

**In Ogun State, PharmAccess collaborated with the government to institutionalise SafeCare standards within accreditation and empanelment into the state's Araya health scheme**



This snapshot describes the process used by AHME to consolidate the SafeCare quality assurance activities with those of Ogun State, build capacity for assessing and improving healthcare, and develop a sustainable model for healthcare quality improvement.

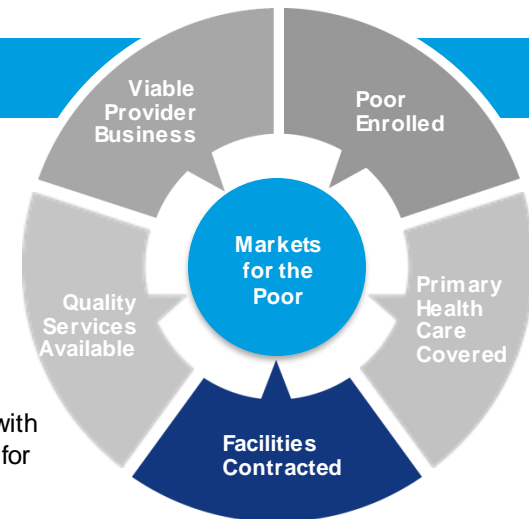


**Intervention**

From the start, AHME's focus in Ogun State was to promote the long-term sustainability of healthcare quality assurance. In order to institutionalise SafeCare quality standards, AHME worked at the State government level as well as among public and private healthcare providers and franchise networks.

To engage with Ogun State's health leadership, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) led meetings with the State Health Commissioner, followed by a workshop which brought together AHME partners and top state health stakeholders. The meetings and workshop featured discussions regarding the SafeCare quality improvement process, along with questions on how the standards and quality assessments could be aligned with the State's existing system and the Araya scheme.

The State created a Technical Working Group (TWG), which included top leadership from the State Ministry of Health, including the Permanent Secretary, Department Directors, and Special Advisor to the Health Commissioner. AHME facilitated TWG meetings and brought in private-sector participation, including social franchise networks (SFNs), with representatives from private practitioner groups.



The TWG met for one year and prepared a recommendation document that included a roadmap to guide the state in institutionalising quality. By then, there had been a turnover in state leadership, but the new Health Commissioner was brought on board thanks to the momentum created by the working group and support from the Special Advisor to the Health Commissioner.

To curb standards fragmentation, the State instituted a Central Coordinating Unit for Health Standards within the Ministry of Health. AHME aided its development, adding private sector members, including SFN quality officers. The unit consolidated SafeCare standards with the State's, creating an assessment tool that was manageably short while maintaining a robust set of criteria. The standards are used for accreditation to the Araya scheme.

To increase capacity, AHME began training SFN clinical quality officers to become quality assessors. The quality officers were linked to 30 of the clinical sites using WhatsApp groups to facilitate weekly technical assistance communications with providers. To harmonise activities at provider sites, AHME instituted quarterly coordinating meetings with the SFNs and PharmAccess/SafeCare.

The quality standards are now linked to provider empanelment with SafeCare quality improvement methodology increasing provider capacity to meet empanelment requirements of the Araya scheme.

In Ogun State, PharmAccess collaborated with the government to institutionalise SafeCare standards within accreditation and empanelment into the state’s Araya health scheme



**Result**

Ogun State has adopted the SafeCare standards into its accreditation and empanelment system, and the recruitment guideline adopted by the Health Insurance Unit mandates that all providers be on the SafeCare quality improvement program. The SafeCare level determines the number of assigned clients per facility.

The state has increased transparency and can benchmark providers against those in five other African countries. Three more Nigerian states are looking to adopt the system.



**Examples and Evidence**

*“PharmAccess’ support has greatly impacted the state, and quality improvement using the SafeCare method is seen as a must-have for the State”.*

Dr Nafiu Aigoro, Permanent Secretary for Health, Ogun State

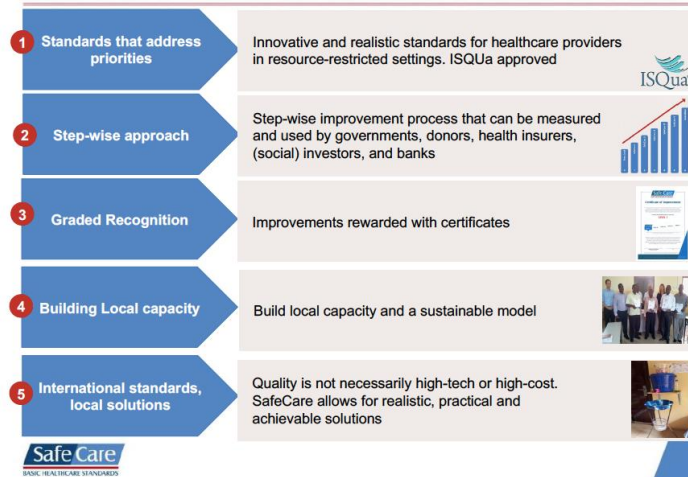


**Lessons Learned**

Key stakeholders should be engaged at the programme design stage to ensure buy-in. When developing a facility accreditation process for a nascent health insurance scheme, it is more efficient to modify existing tools than to design a new one from the ground up.

Maintaining open and regular communication with government helps to ensure continued engagement and builds credibility.

**Principles of SafeCare**



**Outlook**

AHME partners have worked with Ogun State to link quality standards with requirements for empanelment into the Araya scheme. AHME helped the state to develop recruitment guidelines for the state insurance system based on the SafeCare improvement process.

The integration of demand and supply is key to improving health care quality, and it is slowly gaining ground. Initially, there was no financial incentive for providers to improve quality from the demand side, particularly among public providers. Now quality assessments are determining accreditation and monthly capitations. Providers can be contracted into Araya when they reach SafeCare Level 2, and capitation payments increase as they continue to improve and reach higher levels.