

PUBLIC HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURE IN MEXICO, 1992

	Total	Open System	premium-based System
People covered	89,900,000	42,000,000	47,900,000
Primary care facilities	13,339	10,309	3,030
General hospitals	676	310	366
Specialized hospitals	157	100	57
Laboratories	967	769	198
X-Ray rooms	2,108	887	1,221
Operating rooms	2,290	997	1,293
Beds	71,500	32,319	39,181
Medical doctors	103,354	40,570	62,784
Paramedics	177,334	62,160	115,174
Nursing staff	148,957	58,556	90,401
Blood banks	235	110	125

Source: Recursos y Servicios - Sistema Nacional de Salud, Boletín de Información Estadística, Número 12, 1992, p. 76.

Individuals are eligible for different programs that make up the National Health Care System, depending mainly on their employment status, their economic status and their location.

Roughly half of the population consists of formally employed persons and their families. They are covered by the *población derechohabiente*. This is a premium-based system funded by employer and employee contributions to a variety of health care entities. There are several programs covering different types of employers. A separate system serves the health care needs of Mexicans who are not employed, who are self-employed or who are engaged in the informal economy. It is referred to as *población abierta*, or open system.

The facilities of both the open and premium-based health care systems are classified as primary care, second level or third level (see box). Each system offers services throughout all 31 states and the Federal District. In a few of the more remote and less populated areas, second and third level facilities may not be available.

The National Health Care System is based on an extensive infrastructure of more than 14,000 medical service centres, of which about 13,000 are primary care facilities. About three-quarters of these facilities fall under the jurisdiction of the open system. General hospitals are a key element of both systems, but two-thirds of specialized hospitals are in the open system. Although several hospitals in the larger cities are comparable to those in Canada, Mexican facilities average only 86 beds.

