

## PAHO/CANADA FUNDED 2006/2007 BPB PROJECT

### Final Status Report as of 30 November 2007

#### 1. PROJECT TITLE:

Support to strengthen the governance function of the Health Services Accreditation Programme of Trinidad and Tobago and conduct surveyor and accreditation coordinator training.

#### 2. PROJECT SUMMARY:

The intent of this project was three-fold, namely:

- to strengthen the governance function of health services accreditation programme in Trinidad and Tobago (TRT) by establishing the Health Services Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago;
- to conduct surveyor and accreditation coordinator training; and
- to explore the feasibility of a formal partnership between TRT and the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA) to support the implementation of the TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme.



This project was intended to entail a study tour of three (3) members of the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council to Canada to visit the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA), to learn more about mechanisms to strengthen the governance function of accreditation with the intent of strengthening the policy framework for the establishment of the Health Accreditation Council of TRT and processes needed to operationalise the said Council.

The next step would be to have a CCHSA expert team visit TRT for one week to provide surveyor and accreditation coordinator training as well as to explore possibilities of a joint venture partnership to support the implementation of the TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme.

#### 3. STATUS OF PROJECT

All activities within the project have been completed except for surveyor training. The need still exists to conduct this training but it was felt that it would be more appropriate to delay this training until the Health Services Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago is established – hopefully in 2008. Ministry of Health funds would be used.

#### 4. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ACTIVITIES/TASKS

##### TRT Delegation on Study Tour to Canada to Visit CCHSA

In the proposal, it was envisaged that a study tour of a TRT delegation to Ottawa, Canada would take place in the period April-June 2006 in order to meet with the CCHSA. However, it occurred over the period 10-14 July 2006. The delegation comprised:

- Ms. Valerie Alleyne-Rawlins (Team Leader), Director, Health Services Quality Management, Ministry of Health (MOH);
- Ms. Bhabie Roopchand, Legal Advisor, MOH; and
- Dr. Andrea Yearwood, Director, Health Policy, Research and Planning, MOH.



Ms. Bhabie Roopchand and Dr. Yearwood during the Study Tour

Attached are (a) the agenda for the study tour; (b) presentations made to the TRT delegation and (c) the trip report by the TRT Delegation. The visit included lectures, site visits to health care organizations, and discussions with representatives of health care organisations. Topics covered as part of the tour included:

- human resources
- knowledge transfer on governance
- learning and development
- recent experiences of a Local Health Integration Network
- strategic communications
- the debate in Canada relative to voluntary and mandatory accreditation influenced by the Health Council of Canada
- Canadian Patient Safety Institute's role, patient safety concepts and practices and the relevance of accreditation to support its mandate of creating a safer health environment

- research and product development
- information technology
- service delivery

Site visits were also made to Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

#### Visit by CCHSA Expert Team to Trinidad and Tobago

A two-member CCHSA team (Ms Eva Kiess and Ms. Joan Fernandez) visited TRT from April 20 to May 4, 2007. The team was given the following scope of work for their visit:

- Review the existing standards as outlined in the *Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Health Accreditation Standards Manual for the Health Sector* and make recommendations to the Ministry of Health of Trinidad and Tobago regarding potential enhancements.
- Conduct site visits to two TRT hospitals (Port of Spain General Hospital and San Fernando General Hospital) and the Couva District Health Facility.
- Provide technical guidance to the Ministry of Health of Trinidad and Tobago suggesting selection criteria for persons to be trained as accreditation coordinators and team leaders.
- Develop and conduct an education/training session and handouts on the CCHSA accreditation process using examples of TRT standards for accreditation coordinators, team leaders, and front line staff.
- Provide an assessment of the success of the education/training program.
- Develop and deliver a national sensitization session on quality improvement and accreditation for key stakeholders of the TRT healthcare system.
- Develop and deliver a presentation for members of the TRT Health Sector Quality Council on quality improvement and the accreditation process.
- Develop a checklist to serve as a guiding framework for the establishment of the TRT Health Sector Accreditation Council.
- Conduct a working session on further enhancing the collaboration between the Ministry of Health and CCHSA relative to the overall goal of strengthening TRT's Health Services Accreditation Programme.

Attached is the final report by CCHSA in regards to this phase of the project.

#### **Enhancing the existing TRT Ministry of Health Accreditation Standards Manual for the Health Sector: Review and recommendations**

Standards were reviewed for organization (including flow, language, and numeration), measurability, and standard content (including completeness, clarity and ability to drive quality). Comments and recommendations were provided to the TRT Ministry of Health on the organization of the standards, measurability, and completeness, as well as for specific chapters and topic areas.

