



25 YEARS FOR BETTER HEALTH SYSTEMS
25 წელი უკეთესი ჯანდაცვის სისტემებისთვის

**Letter of Invitation to become a member of an Independent Steering Committee
for the project**

“Concentration and fragmentation: analysing the implications of the structure of Georgia’s private healthcare market for quality and accessibility (ConFrag)”

Dear Dr. Tamar Gabunia,

Curatio International Foundation (Georgia) represented by Principal Investigator Dr. George Gotsadze, in partnership with London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (UK) represented by Co-Investigators Prof. Kara Hanson and Prof. Catherine Goodman, is implementing a study *“Concentration and fragmentation: analysing the implications of the structure of Georgia’s private healthcare market for quality and accessibility (ConFrag)”*. The study is funded through the Joint Health Systems Research Initiative of the UK Department of International Development (DFID), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Wellcome Trust (WT). The 24 months duration research project will elaborate the conceptual framing of risks of harm arising from concentration and fragmentation of healthcare markets and develop a set of tools for undertaking healthcare market analysis that can inform policy options for shaping healthcare markets in the context of UHC. More information about the study is attached.

To ensure ongoing support and guidance to the research consortium we are creating an Independent Steering Committee (ISC) for the project. This committee will bring together key stakeholders in Georgia and a number of international advisors. As a person with respected knowledge and experience, and as one who will make a valuable contribution, we would like to invite you to participate in the Steering Committee work.

The ISC will meet once a year, remotely or face to face if possible and on rare occasions additional meeting(s) might be necessary. The first meeting is scheduled at the end of May and in case of your agreement we will notify you of the proposed date.

The role of the ISC will be to provide advice and guidance on strategic issues and risks related to the project, to advise on activities that will ensure maximum dissemination and policy uptake of the study findings, and to be a “critical friend” to the project, helping us to ensure that the research is undertaken to a high technical standard and with maximum impact.

Please consider our invitation and let us know your decision no later than May 10th. We look forward to hearing from you and appreciate you giving consideration to this request. If you have questions, please contact the project manager Maia Uchaneishvili m.uchaneishvili@curatio.com.

Sincerely yours,

George Gotsadze
Principal Investigator
President/CEO
Curatio International Foundation

Attachment #1

Concentration and fragmentation: analysing the implications of the structure of Georgia's private healthcare market for quality and accessibility (ConFrag)

Curatio International Foundation (Georgia) in partnership with London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (UK) is implementing a study "Concentration and fragmentation: analysing the implications of the structure of Georgia's private healthcare market for quality and accessibility (ConFrag)". The study is funded through the Joint Health Systems Research Initiative of the Department of International Development (DFID), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Wellcome Trust (WT). The 24 months duration research project will elaborate the conceptual framing of risks of harm from concentration and fragmentation of healthcare markets and develop a set of tools for undertaking healthcare market analysis that can inform policy options for shaping healthcare markets in the context of UHC. This research will be undertaken in Georgia, a lower-middle income former soviet country which has undergone extensive privatization. This award sets the foundation for evaluating future policy changes in Georgia and extending the analytic approach to other settings in a future research project.

The overall aim of this study is to elaborate this conceptual framing of risks of harm from concentration and fragmentation of healthcare markets and develop a set of tools for undertaking healthcare market analysis that can inform policy options for shaping healthcare markets in the context of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The principal health systems research question addressed in this study is: What are the risks to quality and accessibility of patient care from excessive concentration and excessive fragmentation in private healthcare markets, and what health system policies are available to address these?

The aim will be achieved through 4 specific research questions:

1. What is the structure and nature of the healthcare market in Georgia: to what extent is the market characterized by fragmentation and concentration, and by horizontal and vertical integration?
2. What demand, supply and policy factors are driving this pattern?
3. What are the risks and benefits for patients, and for the health system, of fragmented and consolidated health service provision?
4. What policy levers are available to shape the private healthcare market to better serve the needs of UHC?

The study uses a mixed methods approach, collecting qualitative interview data and undertaking quantitative analysis of large social insurance databases. The study will describe the Georgian healthcare market in terms of types of business and market structure, explore the reasons for the patterns that we observe, and then construct "theories of harm" which will describe the potential risks to patients and to the health system of fragmentation and concentration. The research uses quantitative methods applied to insurance claims data to look at the extent to which key individual outcomes such as price and intensity of treatment, and system level outcomes such as accessibility, approaches to quality assurance and the costs of contracting and regulating, differ by provider business model and market structure.

The research project commenced on March 11th, 2020 and will be completed on March 11th, 2022.