



CHANGES IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR IN NEW UZBEKISTAN (THE CASE OF SURKHANDARYA REGION)

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 28 th February, 2026 Accepted: 26 th March 2026	This article highlights the progress of reforms in the healthcare sector in recent years in our country, particularly in the Surkhandarya region. It examines the changes in the material and technical base of medical institutions in the region and the transition of the regional healthcare system to a new model.

Keywords: Healthcare system, medical sector, private clinics, material and technical base, mobile polyclinic

INTRODUCTION

In the conditions of New Uzbekistan, extensive reforms carried out for the sake of human dignity and health have led to enormous changes in the medical system. The healthcare system of the Surkhandarya region has also stepped into a completely new stage. Based on the elevation of human dignity in society and the lessons learned from the pandemic period, a radical reform of the medical system was initiated. On this basis, significant steps were taken to develop specialized medicine in our country. Consequently, the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of primary health care services for the population have improved, and the status and role of medical workers in society have been strengthened.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

A number of scientific articles and other works regarding the history of the healthcare system in our country have been published. In this regard, the research of B. Umrzakov, A. Kadirov, N. Khujaev, Sh. Iskandarova, and G.E.Muminova is particularly noteworthy. During the years of independence, several dissertation works dedicated to studying the healthcare system were also defended. These include dissertations by G.E.Muminova, M.D.Makhsumov, N.F.Rasulov, S.A.Djumanov, O.R.Ochilova, and A. Khujanazarov. This article describes the changes in the healthcare sector in the Surkhandarya region under the conditions of New Uzbekistan based on generally accepted methods: objectivity, historical analysis, comparative-logical analysis, chronological sequence, and principles of impartiality.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan is paying close attention to protecting human health, developing

the material and technical base of medical institutions, fostering healthy competition in medical services, and strengthening the material and technical base of non-governmental medical institutions. To develop private medicine, the allocation of low-interest loans, the provision of vacant buildings to entrepreneurs at "zero" value, and the allocation of land plots have opened a broad path for the development of this field.

Specifically, in accordance with the Presidential Decree № PQ-3450 dated December 23, 2017, "On creating additional conditions for the further development of private medical organizations," more than 200 high-tech modern medical devices were brought in at the expense of 2 million [1].

Qualified personnel play an incomparable role in the development of medicine. For instance, 23 specialists working in private clinics enhanced their skills in countries such as India, Turkey, Russia, and South Korea in the fields of endosurgery, neurosurgery, oncology, and urology. This has reduced the need for the regional population to travel to the capital or abroad; furthermore, private medical institutions now account for 50-60% of the total medical service load and 75% of diagnostic work previously handled by state medical institutions [2].

Significantly, according to Decree № PQ-2863 dated April 1, 2017, funds saved from tax incentives for private clinics must be directed toward providing free medical services to vulnerable segments of the population. Consequently, qualified medical services are being provided to this segment of the population according to the established procedure.

In 2018, the "Mehrigiyo medmex" (India) joint venture in the Kumkurgan district, and in 2019, "Alles Sagliq Group" LLC (Turkey) in Termez city, attracted 2.5 million USD in investment to establish a laboratory equipped with modern innovative technologies



(employing 3 foreign specialists and 22 local staff). Since 2020, "Avisenna International Hospital" (Afghanistan) joint ventures have also been operating. Foreign citizens also visit major private diagnostic and treatment centers in the region; specifically, 558 foreign citizens were served in 2018, 647 in 2019, and 401 in 2020 [3].

The regional population is served by 34 inpatient medical institutions. They have a total of 7,711 beds, of which 7,039 (91.3%) are budget-funded. A total of 324,748 patients were treated (including 310,085 in budget beds). In budget-funded inpatient facilities, 52,281 surgeries were performed in 2019 and 42,693 in 2020. These facilities have 3,255.0 allocated staff positions, with a fulfillment rate of 87.9% (2,842.0) [3]. At the President's initiative, 11 highly qualified doctors and scientists from central Republican clinics were sent to the Surkhandarya region as leaders, resulting in several positive outcomes. At the Termez branch of the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center of Oncology and Radiology, surgeries for mediastinal and lung tumors were introduced. At the Regional Phthisiology and Pulmonology Center, advanced surgical treatment for spinal tuberculosis was established, and at the Termez branch of the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center of Eye Microsurgery, the "gold standard" of cataract treatment—phacoemulsification—was implemented.

Through the KFB, a total of 86 types of medical equipment worth 7 billion 960 million 168 thousand soums were brought to the Regional Multidisciplinary Medical Center. With the arrival of a Gamma-therapeutic radiotherapy machine worth 590,000 dollars at the Surkhandarya branch of the Republican Oncology Center, the need for nearly 100 patients to travel to the Republican center or Bukhara region ended. To ensure the continuous operation of this high-tech device, 2 specialists were trained in Belarus and 1 in Austria. Additionally, equipment such as IFA analyzers, ultrasound, digital X-ray, endoscopy, and digitizers were brought in, strengthening the institution's material and technical base.

The material and technical base of institutions dealing with the treatment and prevention of social diseases has improved year by year. For instance, over the last two years, the regional phthisiology and pulmonology center received 64.7 billion soums worth of medical equipment, including a biochemical analyzer, an oxygen concentrator, two Frimo star ILED-1 microscopes, an autoclave, a multifunctional monitor, a high-frequency surgical device, and 13 pulse oximeters. Additionally,

400.0 million soums from the local budget were spent on repairs, a laboratory building was built for 1.7 billion soums, and a special sewage disposal vehicle was purchased for 395 million soums [4].