### **Guidance on selection of accreditation coordinators and team leaders: Role description and recommended selection criteria**

The position of Accreditation Coordinator for a healthcare organization undergoing accreditation can be defined as one of leading the organization through the accreditation process. By CCHSA's definition the Accreditation Coordinator acts as a link between the organization and the accrediting body. As well, the Accreditation Coordinator liaises with the surveyors, supports and links with accreditation team leaders within the organization, ensures that all involved in accreditation are appropriately educated on the process, and provides ongoing support and clarification to the accreditation teams and leadership. Furthermore, the Accreditation Coordinator plays a major role in ensuring logistics for the surveys are appropriately carried out.

CCHSA provided the TRT Ministry of Health with the following selection criteria for the position of Accreditation Coordinator:

- Highly developed organizational and interpersonal skills
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to think strategically while also managing details
- Capacity to assist in managing organizational change processes
- Ability to work as part of a team, working co-operatively with senior and junior colleagues
- Professional manner, discrete, good attitude, and willingness to be flexible
- Experience in the leadership and management of a team
- Proven problem-solving abilities, a results-oriented background with strong follow through abilities
- Ability to handle multiple priorities and deadlines

The responsibility of a Team Leader includes organizing and facilitating the individual accreditation team as they go through the accreditation process. The Team Leader's role is very much a facilitator's role, and as such the Team Leader will monitor and assist the team to stay focused and keep interactions positive and productive. The Team Leader is responsible for scheduling accreditation meetings and handling team logistics, as well as promoting equal and balanced participation among members.

CCHSA provided the TRT Ministry of Health with the following selection criteria for the position of a Team Leader:

- Facilitation skills
- Ability to work as part of a team, working co-operatively with senior and junior colleagues
- Highly developed organizational and interpersonal skills
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills

## **Guidance on establishing the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council: Checklist of Administrative and Operational Processes**

CCHSA provided the TRT Ministry of Health with select key processes in ten areas associated with the governance and management functions of an accreditation body. The checklist incorporates CCHSA's 50-year experience as an internationally recognized organization that has been awarded three times accreditation status by the International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua). The list also drew on CCHSA executives' long-term experience with the development and implementation of ISQua accreditation standards. The checklist was compiled in accordance with CCHSA's internationally recognized standards of excellence and ISQua's ALPHA International Accreditation Standards.

### **National Training Session for Accreditation Co-ordinators**



Health Minister John Rahael displays the Ministry's Accreditation Standards Manual for the Health Sector after the formal opening of the Workshop for Quality Managers, Accreditation Coordinators and Team Leaders of public and private sector facilities at Ambassador Hotel (from left) Eva Kiess, of the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation. Dr Carol Boyd-Scobie, PAHO, Sandra Jones, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, and Valerie Alleyne-Rawlins, Director of Health Services Quality Management

On 1 May 2007 the CCHSA conducted an education/training session on the CCHSA accreditation process for TRT accreditation coordinators, team leaders, and front line staff. The CCHSA Final Report for this phase of the project provides the materials used for the education/training session. During an opening ceremony, the Minister of Health and the PAHO/WHO Country Representative gave welcoming remarks to the participants.



Eva Kiess, left, visiting head of the Market Development function of CCHSA (Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation), chats with Dr Carol Boyd-Scobie, country representative of the Pan American Health Organisation at a workshop for Quality Manager and Accreditation co-ordinators and team leaders of public and private sectors at Bamboo Room, Ambassador Hotel, St James,

### **National Sensitisation Session on Quality Improvement and Accreditation for Key Stakeholders of the TRT Healthcare System**

On 2 May 2007 the CCHSA conducted a national sensitization session. The CCHSA Final Report for this phase of the project provides the presentation for this session.

#### **Presentation to TRT Health Sector Quality Council**

On 3 May 2007 the CCHSA made a presentation to the TRT Health Sector Quality Council. The CCHSA Final Report for this phase of the project provides the presentation to Council.

The consultants commented on the tour of the local health facilities they visited on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> April 2007. These facilities were the Port of Spain General Hospital, the Couva District Health Facility and the San Fernando General Hospital.

Salient points highlighted in the presentation included:

- Overview of CCHSA – mission, vision and strategic direction
- CCHSA international Markets and Commitment to Caribbean Clients
- Recommended TRT Health Services Accreditation Standards
- Accreditation Integrated Information Management System
- Survey Management
- CCHSA Standards framework and Accreditation Process
- A recommended TRT solution

- A demonstration of the software used by the CCHSA

Members raised some concern that within institutions, smaller departments may not move at the same pace and may therefore affect the accreditation process. There may be a need to consider some form of provisional accreditation. Discussion included the consideration of the wider implications for the accreditation process, for other areas such as labs and the diagnostic services currently out side the system.

