



Enhancing Quality of Care



In 2008 Population Services Kenya (PS Kenya) began the journey that now provides over 3.5 million Kenyans with better healthcare each year. The Tunza family health network was established in response to a need that PS Kenya had observed in its work delivering reproductive and family health services to under served communities. Developed as a social health franchise, Tunza provides family health services through an innovative franchisee model. At the heart of the model is ensuring quality services are delivered by private health providers across all counties of Kenya. The quest for quality has been iterative, with PS Kenya and its partners learning, adapting and progressing up the quality ladder over its tenure.

QUALITY DEFINED

Tunza began as a focused intervention for Family Planning, but in time was expanded to a larger bouquet of family health services. As the Tunza delivery shifted towards integrated services, the role of quality assurance became even more critical to its work. The early years had shown that training and capacity building of health providers to enhance delivery of family planning made a significant difference in uptake and client satisfaction. The challenge ahead was to build a holistic quality assurance programme that encompassed a comprehensive service offering.

QUALITY IN TUNZA WAS DEFINED ALONG FIVE DIMENSIONS:

- THE TECHNICAL COMPETENCE** — ensuring providers have the skills and capability to deliver services according to set standards and procedures.
- PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY** — maintaining patient dignity and discreet management of medical records.
- CONTINUITY OF CARE** — putting in place referral and follow up systems that ensure end-to-end patient care.
- INFORMED CHOICE** — Being able to provide a range of options for treatment and care to clients.
- SAFETY** — an assurance that providers met standards that catered to the protection and wellbeing of the patient as they received treatment.

Tunza strives to drive understanding that quality improvement is a long-term process that requires multiple forms of investment from providers — time, finances and attitude change. As the focus on quality intensified, PS Kenya entered into partnership with Pharm Access Foundation (PAF) in 2011 to help build a suitable comprehensive quality improvement process and plan for its Tunza social franchise using PAF's SafeCare — an internationally accredited quality improvement programme that has benchmarks for facilities and a step-by-step improvement plan for achieving new levels in the SafeCare Quality system.

DIANA MWARANIA
QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER TUNZA

What's different About Tunza is that quality of health services comes before anything else. We don't look at the most polished of partners to work with. We start with them and walk with them through the quality improvement journey. With the improvements, growth begins to happen naturally. Next thing, patients want a lab, then more services, then the provider needs more rooms. We've seen growth from one/two rooms to hospitals — all on account of the investment in quality services.

In addition to SafeCare, PS Kenya uses Ministry of Health treatment guidelines and SOPs to assess providers proficiency in delivering services for all its franchised services. As part of the quality work, the Tunza team offers in personal support to health facilities to help them address any gaps identified during routine bi-annual quality assessment exercises.

Tunza Quality Assurance (QA) officers help providers transform their clinics holistically in terms of infrastructure, data management, pharmacy standards, commodity management, on-job training needs and more. As the network and its offerings have continued to gain traction new providers have sought to enter the network.



The Tunza brand proudly signifies that patients can find a level of service that is synonymous with affordable, accessible and good quality healthcare.

INNOVATION IN QUALITY

As PS Kenya has continued to learn, recalibrate, expand and pivot, they have continually sought ways to enhance their ability to track and monitor quality improvements. Since inception, quality assessments had been captured using paper forms, that were then reviewed by the team and feedback was then consolidated and sent back to providers. While the system met the expectations of data collection, the feedback to providers would take almost two months, meaning a loss of momentum and efficiency in terms of opportunity and will to improve. PS Kenya invested in the development of a digital application that would offer quicker turnaround times for feedback and streamlined data management. Months of development led to the launch of the Health Networks Quality Improvement System (HNQIS), generally known as “HanKeys,” in 2015 in partnership with Population Services International.



Built on an Android platform, Tunza Quality Assurance Officers are now able to carry out their support supervision while keying in data on handheld tablets. By the end of the visit, the provider receives the clinic assessment report by email which includes an outline of the gaps that have been mutually identified, the areas of improvement and an action plan for the subsequent months. The app also includes videos which are live demonstrations of actions to improve services. The immediate feedback mechanism has meant that changes are implemented soon after the assessment. Furthermore, the app provides a guided scoring system that takes into account the size of the facility, number of patients seen, and other parameters, ensuring that a bespoke quality improvement solution is given for each facility. The app also provides the Officers with the suggested timing for the next visit helping with their own planning and prioritization of facilities that may benefit from more frequent review visits than others. HNQIS has become such an essential part of the Tunza quality journey that the innovation has been adopted by seven countries in the Population Services International platforms.



PROMOTING EXCELLENCE



As the Tunza Family Health Network continues to evolve, new revelations on how to incentivize and promote quality care are becoming apparent. The pursuit of quality is at the center of the Tunza programme. Ultimately this serves the patients but one learning is that it allows facilities a growth path that can be achieved over time and that is also aspirational. Strong peer networks have formed amongst the providers over time and those with expanded offerings in their facilities or who have achieved a higher level on the Safe Care Continuum are open to sharing their lessons as well as acting as referral points for others in the vicinity.

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The strength of these interactions and learnings was eventually codified by PS Kenya into the Centre of Excellence concept in 2017. Facilities which had attained Safe Care Level IV, were consistent scoring well as per the MOH assessment guidelines, had robust business systems in place courtesy of the business programme and had embraced a culture of improvement and benchmarking were assessed against a new set of criteria and invited to become Centres of Excellence. The Centres of Excellence (CoEs) programme has already recognised 18 facilities with the award.

PS Kenya will use the CoE program to entrench a culture of competitiveness and high performance within the network through continuous learning and improvement as well as coordinated peer support and influence. Quality has been central to Tunza’s approach to transforming clinicians, and it continues to remain a fundamental aspect of its success.