

# Public – Private Partnership (PPP) towards UAE Healthcare Reforms

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Public-private partnership (PPP) is a legal agreement between public and private sectors by sharing its assets and skills in delivering quality facilities and services to the people. PPP is becoming like a fad, however, it is a long-term process. It entails a broader capacity of understanding between the public and private entities that requires experience and knowledge advisers in facilitating the partnership between public and private sectors.

In the healthcare industry, most of the services are being delivered by the private sectors. Somehow the public sector provides the facilities but the management is usually being commissioned to the private sectors.

The healthcare industry in UAE is becoming fast improving and competitive to cater the needs of its citizens and the expatriates. The continuing move of the government in integrating policy to for a quality healthcare is also being challenged on how it can provide the most affordable services to offer to the public.

Improving the healthcare system, while considering the high cost in every health care provider is the main challenge for the policymakers. The UAE healthcare system both the private and public sectors provide funding leading to various payments, insurance coverage, and services offered. Thus, the system becomes so complex and very costly to manage and sustain because of the varying expenditures.

In 2014, during the World Government Summit, the UAE government has commissioned a report from Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, indicated that healthcare and education ranked the lowest in terms of quality based on the public perception in the lower middle-income countries. One of the six pillars of the Vision 2021 National Agency is to provide world-class healthcare. The government is now working in having all the public and private hospitals accredited according to the joined national and international quality standards of medical services and medical practitioners.

As stated in the Vision 2021, the UAE government set forth the following objectives: (1) enhancement of quality healthcare services; (2) attraction, retention, career development of healthcare professionals; (3) ensuring patient safety and wellbeing; (4) emergency preparedness; (5) health-hazards precautionary awareness to improve public health; (6) ensuring value of money and sustainability of healthcare spending; (7) inclusion of private sector health providers and endorsing their investment initiatives in the sector; and (8) launching electronic health program as a primary facilitator for the other priorities as stated above. The objectives are not only to set to be achieved but it will be a mechanism for innovation, reform, and development of the healthcare sector in UAE.

The UAE government enacted a law on public-private partnerships (PPPs) in 2015. The law encourages more partnerships between the public and private sectors in the development of projects in the country in order to improve the delivery of goods and services to the people.

Public-private partnership policy is a tool which requires a proper mindset on how to set its agenda, its policy objectives and how it will be implemented. Commitment to the partnership needs a solid foundation in order to have a successful UAE healthcare reform.

