

Observing Healthcare and Medicine in Ecuador

Accessibility and Healthcare

Under Ecuador's government system, healthcare is very accessible to low income populations; drugs are inexpensive, services are door-to-door, and clinics are placed in accessible locations for populations without means for transportation.

Disease control and care for the elderly and disabled are responsibilities of the government rather than of individuals.



Figure 1: El Fortín (photo by Anna Breen)

Working in the Lab

A crucial aspect of healthcare in any region is the lab work which goes into analyzing patient samples. The private health organization La Fundación de Mariana Jesús has a lab in the heart of El Fortín which provides sample analysis for all the clinics in the organization. This includes blood, urine, stool, saliva, and dermal samples.



Figure 2: Elderly patients describing symptoms in home (photo by Hernan Vernaez)

Disease Control

In a dense population where standing water is stored in tanks in homes, vector control so as to prevent spread of tropical diseases is a crucial aspect of Ecuadorian healthcare. A sector of El Ministerio de Salud Pública is dedicated to administering poison for mosquito larvae in water tanks in the homes of the population.

Additionally, vaccinations are free and required for school enrollment.



Figure 3: Transferring urine samples into centrifuge tubes (photo by Miranda Perry)

Healthcare on Foot

Without established nursing homes and hospice care, elderly and disabled populations require clinic-to-door healthcare provision. Healthcare workers of El Ministerio de Salud Pública travel to sectors of the city of Guayaquil and perform physical exams, refill prescriptions, and educate families of the elderly and disabled in their home.

Special Thanks to the E.R. Jackman Friends & Alumni Internship Support Program, Global Experiences Fund, College of Agricultural Sciences, and Child Family Health International.