



BAHRAIN & THE HEALTH SECTOR



The Kingdom of Bahrain takes pride in its achievements in the fields of sustainable human development. This is evident through its attainments in health services and projects as is recognized throughout the regional and global arenas. These achievements are reflected through the positive impacts on the health indicators as is stipulated by global reports. These remarkable achievements were based on the Leadership's vision and directives especially within the medical sector throughout the past decades.

Bahrain is characterized by the high standard of full coverage of its health services to all the are areas of the Kingdom according to the best international practices and within the available potentials and resources. Despite the development of the health services and the reforms carried out in the Kingdom over the past years, there are several challenges such as high cost of health services as a result to the rapid development of the health sector.

Bahrain's biggest project ongoing in the health sector is the National Health Plan (2016-2025) as it represents an important national initiative and a prominent achievement in HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's reform project and development march. The National Health Plan (2016-2025), which was endorsed by Cabinet, came to pave the way forward for the health industry in the Kingdom of Bahrain for the coming 10 years. The Plan provides the building blocks for the provision of high-quality health services, healthcare sustainability, and securing the necessary manpower and infrastructure, to achieve the set goals of the Economic Vision 2030.

One of the main objectives of the National Health Plan (2016-2025), is the adoption of the Social Health Insurance Program (SEHATI), to develop the quality of the current health system and ensure sustainability. This system is meant to revolutionize the local health sector through better utilizing the available resources, while overcoming pressing challenges, which are mainly due to the rapid increase in population and shifting demographics. This Phenomenon is increasing the burden and demand on health services.



The Social Health Insurance Program (SEHATI) is based on main pillars that are Finance, Autonomy, Packages, Governance.



- **SHIFA:** The new system will witness the birth of the Social Health Insurance Fund Authority (SHIFA). This independent authority will be presided over by a board of directors, appointed by the Government. The main functions of SHIFA will include: collecting premiums from beneficiaries as per the designated package, forging contracts with health providers to finance and purchase health services and providing periodic actuarial studies.



- **Autonomy:** The current administrative system in public hospitals is not designed to cope with the planned reforms due to be brought about by the Social Health Insurance Scheme. Hospital Management systems should be changed to adapt with the Future National Social Health Insurance system and public hospitals will be forced to compete with private hospitals in the quality of the services provided to attract patients. The proposed changes highlight the need to give these institutions greater autonomy through the appointment of a board of trustees and granting it privileges to oversee the functions of public health facilities; be it hospitals or primary healthcare centers. This board of trustees will, in turn, direct the designated board of directors through its financial and administrative duties, to ensure the provision of high-quality services.



- **Health Information Knowledge Information Agency (HIKMA):** A Health Information and Knowledge Management Agency will be established under the new system. HIKMA, under the Supreme Council of Health, will aim to monitor and direct the healthcare industry in collaboration with the National Health Regulatory Authority and the Social Health Insurance Fund Authority (SHIFA), along with the private health insurance companies.
HIKMA will be comprised of four directorates that are Health Information Directorate, Health Economics Directorate, Quality Directorate, Health planning Directorate.