



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, WEST INDIES

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

HEU, CENTRE FOR HEALTH ECONOMICS

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November 20, 2019

Re: Debriefing Note on Presentations and Discussions at the 13th Caribbean Conference on National Health Financing Initiatives held at Cuisinart Golf Resort and Spa, Anguilla, November 6- 8, 2019

1. Background

Heads of Caribbean Social Security Organizations, meeting in Belize City in 2005, decided to establish a Conference or forum for activities to build capacity in designing, strengthening and managing national health financing initiatives.

Following previous Conferences in Turks and Caicos Islands (2006); Aruba (2007); Trinidad and Tobago (2008); St. Maarten (2009); Belize (2010), Bermuda (2011); Curacao (2012); Jamaica (2013); Trinidad and Tobago (2014); Turks and Caicos Islands (2015); Bonaire (2016) and Suriname (2018), the 13th Conference was convened at The Cuisinart Golf Resort and Spa in Anguilla from November 6-8, 2019.

2. Objectives

The overall objectives of these Conferences are to share knowledge, increase understanding, test ideas, enhance national expertise and deepen regional collaboration in designing and managing national health financing initiatives.

In keeping with previous Conferences which selected specific issues for deeper analysis, the 13th Conference focused attention on “Fiscal Space and Sustainability in Caribbean Health Financing”.

3. Host

The 13th Conference was hosted by the Anguilla Social Security Board (ASSB) in collaboration with The University of the West Indies, HEU, Centre for Health Economics (UWI-HEU), St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago.

4. Planning Team

The Conference planning team included Dr. Stanley Lalta and team from the UWI-HEU and Mr. Timothy Hodge and team from the ASSB.

5. Participation

The Conference attracted more than 80 participants from 19 countries, as well as 16 public and private organizations. Participants included:-

- senior officers in Caribbean Social Security Organizations;
- senior managers from Ministries of Health;
- senior officers from national/social health financing programs;
- representatives of local and international organizations in financing, health insurance, actuarial science and health services management;
- representatives of universities, hospitals, health and IT consulting firms; and
- specially invited expert presenters.

6. Program Content

a) Formal Opening

Chaired and welcomed by Mr. Timothy A. Hodge, Director of the ASSB, the Formal Opening was attended by more than 90 persons including participants and specially invited guests from the government, public and private sectors in Anguilla.

Speaking on behalf of the Government of Anguilla, the Honourable Minister of Health, Mr. Evans McNeil Rogers indicated some of the strategic measures being undertaken to improve health services for all in Anguilla. He expressed best wishes for the Conference and looked forward to learning from other countries with National Health Insurance (NHI) systems on their progress to assist in implementing a similar plan in Anguilla.

Other speakers bringing greeting from their organizations included Dr. Anton Cumberbatch on behalf of Professor Karl Theodore of the UWI-HEU and Mr. Rick Kromodihardjo of the State Health Insurance of Suriname.

Dr. Stanley Lalta, Conference Program Coordinator, drew attention to the theme of the Conference—'Fiscal Space and Sustainability in Caribbean Health Financing'—and highlighted core aspects of the structure and content of the presentations featured in the Conference's program.

In formally addressing and opening the Conference the Honorable Premier of Anguilla, Mr. Victor F. Banks emphasized government's commitment to universal health coverage at a time when demands were expanding from all sectors for already constrained resources. He pointed to intensified actions being undertaken to implement the proposed NHI Plan as part of the broader agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Vote of Thanks was offered by Ms. Denise Buchanan, Senior Benefits Officer of the ASSB.

b) Conference Feature Papers

These included:-

- ‘Determinants and Dimensions of Fiscal Space in Latin America and the Caribbean’ by Ms. Claudia Pescetto, PAHO;
- ‘Partnerships Against NCDs: The Head, Heart and Pocket Approach’ by Dr. James Hospedales, UN Defeat NCDs Partnership; and
- ‘Climate Change and Implications for Individual and Health System Resiliency’ by Professor Leslie Walwyn, American University of Antigua.

c) Conference Sessional Thematic Papers

These included:-

- ‘A Practical, Political and Financial Perspective on Universal Health: The St. Maarten Experience’ by Mr. Emil Lee, Former Minister of Health in St. Maarten;
- ‘National Health Insurance in Belize: Costs, Financing and Fiscal Space’ by Dr. Ramon Figueroa, National Health Insurance Plan of Belize;
- ‘Actuarial and Plan Design: A Regional Assessment’ by Mr. Hernando Perez Montas, Consultant Actuary;
- ‘Integrated Health Systems, Primary Care and Sustainable Health Financing’ by Ms. Claudia Pescetto, PAHO;
- ‘Ageing, Health Care Demands and Sustainable Health Financing’ by Mr. Howard Cimring, Morneau Shepell Inc.; and
- ‘Optimising Technology Applications for Improved Health Outcomes and Financial Sustainability’ by Dr. Javier Asin, ACSION Inc.

d) Panel Discussion Papers

There were 6 Panels discussing the following matters:-

i) Panels 1: Tracking Action in New Health Financing Plans

- ‘Advancing Action on Universal NHI in Anguilla’ by Mr. Merwyn Rogers, Ministry of Health;
- ‘Transformation from Primary Care to Full Package NHI in The Bahamas’ by Mr. Graham Whitmarsh, National Health Insurance Agency;
- ‘Progress in Development of the Universal Health Plan in St Kitts and Nevis’ by Mr. Clifford Griffin, Ministry of Health; and
- ‘Cost Effectiveness of the HPV Vaccine in Guyana’ by Mr. Ganesh Tatkan, Ministry of Health.