To determine the sensitivity of tuberculosis mycobacteria to second-line drugs (fluoroquinolones and aminoglycosides), an MGIT laboratory device was installed in the region. This eliminated the difficulties of sending pathological materials to the Republican Center and waiting a long time for results. Consequently, while 947 cases of tuberculosis were detected in 2018 (36.1 per 100,000 population), this was a decrease of 1.7 permille compared to 2017. In 2020, 655 cases were detected (24.6 per 100,000 population), an 11.5 permille decrease compared to 2018 [4].

Due to the research efforts of medical staff, new innovative surgical procedures such as "necroectomy of vertebral bodies, decompression of the spinal cord, spondylodesis with titanium pyromesh and autologous bone" were performed on 172 patients, and "total endoprosthetics of the hip and knee joints" were implemented for 15 patients. This has prevented patients from having to travel to the Republican center. During each visit of President Sh.M. Mirziyoyev to the Surkhandarya region, special attention has been paid to protecting the health of the population and strengthening the material and technical base of treatment-prevention institutions. During four visits between 2017 and 2020, a total of 41 assignments were given regarding the healthcare sector. Specifically, during the visit on February 10-11, 2017, an assignment was given to establish the Termez branch of the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center of Eye Microsurgery on the basis of the regional perinatal center. Within the investment program, 7.5 billion soums were allocated for full reconstruction, and the branch (with 70 beds) was established in January 2019.

During the same visit, to improve ophthalmological services in remote districts and villages, an assignment was given to establish a "Mobile Ophthalmological Poliklinika". This mobile clinic was created on an Isuzu bus platform and currently organizes medical check-ups in remote areas. To reduce patient travel to the Republican center, a telemedicine system was established at the branch, allowing for remote consultations with the Center for complex cases. In 2019, 526,000 USD worth of high-tech medical equipment was brought in (Optical Coherence Tomography, Ultrasound Biomicroscopy, etc.), which reduced the need to send patients to Tashkent for ambulatory examinations by 90% [5].



Based on the minutes of the meeting held by the President in the Surkhandarya regional administration on February 10, 2017, and Cabinet of Ministers Resolution № 191 dated April 7, 2017, the former regional eye hospital in Termez was reconstructed for 17.4 billion soums [6]. In its place, the regional perinatal center, the population reproductive health center, and the regional "Mother and Child" screening centers were established. These centers were equipped with high-tech medical devices. Due to the proper organization of neonatology services and the integration with districts, specialized medical care was provided to 867 (23.3%) premature infants out of 3,768 live births in 2020, compared to 539 (11.8%) out of 4,533 live births in 2016, leading to a decrease in infant mortality [7]. In the neonatology department, the use of "Vital K" to prevent hemorrhagic diseases and "Curosurf" for respiratory distress syndrome in infants weighing under 1000g was implemented. As a result, the number of surviving infants weighing under 1000g increased from 3 in 2016 to 9 in 2020 [8].

Another assignment from the President's 2017 visit was to "build an additional building for the regional children's multidisciplinary medical center and equip it with necessary medical equipment". Currently, a new modern 5-story building worth 17.5 billion soums has been erected for the center [9]. Furthermore, a Surkhandarya branch of the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center (Urology), featuring a hemodialysis department with 10 "artificial kidney" machines, was established and began operation on August 14, 2018 [10].

Regarding public-private partnership (PPP) projects and outsourcing services, the Surkhandarya Regional Health Department submitted 6 projects to the Ministry of Health for review in 2020. Agreements were signed and work began on 2 of these. Outsourcing services were organized in 46 state medical organizations. For 2021, three projects were proposed:

1. Establishing a medical diagnostic and treatment center at the "Khujaikon" sanatorium in Sherabad district with an 8.0 billion soums investment.
2. Establishing a center in the "Vodiy" neighborhood of Denau district with a 2.5 billion soums investment.
3. Reconstructing the old infectious disease hospital building in Uzun district into a diagnostic and treatment center with a 5.5 billion soums investment [11].

Between 2019 and 2022, several efforts were made at the Regional Multidisciplinary Medical Center to improve

service quality and introduce modern, minimally invasive diagnostic procedures. The polyclinic section was renovated and equipped with modern tools (Ultrasound, ENT-combine, X-ray). Support from the KBW Development Bank provided over 18 billion soums in modern equipment, enhancing the quality of diagnostics and treatment. Following Presidential Decree № PQ-5254 dated October 4, 2021, a total of 1,938.0 million soums (split between the Ministry of Finance and the regional administration) was allocated to purchase 6 types of medical equipment for regional branches to enable online data transmission [12].

Thus, significant changes have been made to the healthcare system in recent years. These efforts prioritize protecting the health of the oasis population and raising a healthy and harmoniously developed future generation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the main goal of the New Uzbekistan idea is human dignity and creating decent living conditions for people. Human health plays a vital role in realizing this sacred idea. Significant practical work has been completed in reforming the healthcare system based on international standards, regularly improving the qualifications of medical workers, establishing cooperation with international medical institutions, reconstructing the regional healthcare system, and providing modern equipment and qualified specialists.

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