

FBSA experiences on covid-19 Resilience

Introduction:

Federal Board of Supreme Audit /Public Services Activity Audit Office issued technical reports regarding the Covid-19 pandemic: The first titled (Results of the work field visits to follow up on the procedures of Ministry of Health and Environment in implementing the vaccination plan for the emerging Novel Corona Virus) ref. (12804) on 28/07 /2021 and the second titled (Results of control and audit works on the procedures of Ministry of Health and Environment to confront the Corona pandemic in Baghdad for the period from 01/0/2020 to 01/10/2021) ref. (8439) on 17/04/2022. FBSA has within its staff technical specialists in many fields, including health, in addition to accounting and financial expertise.

1. Problem:

COVID-19 is one of the most widespread infectious pandemic. Its spread has led to many complications and health effects on citizens. It has led to the death of many infected patients all over the world. In Iraq, Ministry of Health faces many challenges that need to be dealt with in order to confront this pandemic e.g. Lack of equipped hospitals to receive infected cases, lack of doctors and health staff and lack of medicines and supplies that must be made available.

2. Audit objective:

Determining areas of risk that must be addressed within Ministry of Health to confront the pandemic and making important recommendations to address these risks with them.

3. Scope of Audit:

The scope of the audit process is the following institutions within the Ministry of Health:

- Public Health Directorate.
- The State Company for Marketing Drugs and Medical Appliances.
- Directorate of Technical Affairs.
- Baghdad Health Directorate/ Al Karkh and a number of its affiliated health institutions.
- Baghdad Health Directorate / Rusafa and a number of its affiliated health institutions
- Baghdad Health directorate/ Medical City, and a number of its affiliated health institutions.

4. Audit Criteria:

- Criteria and circulars approved by Ministry of Health regarding number of hospitals and medical staffs
- Criteria and circulars approved by Ministry of Health regarding the mechanism of safe handling of medical wastes
- Criteria and circulars approved by Ministry of Health regarding the mechanism of dealing with vaccines cold chain.
- WHO Pandemic Guidance.

5. Audit results

Results				Recommendations
Observations	Criteria	Reasons	Impact	
Health institutions designated to isolate Corona virus patients are insufficient compared to the number of infections.	one hospital per 50,000 people	Due to the delay in the completion of hospital projects	Most citizens isolate the infected in their homes, which spread the disease further	We recommend to work on the completion of hospital projects, to take the necessary measures to increase the accommodating capacity
The doctors working in the field of Corona virus (internal, cardiac and respiratory) are insufficient.	The Ministry of Health criteria for the number of doctors	The required specialists are insufficient	Staff needed to treat patients are insufficient	We recommend developing a plan to distribute medical staff and provide the necessary medical specialties to face the Covid-19 pandemic
Many employees of the Ministry of Health and its affiliated institutions did not abide by taking the vaccine, as the percentage of vaccinated persons is (60%).	The Ministry of Health criteria to vaccinate medical and support staff	Reluctance to take the vaccine for health and media concerns.	Frequent infections and deaths among the employees of the Ministry of Health, as they are the first line of prevention to face the pandemic	We recommend that all staff working in the health system be vaccinated
Ambulances that are dedicated to quarantine procedures, follow-up of suspected cases and safe transportation of samples were not provided.	(Prepare a number of ambulances to be ready for any work related to quarantine procedures or follow-up of suspected cases)	Ambulances are insufficient	It affects the safety of patients who are not infected with the virus and it cause virus transmission, in addition to the failure to provide special ambulances to transport samples (Covid-19) from health centers or hospitals to biomolecular laboratories or hospitals for testing (Covid-19)	We recommend working to allocate a ambulances for Corona pandemic and providing disinfection and sterilization requirements

Work in a escort shifting manner between family`s patient	Standard of the Ministry of Health regarding isolation halls and the presence of escorts	Weak precautionary procedures to be followed inside isolation halls	The reason for the spread of the virus may be the frequent daily entry and exit to and from the hospital	We recommend working to adjust the precautionary procedures in isolation halls
Merging covid-19 waste with medical waste. Addition to the absence of a special record documenting the gathering and destruction of this waste in an isolated manner	Standard of the Ministry of Health regarding waste isolation and safe handling of waste	Weak procedures for isolating waste in isolation halls designated for the covid-19 pandemic	Gathering the medical waste for along time	We recommend that medical waste be isolated from others
There is a shortage in providing of some medicines by the State Company for Marketing Drugs and Medical Appliances in Baghdad Health Departments (Al-Karkh and Al-Rusafa) related to confront covid-19pandemic	Mechanism for estimating the need for medicines within the Ministry of Health	The lack of funds available for the purpose of providing medicines	lack or loss of some necessary medicines related to the treatment of (Covid-19) patients, which are included in the pandemic treatment protocol	We recommend the necessity of providing these materials in accordance with the controls, as they are included in protocols to confront the pandemic

Most of the beneficiaries did not wait after receiving the vaccine dose for a period from (15-30) minutes in order to follow up on them in case of side effects arising from receiving the vaccine.	Standard work items included in the public health directorate letter No. (12376) on 1/3/2021	As there is no place for patients to wait and stay at the vaccine outlet until the end of the specified period.	Side effects may appear on the vaccine beneficiaries after receiving the vaccine, and their health status should be monitored.	We recommend that a place should be prepared so that the beneficiaries can wait for monitoring their status.
The hotline number of the contact person in the department responsible for the vaccination site is not listed on many cards.	Standard work items included in the public health directorate letter No. (12376) on 1/3/2021.	Cramming of patients during vaccination.	For immediate contact if any undesirable side effects appear after vaccination (negative monitoring of side effects).	We recommend that a hotline number should be identified within each vaccination centers for the immediate contact, which is dedicated to the beneficiaries.
The temperature of the refrigerators for storing vaccines was not documented during the day in the private nursing hospital for the refrigerators of AstraZeneca and Sinopharm.	National plan to deploy the COVID-19 vaccine.	There should be follow up by the storage officials for the case.	Safe keeping of vaccinations	We recommend that all vaccination centers affiliated with the health directorates in Baghdad and the governorates be requested to adopt the daily temperature registration table.

There is no laptop or internet in some vaccination centers. Computers available in the institution or PCs are used for making statistics and updating the platform.	National plan for COVID-19 vaccine distribution	Lack of financial appropriations	poor documentation	We recommend that the centers be equipped with the necessary equipment because of its importance for documentation and inputting
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6.Ministry of Health procedures to solve problems:

- In cooperation with a number of non-governmental agencies, the Ministry and some of its directorates, prepared mobile hospitals to increase beds, in addition to the hospital projects under construction.
- The Ministry provided health institutions with a number of medical staff to meet the shortage .In addition other directorates will be provided with the staff in the upcoming allocation.
- The Council of Ministers issued circulars and recommendations from the Supreme Committee for Health and National Safety, encouraging citizens and employees of government bodies to get vaccinated .
- The Ministry of Health issues circulars confirming the approved standards , directing its directorates regarding (isolation of medical waste, safe handling, proper documentation of medical and health information for the vaccinated , increasing the number of supervisory visits to follow-up documenting the temperature of vaccines storage , providing the waiting spaces for the vaccine beneficiaries , and ensuring that the immunization divisions heads are the contact persons in vaccination centers.
- The Ministry of Health cooperated with the ICRC and UNICEF in providing computers with modems for most vaccination centers.