

Determining the challenges of strategic purchasing in Iranian Health Insurance organization and providing solutions

Abstract

Introduction: Strategic purchasing is introduced as a key and central activity to the improvement of health system performance and solving difficulties in passive purchasing. In Iran, the government has obliged health insurance organizations to implement this strategy. But after several years, no good progress has been made in this regard. Identifying the reasons for the lack of progress is essential and the present study was conducted to achieve this aim.

Method: This was a qualitative method with “best fit framework synthesis” approach, carried out in ۲۰۱۵. The selected framework for the initial analysis of the data, was the S. Preke's model. Data were collected in two phases. At the first, data were collected through ۲۷ semi-structured interviews (۲۳ executives of health insurance in the country and ۴ national experts) and were analyzed qualitatively. In the next stage, the list of challenges was finalized in a joint national session.

Findings: Challenges of the strategic purchasing were classified in the form of ۹ original code under the concepts of financial problems, problems related to service providers, lack of rules and supervision, staffing problems, infrastructure problems, problems related to inter-sectoral and cultural communication, problems related to the insurance package, problems related to payment systems, weakness in policy-making. The main challenges were divided into ۴۴ sub-codes.

Conclusion: Improving the strategic purchasing in Iran requires an integrated approach, taking into account all the factors affecting it. There are effective measure to successfully implement the purchasing strategic plan which include revision of some policies, amendment and codification of the needed rules, solving infrastructural problems, providing suitable resources (human and financial), proper review of the insurance package, strengthening inter- and intra-sectorial communications, use of prospective payment systems, resolving internal problems of insurance organization.

Keywords: Strategic purchasing - Iranian health insurance organization- best fit framework synthesis- inactive purchasing



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