

- a number of public sector doctors and researchers mentioned that they brought their own equipment to the hospital for personal use;
- in almost all cases clinical records are kept manually;
- small hospitals generally use their computer equipment for laboratory and radiological use but rarely for accounting;
- some hospitals have purchased hotel management programs which they have adapted to hospital administration; and data-base access for the purposes of diagnostic assistance is virtually non-existent.

Areas of priority will be the computerization of medical records, inventory control, personnel data, admissions, scheduling, pharmaceutical records, laboratory and test results, diagnostic support systems, and more comprehensive accounting systems. Training programs in the use of computer technologies will be needed to introduce these new systems into hospitals.

There are additional opportunities for companies offering communications services and equipment such as telephone networks, teleconference and video installations, and closed-network video services for hospital rooms.

EQUIPMENT SERVICES

Mexican health care organizations are making increasing use of private companies to plan and manage equipment purchases and to maintain and repair equipment. They are also attempting to avoid the purchase of expensive equipment by contracting out specialized services.

EQUIPMENT PLANNING SERVICES

Each medical unit makes its own equipment procurement decisions in accordance with its budget. Traditionally, buyers make purchasing decisions by consulting with equipment suppliers or their distributors, reviewing equipment catalogues and by using a U.S. publication entitled ECRI.

The concept of retaining professional advisors to plan equipment purchases is new to the Mexican market. Imaginative packaging will therefore be necessary to sell this approach particularly where the *Secretaría de Salud (SS)*, Secretariat of Health, is concerned. Nonetheless, as Mexico's health care reforms proceed, equipment planning, including purchasing, financing, installation and usage scheduling will become a larger priority.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

Within the *Secretaría de Salud (SS)*, Secretariat of Health, each department is responsible for managing its own equipment repair needs. The *SS* has a special department for the manufacture of parts called *Centro de Desarrollo y Aplicaciones Tecnológicas (CEDAT)*, Centre for the Development and Applied Technologies. This centre also provides low-cost repair services for hospital equipment.