ii) Panel 2: Building Sustainable Health Financing Systems-2

- ‘Re-structuring Health Financing in Barbados’ by Mr. Danny Gill, Ministry of Health;
- ‘Managing Health, Hospital and Health Financing Reforms in Curacao’ by Ms. Jeanine Constansia-Kook, Ministry of Health and Mr. Gerbert Spijker, Social Insurance Bank; and
- ‘Financial Sustainability and Managing Pharmaceutical Costs in Suriname’s State Health Insurance’ by Mr. Rick Kromodihardjo, State Health Insurance.

iii) Panel 3: Building Sustainable Health Financing Systems-3

- ‘Optimising MIS-IT Applications for Tracking Expenditure and Financial Sustainability in Jamaica’s National Health Fund (NHF)’ by Mr. Granville Gayle, National Health Fund;
- ‘Policy and Operational Adjustments to Enable Financial Sustainability in the NHIP’ by Dr. Terese Maitland, NHIP, Turks and Caicos Islands; and
- ‘Limits of Operational Adjustments to Enable Financial Sustainability in Antigua’s Medical Benefits Scheme’ by Mr. Kevin Silston, Medical Benefits Scheme.

iv) Panel 4: Building Sustainable Health Financing Systems-4

- ‘Regulatory Requirements and Oversight to Enable Financial Sustainability in Bermuda’s Health System’ by Dr. Ricky Braithwaite, Bermuda Health Council;
- ‘Policy and Operational Adjustments to Enable Financial Sustainability in BVI’s NHIP’ by Mr. Roy Barry, National Health Insurance Plan; and
- ‘Confronting the Challenges of Financial Sustainability: A Primary Care Perspective’ by Dr. Natalia Castillo, Belize National Health Insurance Plan.

v) Panel 5: New Directions in Universal Coverage and Health Financing-1

- ‘Health, Human Rights (Migrants) and Health Financing Implications’ - Professor Laura Hartman, Dr. Robin Roberts, Dr. Irad Potter and Dr. Stanley Lalta.

vi) Panel 6: New Directions in Universal Coverage and Health Financing-2

- ‘Performance Measures: The WHO’s Progress Matrix on Health Financing and Proposed NHI System Indicators’ — Dr. Ricky Braithwaite, Mr. Derek Osborne, Ms. Charmaine Metivier, Dr. Anton Cumberbatch, Ms. Claudia Pescetto and Dr. Stanley Lalta.

e) Special Presentations

- ‘The Health Care Ecosystem in Fundacion Cardiovascular of Colombia’ by Dr. Victor Castillo, Fundacion Cardiovascular; and
- ‘Islands of Progress: Universal Health Coverage in the Caribbean’ by Mr. Shripal Doshi, KPMG Inc.

f) Conferences Progress Report

Dr. Stanley Lalta, Program Coordinator, presented a review of activities and progress over the 13 Conferences (Turks and Caicos Islands, 2006; Aruba, 2007; Trinidad and Tobago, 2008; St. Maarten, 2009; Belize, 2010; Bermuda, 2011; Curacao, 2012; Jamaica, 2013; Trinidad and Tobago, 2014; Turks and Caicos Islands, 2015; Bonaire, 2016; Suriname, 2018; Anguilla, 2019).

He referred to the Conferences’ overall objectives as outlined by heads of Social Security Organizations in Belize in 2005 and highlighted key aspects pertaining to the level of participation; key topics covered in feature, sessional, panel and special presentations as well as issues identified by participants for further consideration.

7. Decisions

The Conference agreed:

- a) To broaden participation by including representatives of Ministries of Finance and private insurance organizations (rather than only speaking to the ‘converted’);
- b) To give particular attention to ‘Public Health Goods’; ‘Financial Protection’; ‘Best Practices in Health Prevention’ and ‘Compliance Behaviour by Patients’ in subsequent Conferences;
- c) To consider preparation and circulation of a communications document to senior policy-making groups highlighting key findings and recommendations from discussions at the Conference;
- d) To introduce some dedicated discussion workshops for addressing particular issues confronting national health financing systems; and
- e) To accept the offer of the Medical Benefits Scheme and the Ministry of Health in Antigua and Barbuda to host the 14th Conference.

8. Acknowledgements

The Conference thanked the hosts—the Director (Mr. Timothy Hodge) and staff of the ASSB in particular Dr. Maglan Lewis, Ms. Twana Duncan-Vanheyningen, and Ms. Rosanna Browne for their dedication and careful attention to details in ensuring the smooth and efficient functioning of all Conference activities. Special mention is made of Mr. Kenvis Gumbs, for his unwavering ICT support.

The Conference also expressed warm appreciation to its sponsors (Bearing Point, Morneau Shepell, FCV Cuidamos Vidas, Cuisinart Golf Resort & Spa, BDO) and acknowledged the support received from various agencies of the Government of Anguilla, as well as other local and external organizations.

9. Access to Documents

Presentations made at the Conference may be accessed from the Conference’s website (<http://conferences.sta.uwi.edu/healthfinancing/>).

10. Information Requests and Recommendations for Future Action

Information pertaining to previous conferences and recommendations for future action may be directed to the Program Coordinator, Dr. Stanley Lalta (Stanley.Lalta@sta.uwi.edu or stanleylalta@gmail.com) or to Ms. Charmaine Metivier (Charmaine.Metivier@sta.uwi.edu) or the office of the HEU, Centre for Health Economics (Telephone: 1-868-662-9459 or 1-868-645-7351).

Yours sincerely,



Althea La Foucade
Director, UWI-HEU



Mr. Timothy Hodge
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