**Bangladesh Pharmacy Model Initiative**

**Training Strategy**

**Background and Objective**

MSH is working with Bangladesh’s Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) and the Pharmacy Council of Bangladesh (PCB) to ensure access to quality medicines and pharmaceutical services by developing an accreditation model for private sector medicine shops and pharmacies. The Bangladesh Pharmacy Model Initiative (BPMI) is funded by Joint Donor Technical Assistance Fund—a consortium of donors led by the UK Department for International Development. The first phase of this program includes designing the preliminary model, planning for targeted district implementation and evaluation, and building the capacity of national institutions, including DGDA and PCB, to move the BPMI implementation forward.

The BPMI builds on what is currently in place and working well in Bangladesh’s pharmaceutical sector. Changes have only been proposed when needed to meet the country’s objective of ensuring access to quality medicines and pharmaceutical services. Bangladesh currently has three pharmacy training programs: Bachelor of Pharmacy (grade A), Diploma in Pharmacy (grade B), and Pharmacy Certificate Registration Course (grade C). While grade A and grade B pharmacists are eligible to work in private sector pharmacies and drug shops, nearly all are absorbed into Bangladesh’s thriving pharmaceuticals manufacturing and marketing sector or in public hospitals. Their training is largely based on the pharmaceutical sciences with only limited exposure to pharmacy practice and patient care. Grade C personnel are targeted for work in retail pharmacies and drug shops, although the training provided for certification has been recognized as less than optimal.

During the first phase of BPMI, DGDA, PCB, and other stakeholders have approved the classification of two levels of accredited private sector drug outlets: Level 1 pharmacies attended by grade A pharmacists and Level 2 medicine shops attended by grade B or C pharmacists.

**Objective and Overview of the BPMI Orientation and Training Programs**

To become accredited, Level 1 pharmacies and Level 2 medicine shops will need to employ dispensers that have undergone a short, but comprehensive BPMI orientation or training program. The program’s objective is to ensure the sustained availability of well-trained and competent pharmacy and medicine shop owners and dispensers, thereby, improving access to and appropriate use of quality medicines and pharmaceutical services in Bangladesh.

The PCB will lead a group of pharmaceutical training experts in developing a BPMI orientation and training program to prepare pharmaceutical personnel to operate private sector model pharmacies and accredited medicine shops. The two-pronged program includes:

1. Orientation for grade A and B pharmacists
2. Training for grade C dispensers

The high-level grade A and B pharmacist orientation program will provide training related to patient care that will complement their grade A or B pharmaceutical sciences training received during their degree program. The more in-depth grade C training program will equip dispensers with the knowledge and skills needed to provide quality patient care in Level 2 medicine shops. Training topics include good dispensing practices, dispensing documentation, management of common diseases, patient counseling and communication, medicines management, public health, and regulatory issues. Additionally, each program will include a business training component to promote the profitability and sustainability of the pharmacies and medicine shops. This component will be required for all BPMI pharmacists and dispensers, but outlet owners who are not dispensers will also be able to sign up to join the business skills sessions. Table 1 summarizes the grade A and B orientation and grade C training.

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| **Table 1.** **BPMI Orientation and Training Program Details** |
|  | **Grade A and B Pharmacist Orientation** | **Grade C Dispenser Training** |
| **Purpose** | Train pharmacists interested in dispensing medicines in Level 1 model pharmacies or Level 2 accredited medicine shops | Train dispensers interested in dispensing medicines independently in a Level 2 accredited medicine shop or working under supervision in a Level 1 model pharmacy |
| **Course Duration** | 30 hours full-time course offered over 5 consecutive days, 6 hours per day | 80 hours. Course may be offered full-time (consecutively with 6 training hours per day) or can be scheduled part-time |
| **Trainee qualification** | Existing grade A or B certificate holders | Existing grade C certificate holders. New applicants must have a minimum education Secondary School Certificate in science |

**Curricula and Training Materials**

PCB will lead a technical working group of pharmaceutical and training experts to develop curricula and materials for the grade A and B pharmacist orientation and a grade C dispenser training program. The materials will be adapted from Uganda’s recently revised accredited drug seller training materials to fit Bangladesh’s legal, pharmaceutical, and epidemiological context. The working group will supplement the adapted materials with content from PCB’s existing grade C training textbook as needed.

The orientation and training materials will each include a trainer’s manual, trainee manual, and PowerPoint presentations. The trainer’s manual includes details on the duration of each session, materials required, and learning activities. The trainee manual comprises detailed notes on each topic covered during the classroom sessions. It also provides information for course participants to familiarize themselves with topics and prepare for examinations.

The curricula and materials will be developed in English, reviewed by an adult learning training expert to ensure the integrity of the learning methodology, and then reviewed and approved by a technical review committee. Once approved, the curricula and materials will be translated into Bangla.

**Rollout and Sustainability**

Once the training materials are completed, MSH will work with PCB, DGDA, and pharmaceutical trainers to offer the grade A and B orientation to select Level 1 model pharmacy owners and dispensers in Dhaka and divisional towns. The orientation will be held in Dhaka city over five consecutive days.

During the Level 2 pilot phase, MSH will also support PCB and DGDA in conducting a training of trainers for the grade C training. These trainers will then be responsible for training grade C dispensers and qualified candidates in six pilot upazilas. The trainings will be offered at the upazila level to minimize trainee travel time. Class size will be limited to 40 trainees per class. The course will be held over 13 consecutive days with about six training hours per day.

To enhance sustainability, MSH will help PCB develop a strategy to institutionalize training, which shifts the organization and cost of the training to the private sector. MSH will support PCB in identifying institutions that would be interested in offering ongoing grade A and B pharmacist orientation and/or grade C dispenser training. PCB will develop eligibility criteria for institutions and then train eligible institutions in how to carry out the training. The institutions will incorporate the orientation and trainings into their regularly offered courses, and trainees will cover the cost.

PCB will develop a systematic review process for updating the training and orientation materials to reflect changes or revisions to national policies, national standard treatment guidelines, drug lists, etc. PCB will disseminate these updates to existing grade A, B, and C pharmacists through continuing education sessions, seminars, or workshops. MSH will continue to support PCB in formalizing a plan for continuing education.

Table 2 details an illustrative timeline for the training strategy.

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| **Table 2: Illustrative Timeline** |
| October 2016 | Grade A and B orientation curriculum and materials complete |
| November 2016 | Level 1 pilot training |
| November 2016 | Grade C training curriculum and materials drafted |
| March-July 2017 | Level 2 pilot training |
| October 2017 | Institutionalized training strategy in place |
| April 2018 | Training institutions identified and trained to offer BPMI orientations and trainings |