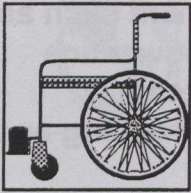


### 3. HEALTH CARE\*



- **Opportunities exist in medical equipment sales, including high-technology items, as well as in emergency medicine systems and training implementation and simple, disposable medical accessories.**

The allocation for medical care in the Sixth Malaysian Plan (1991-1995) totals C\$1.127 billion, compared to C\$490.5 million in the previous plan. This huge increase is required for the implementation of 20 nucleus hospitals, the upgrading and rehabilitation of 13 existing general and district hospitals and of rural health services and the construction of a new cardiothoracic centre. Health services will be further enhanced by the improvement of pathological and radiological services and the provision of increased specialist services in medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology. The privatization of medical services will mean an increase in purchases of medical equipment by the private sector as well as a new demand for higher technology. Emergency medicine systems and training implementation is a priority.

Malaysia has begun production of mainly simple disposable accessories such as surgical blades, forceps, scissors, syringes and vein puncture sets. These do not pose much of a threat to importers for several reasons:

- ▶ local companies are mainly manufacturing for their parent companies overseas;
- ▶ Malaysia still lacks the technology and skilled labour to produce its own sophisticated medical equipment and is entirely dependent on imported products to meet domestic demands; and
- ▶ the domestic market is not large enough to justify the establishment of factories to produce high-technology equipment.

However in recent years, manufacturers are encourage to invest in the manufacturing of generic pharmaceutical (e.g., over-the-counter drugs or medications). Traditional medication manufacturers are also investing in upgrading and modernization of their facilities and factories.

\*This summary is based on an October 1993 sector study, *Medical Devices & Assistive Devices for Home Health Care and Institutions*, commissioned by the Canadian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur. The complete study can be obtained from the High Commission or DFAIT's InfoCentre.