### **Debriefing with TRT Minister of Health and Senior Staff**

During a debriefing session on 4 May 2007 with the TRT Minister of Health and senior Ministry of Health staff, the CCHSA team made a presentation. The CCHSA Final Report for this phase of the project provides the presentation. The Minister of Health asked CCHSA to prepare a costing proposal for providing assistance in the implementation of the TRT health services accreditation program.

### **Explore Possibilities of a Joint Venture Partnership to Support the Implementation of the TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme**

The conduct of this project initiated discussions between TRT and CCHSA on the possibility of future activities to support the TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme. On 11 July 2007 the CCHSA submitted a consulting proposal to the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Health to strengthen the Trinidad and Tobago Health Services Accreditation Programme. CCHSA envisions providing ongoing support to the Council and helping with continuous capacity building in the TRT health care community. Long-term, this could include CCHSA's advice to help the TRT Council prepare for accreditation by the International Society for Quality in Healthcare. For details see section on next steps.

## **5. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Project Task / Activity	PAHO Canada BPB Funds		PAHO TRT		TRT Ministry of Health	
	Budgeted US\$	Actual US\$	Budgeted US\$	Actual US\$	Budgeted US\$	Actual US\$
International Air Fare	4800	4800	4800	4800	0	0
Per Diem	8883	8883	0	0	0	0
CCHSA Fees	0	0	0	16491	0	0
Other - Workshop Costs for Accreditation Coordinator Training	0	0	0	0	5000	1495
<b>TOTAL US\$</b>	<b>13683</b>	<b>13683</b>	<b>4800</b>	<b>21291</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>1495</b>

It should be noted that the original proposal did not outline the fees by CCHSA to collaborate in the project. Therefore, the approved funding from PAHO Canada BPB funds needed to be supplemented by PAHO Trinidad and Tobago regular funds to cover the fees.

## 6. PROJECT IMPACT

Accreditation is an effective, internationally recognized evaluation process used by many countries worldwide to assess and improve the quality in health care. It is an educational process that will benefit staff, improve communication and collaboration, and provide a health facility with access to valuable advice from other health care professionals. By participating in accreditation, health facilities will demonstrate to clients, communities, stakeholders and partners, their commitment to quality.

The project has been instrumental in informing the preparation of a policy document to operationalise the proposed TRT Health Services Accreditation Council, to sensitizing national stakeholders on the accreditation process, to conducting the accreditation coordinator training, and to opening a dialogue between CCHSA and the TRT Ministry of Health on the possibility of continued collaborative support to the TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme.

## 7. EVALUATION

*Indicators:*

- (i) *Plan for operationalising the Health Services Accreditation Council of TRT by September 2006*
- (ii) *Governance function of accreditation for health services in TRT strengthened by the September 2006.*

Lessons learned from the study tour were used to inform the preparation of a policy document for operationalising the Health Services Accreditation Council of TRT. The study tour by the TRT delegation to CCHSA took place in July 2006. A summary report of this study tour was discussed at the 5 October 2006 meeting of the MOH's Health Sector Quality Council. The Director of the MOH Directorate of Health Services Quality Management conveyed gratitude to PAHO for the sponsorship of the activity. The Policy Paper on Health Services Accreditation was put out for public review and was available for downloading from the website for the TRT Ministry of Health. This Green Paper was laid in parliament on 20 July 20 2007. This paper informs the development of legislation for the establishment of the Health Services Accreditation Council of TRT. This council will accredit all health institutions and facilities within TRT (both public and private). The deadline for submission of comments from the public was 20 September 2007. It is anticipated that the Council will be established in 2008.

*Indicator:*

- (iii) *Surveyor and accreditation coordinator training provided by the end of 2006 so that TRT will be in a state of readiness to have accreditation surveys undertaken by January 2007.*

Internal surveys are being used in TRT to redesign systems and processes to assess and improve service quality, with the intent of achieving a state of readiness for external audits of health facilities in 2008. Accreditation coordinator training was held in May 2007. The need still exists to conduct surveyor training but it was felt that it would be more appropriate to delay this training until the Health Services Accreditation Council of TRT is established – hopefully in 2008. Ministry of Health funds would be used.

A review of the evaluation forms from the CCHSA Accreditation Coordinator Training Workshop revealed that participants highlighted several useful components of the workshop including the self-assessment tool and the ability to work on a sample standard. In terms of areas for improvement, participants commented on the length of the workshop and felt more time was needed to cover the material presented; in particular, more time to review and discuss the actual survey process.

The high levels of ratings and responsiveness received in the participants' evaluations indicate that the Workshop objectives were successfully met.

