

Trade in Health Services: Data and Monitoring Needs

Debra J. Lipson

Department of Health and Development
World Health Organization, Geneva

+41-22-791-3582

e-mail: LipsonD@who.int

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Trends in Cross-Border Health Services Trade

- **Growing for most modes (types) and expanding in scope/variation**
 - Cross-border supply
 - e.g. telemedicine
 - Movement of health consumers
 - e.g. new “health tourism” packages
 - Commercial presence/foreign investment
 - e.g. US managed care in Latin America
 - Temporary movement of labour
 - e.g. “export” of health professionals



No Global Picture of Health Services Trade

- Existing data on services data not disaggregated
- Certain modes of health services trade not tracked at all
- Health services trade data (where it exists) does not conform to GATS modes of supply



Why do we need better data?

- **Inform National Trade & Health Policy**
 - Encourage or restrict health services trade in various modes
 - Advice/input into trade negotiations
 - Develop “compensatory”/complimentary health policies to minimize risks to national health objectives, or maximize gains



Why do we need better data?

- **Health Policy Research**
 - Economic & health system effects of health services trade
 - Effects of Trade Policy Liberalization via multilateral/regional agreements or unilateral decisions



Avenues for Improving Health Services Trade Statistics

- Multidisciplinary approaches to improving existing statistics and developing new ones
- Studies on validity and reliability of measures and indicators of health services trade to encourage country use and promote comparability



Possible Sources of Health Services Trade Statistics

- **Mode 1 - e-commerce in health services - ??**
- **Mode 2 - movement of consumers**
 - National health accounts - outward flows
 - surveys of consumers, health payers
- **Mode 3 - FDI/FATS**
 - national registries (inward flows)
 - private sector data bases
- **Mode 4 - movement of health professionals**
 - international migration data



WHO Work Program in Health Services Trade

- Promote sound research and data collection
 - January 2002 WHO consultation
 - Support for Country/Regional/Global Research and Data Collection
- Monitor trade negotiations to assess health implications; facilitate information sharing among WHO Member States; provide TA on request of WHO Member States

