

parts and consumables as well as continuous training of service technicians and engineers.

Also playing a significant role in the supply side are the local manufacturers. This group, however, is engaged mainly in the manufacture and distribution of relatively simple, low-technology equipment and hospital furnitures.

Both groups are complemented by local traders in the distribution process, who perform "middlemen" roles.

On the demand side, the hospitals constitute the dominant force among end-users. This group is currently the biggest client of medical equipment and supplies distributors. General hospitals such as medical centers and regional/provincial hospitals utilize the broadest range of medical instruments and appliances while special hospitals are potent markets for specialized and highly advanced equipment and devices of varying type.

3. Foreign Trade Statistics

The National Statistics Office (NSO) is the government agency responsible for recording and monitoring foreign trade transactions in the country. This agency uses the Philippine Standard Commodity Classification (PSCC) Code in classifying import and export transactions with various countries. Although this code was formulated based on international trade standards prevailing in 1977 (the year a publication on foreign trade statistics first came out), its inherent incompatibilities with existing international trade classifications recently led to its revision. The improved version is now nearing completion and will be effected by the end of the year, out before the end of the current year.

In identifying commodity classifications in the PSCC Code) the various product categories listed in the Canadian brochure entitled "Health Care Products For World Markets" (published in 1986 to acquaint