A Handbook for National Quality Policy and Strategy (NQPS)

A practical approach to development of policy and strategy on improving quality of health care, co-developed by the World Health Organization and countries embarking on national quality initiatives.
Quality – Embedded in the SDGs

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Target 3.8

Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

Universal Health Coverage

Ensuring that all people and communities can use the promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative health services they need, of sufficient quality to be effective, while also ensuring that the use of these services does not expose the user to financial hardship.
Background

• The **Sustainable Development Goals** place a clear emphasis on achieving **universal health coverage** (UHC)

• WHO Framework on **integrated people centred health services**

• The development, refinement and execution of a **National Quality Policy & Strategy (NQPS)** is a priority worldwide as countries strive to systematically **improve the performance** of their health care systems

• Across the globe, countries are seeking advice on how to inform their efforts on National Quality Policy and Strategy.
The NQPS Initiative

• Co-development of resources to support development of national policies and strategies on quality of care

• Catalyzing national action through technical cooperation

• Learning agenda: Global Learning Laboratory for Quality UHC

Learn more here: http://www.who.int/servicedefiverysafety/areas/qhc/nqps/en/
WHO IS THE HANDBOOK FOR?

• Governments and policymakers (national, state, provincial levels), developing or planning to develop NQPS

• Technical advisors, donors and other stakeholders supporting NQPS development
HOW WAS THE HANDBOOK DEVELOPED?

• Analysis of existing policies and strategies
• Interviews
• Country experience and piloting
• Existing publications
• Writing team
KEY PRINCIPLES

• Co-development
• Based on country-level experience
• Practical and useable
• Dynamic – continual refinement
• Flexible process, not prescriptive guidance
• Impact!
OVERVIEW OF HANDBOOK

• Introduction
• Part I: Policy Development
• Part II: Strategy Development
• Part III: Tools & Resources
Why have a dual focus on quality policy and strategy?

• Although the focus is usually on a national strategy, there is benefit in a national quality policy.

• The **policy** is based upon an agreed ambition with explicit statement of intention and becomes the agreed “course of action”.

• The **strategy** provides a clear roadmap and outlines “how” the policy will come to fruition, and may be revised and refined during the longer term of the policy.

• The policy and strategy should of course be thought of in an **integrated manner**.

• Most appropriate mechanism for development and publication of NQPS may be as part of **broader integrated national health planning**.
National Quality Policy & Strategy – The Essence

The eight elements of the national quality policy & strategy process:

1. Defining and aligning with national health goals and priorities
   - Government
   - Committee
   - Ministry
   - Ministry
   - Ministry
   - Development and clarification of governance and organizational structures for quality

2. Developing a local definition of quality
   - Safe?
   - Effective?
   - Integrated?
   - Efficient?
   - Accessible?
   - People-centered?
   - Equitable?

3. Selection of improvement methods and interventions
   - Standards
   - Licensing
   - Inspection
   - Workforce
   - Incentives
   - Benchmarking
   - Engagement

4. Stakeholder mapping and engagement
   - District Health Office
   - Health Society
   - Civil Society

5. Situational analysis to determine the state of quality and guide the policy

6. Development of Health Management Information Systems and data systems

7. Selection of quality indicators and core measures
The eight elements

National health goals and priorities

Why?
• Policy & strategy should be aligned with existing national priorities. Strategy outlines how national goals and priorities for quality can be achieved

• Description of process of analysing existing sources of goals and priorities

Content:
• Process of selection of goals and priorities for quality policy & strategy
• Example goal statements
The eight elements

Local definition of quality

Why?

• Policy & strategy must be grounded in local understanding of quality, to ensure implementation and evaluation appropriate to local needs and priorities

Content:

• Overview of rationale for development of local definition
• Actions required to develop definition
The eight elements

Stakeholder mapping and engagement

**Why?**
- Meaningful engagement required through design, implementation, and evaluation, to build shared understanding, mutual ambition, and commitment
- Overview of main stakeholder groups
- Outline of tasks for key stakeholders in strategy development and implementation

**Content:**
- Guidance on selection of stakeholders and mapping of influence
- Key considerations for engagement of stakeholders
- Discussion of vital role of community engagement
Situational analysis: state of quality

Why?

