

The Patient Reported Indicators Survey in Saudi Arabia

Value in Health

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Patient Reported Indicators Survey in Saudi Arabia- an Explainer

Value in Health publishes two-page overviews on important topics on high value health systems in Saudi Arabia, this paper introduces the importance of the PaRIS project, its aims, objectives, and benefits, and explains why Saudi Arabia is committed to its implementation. We also share what has been achieved so far, and what comes next.

Over the past few years, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia represented by the Center for Value in Health has been participating in the Patient Reported Indicators Survey (PaRIS). This project is more than just a survey; it is a global movement, led by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), to place patients' voices at the heart of healthcare improvement, and to assess how healthcare systems are performing for people with chronic conditions.

Saudi Arabia's participation in PaRIS comes at a pivotal moment in its health transformation. With rising rates of chronic diseases, even among young adults, and ongoing efforts to shift towards value-based healthcare, the insights from PaRIS will provide the evidence needed to guide reforms, strengthen primary care, and ensure that healthcare is designed around what matters most to patients.

What is PaRIS?

The Patient Reported Indicators Survey (PaRIS) is an initiative led by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to promote people-centred health care. It aims to develop, standardise, and implement a new generation of indicators that measure what matters most to patients; their outcomes and experiences of health care.

PaRIS focuses on patients with chronic conditions who are managed in primary care or other ambulatory health care settings. Using a newly designed survey, it collects insights directly from patients to understand whether the care they receive is improving their health and quality of life.

Two survey questionnaires are implemented:

- The patient questionnaire contains information about patients' characteristics such as age and gender, health care experiences and health care outcomes. No patient clinical data from patient records are requested or provided by clinicians.
- The provider questionnaire contains information about the structural characteristics of the providers' clinic and the care they provide.

Why PaRIS Matters Globally?

Populations around the world are ageing and people with chronic conditions form the most rapidly growing group of health care users. In many countries, around two thirds of adults aged 45 and older have at least one chronic condition ¹. These patients often receive routine follow-up care in primary care, or other ambulatory care settings, and many receive care from different providers and face fragmented, uncoordinated care and, putting them at risk of receiving substandard care.

While health systems collect massive amounts of data on inputs such as spending, activities, compliance with guidelines, and cost, they rarely measure whether the care they provide actually makes people feel better, function better, and live better. Therefore, it is difficult to improve what is not being measured. PaRIS addresses this gap.

Why PaRIS matters to Saudi Arabia?

Saudi Arabia is a relatively young country with an overwhelmingly young population. With a population of almost 35 million, approximately 25% of Saudi Arabia's population are younger than 15 years, and about 72% were aged between 15 and 64 years, and only about 3% of the population is aged above 65 years. Despite this, there has been a substantial increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in recent decades, especially among young adults; attributing to almost 73% of all premature deaths in 2016 2.

There has been a major issue in chronic disease management due to the weak implementation of primary health care services and the dependence on secondary and tertiary services that are provided free of charge by the government. This has created pressure on specialized hospitals, leading to long waiting times, suboptimal care, and dissatisfaction in the services provided, particularly for chronic disease management.

Although primary health care centers are widely distributed around the Kingdom, and are provided through the Ministry of Health (MOH), Other Governmental Sector (OGS) hospitals, and private hospitals, primary care remains inadequate and inconsistent. For patients with chronic conditions, we currently lack robust, national level data on whether the care they receive is improving their health and meeting their needs.

Aims of PaRIS

The PaRIS survey aims to:

- Measure patient reported outcomes (PROMs) such as pain levels, mobility, psychological well being, and quality of life.
- Measure patient reported experiences such as waiting times, care coordination, and provider communication.
- Provide a clear, comparable picture of how healthcare systems are performing for chronic disease patients.
- Enable international benchmarking to learn from different approaches about effective strategies for supporting people-centred care and measuring progress.

Objectives for PaRIS in Saudi Arabia

The Center for Value in Health, as the Saudi national body tasked with promoting value based health and care, is taking a country-wide lead in the delivery of this survey in primary healthcare centers to identify the potential areas for improvement in care provision. The objectives of this participation are:

- To establish a baseline measurement of PROMs and PREMs in primary healthcare.
- Identify gaps in care provision and opportunities for improvement.
- Align with the goals of the healthcare transformation by shifting to value based health and care and focusing on what matters most to patients.

Benefits of PaRIS for Saudi Arabia

The survey provides insight into what care really delivers to people. This information is essential to help **policy makers** better understand how their health systems are performing and how this could be improved.

The survey will shed light on how **international** health systems are and how primary care, or other ambulatory care systems are responding to the needs of patients. It will tell what is working well in these countries and identify the areas that require policy attention.

Health care **providers** who participate in the PaRIS survey will receive aggregate feedback information on the outcomes and experiences of their patient populations and how they compare to peers, ultimately utilized as a tool to improve quality.

