

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS FOR SUSTAINABLE PHARMACEUTICAL PROCUREMENT

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INTRODUCTION

An effective procurement process ensures the availability of the right drugs, in the right quantities, available at the right time, for the right patient and at recognisable standards of quality.^[1] In Malta, the Central Procurement and Supplies Unit (CPSU) is responsible to efficiently manage the procurement of medicines and medical devices for the National Health Service.

AIMS

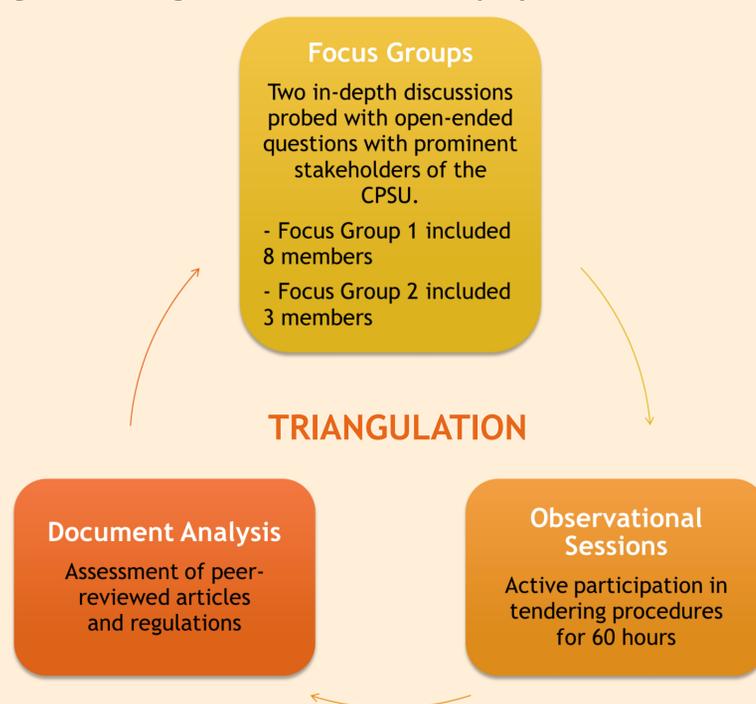
- To examine the limitations encountered in the procurement of medicines and medical devices within the CPSU.
- To develop and validate a practical framework that is relevant to current needs, implements sustainability and motivates policy-making.

METHOD

In this exploratory study an inductive approach was adopted to gain a rich understanding of the elements of pharmaceutical procurement.

Qualitative data was collected through the triangulation of research methods (Figure 1). The information was sorted and examined by SWOT analysis. This analytical tool grouped data into four categories: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A better understanding of issues that required change and innovation were provided to further assist the formulation of a research policy brief.

Figure 1: Triangulation of methods employed in the research



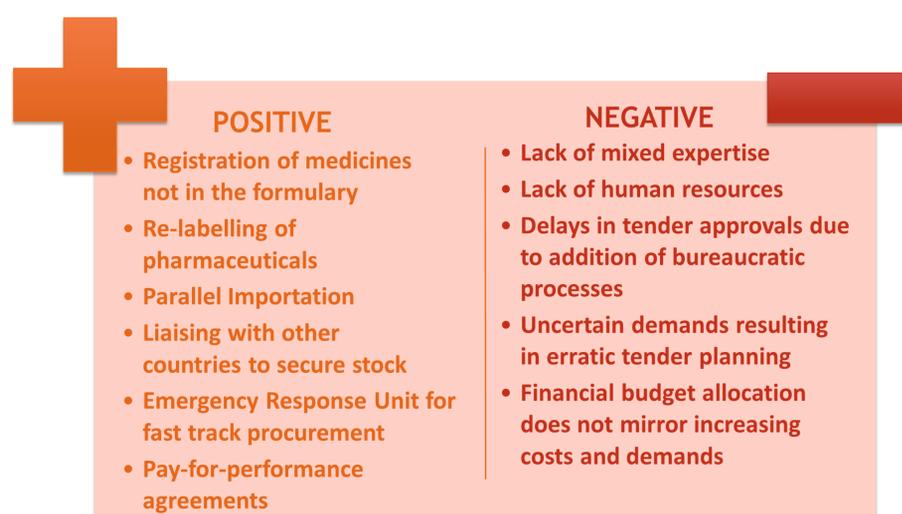
RESULTS

In 2016, the CPSU executed 4279 procurement calls and purchased 300 million medicinal products and 1.75 million medical devices. The CPSU proactively worked to successfully overcome major weaknesses related to sourcing of pharmaceuticals to eliminate stock outs and reduce the total cost of pharmaceuticals.

Recent changes in public procurement regulations have resulted in setbacks to the improvement process causing lack of human resources and an increase in bureaucratic processes, presenting a threat to long-term holistic measures and patient care (Figure 2).

A way to overcome these negative factors is to recognise the CPSU as a ministerial procurement unit leading to an independent regulatory role.

Figure 2: Positive and negative factors currently encountered by the Maltese national health service pharmaceutical procurement system



CONCLUSION

Unsustainable issues in the Maltese National Health Service pharmaceutical procurement system were identified by performance-based monitoring. A dynamic and practical framework that adds value to the procurement and supply of medicines and medical devices was proposed.

Reference

^[1] Ombaka E. Current status of medicines procurement. AJHP. 2009 Mar 1; 66(5): Suppl 3: s20-s28.