## 8. LESSONS LEARNED

Participation in the study tour to CCHSA in July 2006 provided TRT delegates with an increased understanding of the development of a legislative framework and policy for the creation of an accreditation body, as well as an increased understanding of the design, governance, management and operational functions of an accreditation agency. According to the study tour report prepared by the TRT MOH delegation, the following lessons were learned:

- Mandatory vis-à-vis voluntary accreditation – Accreditation can be demand driven. Since patients in Canada are well informed about quality issues in health care, accredited health care providers are in a better position to attract them as “clients”.
- Survey Team Composition - It may be prudent to include a consumer representative or a member of civil society on the TRT survey team.
- Criteria for Selection of Surveyors - Knowledge was gained on the core competencies required to function as a surveyor.
- Accreditation Surveyor Recruitment – As physicians are the most difficult professionals to attract as part of the survey team, the CCHSA offered physicians an office overhead fee as an incentive to compensate for their lost income.
- Information Technology – The necessary IS/IT is critical to support the accreditation system which is data driven.

- Stakeholder Support – In introducing the accreditation system it is important to have significant representation from the key stakeholders. It is critical to do a stakeholder analysis prior to implementation.
- Governance – Arising from knowledge gained during the study tour, some of the critical issues that will be included in the TRT Accreditation Policy Document will be: (i) the composition and term of office of the Board (ii) the type of relationship that would exist between the Accreditation Board and the various Working Committees (iii) responsibility for the selection process (iv) the legal ramifications that may arise from Board membership (v) the nature of the relationship between the accreditation body for tertiary education and the body being established for health (vi) funding for the Accreditation Councils (vii) the skill mix required for members of the Executive structure of the Accreditation Council.
- Policies – Attention would have to be given to the development of the following policies for the accreditation system in TRT: (i) an appeals policy for dissatisfied clients (ii) a policy for recommending grounds for postponement for surveys (iii) a policy to support patient feedback with health care institutions in the event that they are not satisfied with the health service provide (iv) policy to guide the disclosure of client information to the general public.
- Training – Training will be needed for two major clients: (i) surveyors who must engage in a process of continuing education in order to retain their contracts with the TRT Accreditation Council and (ii) local and international organisations that will conduct business with the TRT Accreditation Council.
- Accrediting Other State and Teaching Institutions – In TRT, it will be necessary to develop systems for accrediting health services at correctional facilities, within the military and any other state institutions as well as teaching institutions that include a clinical component for their students.
- Product Development – The accreditation process includes the development of products for specialist services such as mental health. The nature of these products varies depending upon changes in the health care system, in international protocols and best practices. Research is therefore a critical input in determining how these various accreditation standards/products are developed.

Feedback received on the Accreditation Coordinator Workshop held in TRT in May 2007 suggests that the participants gained an increased knowledge of CCHSA's accreditation program and showed willingness to move forward with the accreditation survey process.

## 9. NEXT STEPS

The conduct of this project initiated discussions between TRT and CCHSA on the possibility of future activities to support the TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme. On 11 July 2007 the CCHSA submitted a consulting proposal to the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Health to strengthen the TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme. CCHSA envisions providing ongoing support to the Council and helping with continuous capacity building in the TRT health care community. Long-term, this could include CCHSA's advice to help the TRT Council prepare for accreditation by the International Society for Quality in Healthcare.

Objectives of the consultancy were to: customise the TRT accreditation process using the TRT standards and measurable elements; operationalise the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council; and pilot test and make adjustments to the new TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme. Activities include

- Reviewing the TRT Revised Standards
- Customizing the TRT accreditation process using the TRT standards and measurable elements
- Reviewing the organisational structure for the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council
- Drafting policies and standard operating procedures for the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council
- Developing the survey management process and systems
- Developing the Information System
- Educating Accreditation Specialists for the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council
- Assisting the Accreditation Specialists of the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council with the preparation of three select pilot health care providers (one public, one private and one community organisation) for the pilot surveys
- Advising the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council on the design of a surveyor competency model and the recruitment and evaluation of surveyors
- Providing surveyor training
- Advising the TRT Health Services Accreditation Council on the planning of the 2009 national TRT survey schedule
- Reviewing Readiness Assessments completed for the three select pilot healthcare providers
- Performing simulated surveys in the three pilot organisations with mixed TRT and CCHSA surveyor teams
- Pilot testing the new TRT Health Services Accreditation Program with mixed TRT and CCHSA surveyor teams
- Advising on the evaluation and adjustments to the TRT Health Services Accreditation Programme

The project proposal submitted by CCHSA to the TRT Ministry of Health is still under consideration by the Ministry but it is anticipated that a relationship will be clearly defined with specific activities.

## **10. SUSTAINABILITY**

The establishment of the Health Services Accreditation Council of TRT will ensure sustainability of the activities. Surveyors and accreditation coordinators will need to engage in a process of continuing education.