of six (6 months) and is expected to be conducted between May 2023 to October 2024. Further, the Consultant shall:

(i)   Take all the necessary steps to ensure that the entrusted task is executed properly and on schedule in accordance with the established Terms of Reference;

Perform the task in accordance with the Terms of Reference and according to internationally accepted standards.

The allocation of days per activity is to be agreed.

9.0 Timetable of Deliverables

The Consultant will be required to deliver the following Reports for submission to the Project Implementation Unit:

ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES	# of WEEKS after acceptance of previous deliverable	% of Payment
Report 1	Inception Report and Work Plan	3	10%
Report 2	Background Report	4	20%
Report 3.	Draft Registration Policy, Implementation Guidelines and Implementation Plan	6	40%
Report 4.	Consultation Report and finalized draft Registration Policy, Implementation Guidelines and Implementation Plan	4	20%
Reports 5. and 6.	Dissemination Meeting (documents and PPT Deck) and Final Report	4	10%

10.0 Working Arrangements

Client's Responsibility

1. Designation of a technical lead/leads within the MOHWEA to guide the consultancy.

2. Make available to the Consultant existing reports/studies/data including the existing information on health services and other relevant documents relevant to the work of the Consultant.

3. Review of reports to ascertain congruence with the terms of reference.

4. Initiate the consultation and cooperation of other internal and external stakeholders required to provide support to the Consultant for realization of the relevant aspects of the assignment.

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Consultant's Responsibility

1. The Consultant shall be responsible for the collection of all data and relevant information and survey required for the delivery of the assignment.

2. The Consultant shall submit from the outset the expected outputs, as well as ensure timely submission to the Manager of HMIU & UHC Director for review. The Technical Working Group will ensure the timely review and acceptance of the reports submitted by the Consultant, not more than two (2) weeks after receipt of reports from the Consultant.

3. Execution of services in accordance with the laws, customs and practices endorsed by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and Elderly Affairs;

4. Assurance of strict confidentiality of all data.