• Builds understanding of state of quality, strengths of health care system to leverage for improvement, challenges & priorities, contextual factors, and barriers & facilitators to the policy & strategy development process.

Content:

• Outline of suggested situational analysis process:
  - Document review, data, survey, interviews
• Domains to cover:
  - Context of quality policy and programs; policy and planning; regulation & governance; existing measurement & improvement activities
The eight elements

Governance and organizational structure for quality

**Why?**

- Policy & strategy can be driven by a number of possible governance structures
- Successful implementation relies upon successful governance & accountability

**Content:**

- Questions to consider in clarifying governance structures
- Communication flows and organizational structure
- Community input to governance and accountability
The eight elements

Interventions for improvement

Why?

• Success of policy & strategy rests on selection of appropriate interventions that can address identified priorities. This will form the substance of the implementation plan.

Content:

• Discussion of limitations of evidence base for improvement interventions
• Requirement for a pragmatic approach
• Tools for designing, organizing and delivering strategy:
  • Juran Trilogy
  • Selecting interventions – illustrative list
  • National multi-tiered approach
The eight elements

Health management information systems & data systems

Why?

• Data, backed by adequate information management systems, is essential both in planning the policy & strategy, and in implementing improvement across the system

Content:

• Common limitations of data systems
• Practical approach to understand and improve systems
  • Analyse current situation – key questions to consider
  • Map ideal state
  • Plan to bridge gap
The eight elements

Quality indicators & core measures

Why?
• Measurement central to understanding progress and translating policy into practice
• Need for harmonized indicators and systems to allow data to drive policy, decision-making & improvement.

Content:
• Overview of key considerations in indicator selection
• Overview of uses for indicators and core measures
• Development of indicator framework:
  • Review of indicator lists
  • Cataloguing and assessing existing indicators
  • Use of conceptual frameworks
Operational planning & technical programmes

Developing an operational plan for implementation

• Deeper examination of initial required tasks
• When and how is it developed?
• Elements of an operational plan
• Practical document

Integrating technical programs with NQPS

• Integration of technical & vertical programmes is essential, and benefits both the strategy and the individual programs
• Can be complex task, but allows maximization of existing work, engagement of key partners, and identification of entry points
• Options for integration
• Initial steps
PART III: TOOLS & RESOURCES

- Compendium document under development
- Mainly signposting existing tools to meet critical needs
- “Living” document
- Gaps identified
- The Global Learning Laboratory
LIMITATIONS

• Not exhaustive guidance
• Every country will have different needs – difficult to capture in one resource
• Complex concepts summarized in concise overview
• Linguistic constraints
• Static document for dynamic subject (but we can address this!)
• LMIC?
• Means nothing without being used and refined by countries
CONSULTATION PROCESS

- Country meeting in June 2017
- Open consultation on GLL
- Focused collaboration with technical partners

CONSULTATION: feedback

What we are getting right:

• Broadly on track
• Readable
• Comprehensive
• Useful for those at whom it is targeted
• Little extraneous information
CONSULTATION: feedback

Suggested additions and amendments:

• Practical case examples
• The role of QI teams across different levels
• Engagement & people-centredness
• Evidence generation
• Measurement issues
• Detail on culture
CONSULTATION: feedback

The big questions:

• Tools & resources!
• Length - usability
• Policy vs strategy
• Interventions – regulation, accreditation etc
• Technical areas e.g. WASH
Next steps

- Refinement
- Continued co-development and testing
- Tools & resources
- Launch
- “Living document”
- Implementation
- The Global Report
- Version 2.0 – technical areas, tools, implementation experience
Learn more here: http://www.who.int/servicedeliverysafety/areas/qhc/nqps/en/

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