

Six Facts About Health Care in Honduras

1. Access to healthcare for families in Honduras is determined by poverty level, socioeconomic status and whether they live in a rural or urban environment. Poverty is a major issue in Honduras where over 66 percent of the population lives in poverty with one in five people living in extreme poverty. In rural environments, healthcare is much harder to access despite efforts to improve these conditions. The Ministry of Health in Honduras provides care to almost 90 percent of the population, but these services are mainly available in developed cities making it hard for rural populations to receive good care.
2. One of the major barriers to receiving good healthcare in Honduras is lack of access to physicians. The CDC reports that there are around 0.37 physicians per 1,000 people in Honduras. This number is far too low according to the Millennium Development Goals* estimates for providing sufficient primary healthcare to a nation. Although primary healthcare is insufficient in Honduras, the country still has high immunization coverage for children with between 88 to 93 percent of children receiving vaccinations.
3. The Honduran health system is made up of a private and public sector. The public sector includes the Ministry of Health, which provides services to most of the population, and the Honduran Institute of Social Security. There is also a private sector that includes nonprofit organizations as well as for-profit businesses.
4. Unfortunately, the current health system is experiencing a crisis due to poor management, weak government leadership, and poor human resource administration. This has led to bad coordination between different institutions which provide health care and has only made gaining access to healthcare harder. A shocking nine out of ten people are not covered by any health insurance and at least 18 percent of the population cannot access healthcare.
5. As a result of the challenges mentioned above, Honduras implemented a different national health model in 2015. This model would provide services to impoverished and rural areas and use preventative care to improve health. Care has improved in some ways, but the use of this model has been sporadic and not consistent enough to have a big enough impact. However, there is good news.
6. The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)** has started a \$15.6 million Threshold Program in Honduras that is trying to improve government efficiency and transparency. Part of this program includes social audits of healthcare clinics in rural areas by nonprofits and grassroots organizations in Honduras. These audits show whether or not clinics are providing adequate care to communities then the results are delivered to health center managers who come up with new plans to fix these problems. Real change has been seen as a result of these audits and clinics are starting to be more transparent about what they offer and improve doctor-patient relationships. This has also allowed for a more successful and consistent implementation of the new health model in many rural communities.

**Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) – A series of goals, which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, that form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions*

***Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)- An innovative and independent U.S. foreign assistance agency that is helping lead the fight against global poverty.*

****For more information, please visit <https://borgenproject.org/healthcare-in-honduras/>*