Generating systematic data on outcomes and experiences is only a means to a goal: helping health systems becoming more people centred. Therefore, **patients** will ultimately benefit most from the PaRIS survey.

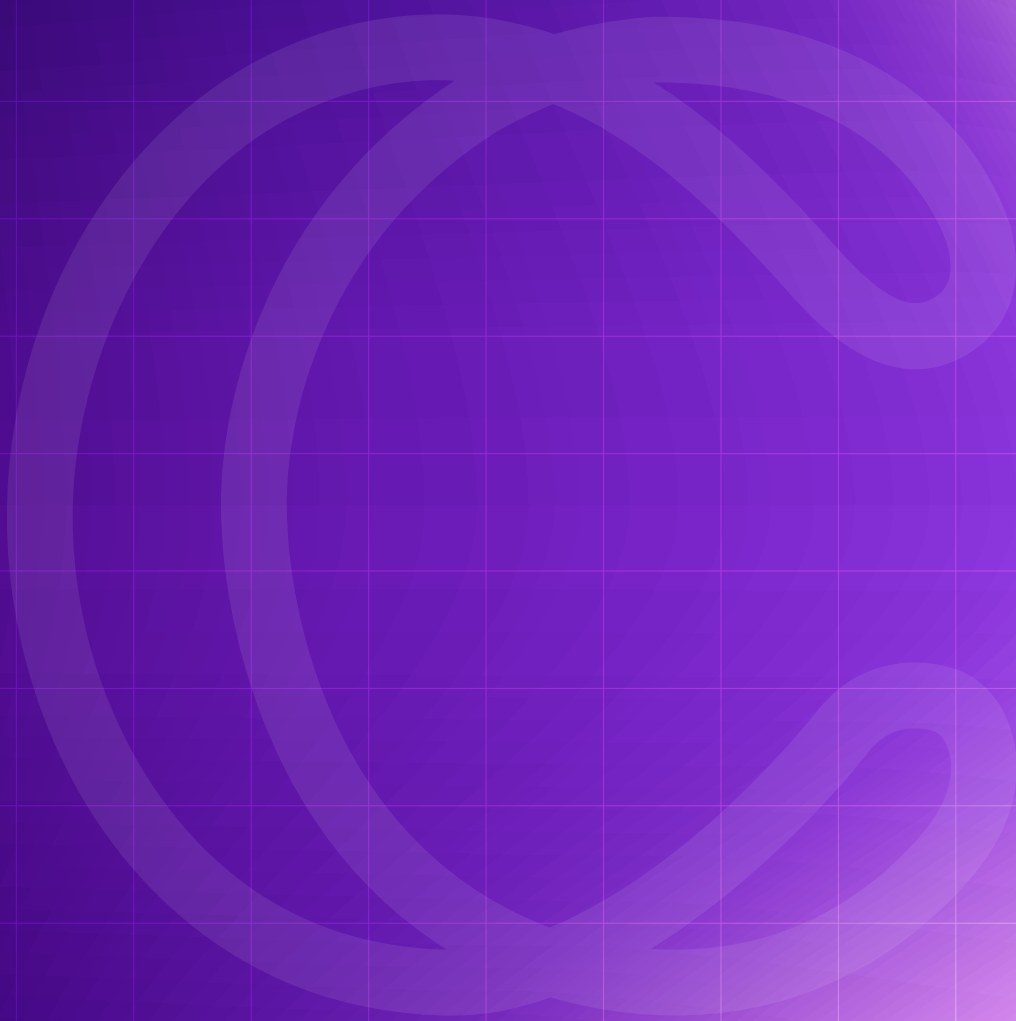
What Happens Next?

The PaRIS survey reached a significant milestone in Saudi Arabia through close collaboration with the OECD. After years of work on the survey's design, framework and survey tools, the Field Trial was launched in 2022. The Main Survey for adults aged 45 and older commenced in April 2024, and the data was submitted to the OECD for international comparison. Both the national and international findings have now been published in the OECD Flagship Report "Does Healthcare Deliver? Results from the Patient-Reported Indicator Surveys". Recognizing the importance of Saudi Arabia's large young population and the high prevalence of chronic diseases in this demographic, an additional stage of the main survey was introduced to measure PROMs and PREMs among adults aged 18-44. Data collection for the Main Survey ended in 2024, and the data is undergoing national-level analysis. We welcome collaborations on research and policy initiatives that will utilise the PaRIS dataset to generate meaningful insights for the Saudi healthcare system.

Looking ahead, the OECD is planning to launch the second cycle of PaRIS in 2026, and Saudi Arabia intends to participate to further strengthen its commitment to people-centred, value-based healthcare.

1 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2021). Health at a Glance 2021: OECD indicators. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/4dd50c09-en>

2 GBD Saudi Arabia Collaborators. "The Burden of Disease in Saudi Arabia 1990–2017: Results from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017." The Lancet Planetary Health, May 2020, doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(20\)30075-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(20)30075-9).



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