



Dominican Republic

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Dominican Republic is a country with an approximate area of 49 thousand square kilometers (UNO, 2008). The population is 10,225,482 and the sex ratio (men per hundred women) is 101 (UNO, 2009). The proportion of the population under the age of 18 years is 38% and the proportion above age 60 is 6% (UNO, 2009). The literacy rate is 95% for men and 97% for women (UN Statistics, 2008). The life expectancy at birth is 70 years for males and 75 years for females (UNO, 2005-2010). The healthy life expectancy at birth is 62 years for males and 75 years for females (UNPD, 2010). The country is in the upper middle income group (based on 2010 World Bank criteria). The total expenditure on health as a percentage of gross domestic product is 5.86% and the per capita government expenditure on health (PPP int. \$) is \$140.0 (WHO, 2006). The suicide rate for males is 2.6 per 100,000 population and for females is 0.6 per 100,000 population. In the Dominican Republic, neuropsychiatric disorders are estimated to contribute to 15.9% of the global burden of disease (WHO, 2008).

GOVERNANCE

An officially approved mental health policy does not exist. However, mental health is specifically mentioned in the general health policy.

A mental health plan exists and was approved or most recently revised in 2010. The mental health plan components include:

- Timelines for the implementation of the mental health plan.
- Funding allocation for the implementation of half or more of the items in the mental health plan.
- Shift of services and resources from mental hospitals to community mental health facilities.
- Integration of mental health services into primary care.

Dedicated mental health legislation exists and was initiated, or most recently revised, in 2006. Legal provisions concerning mental health are also covered in other laws (e.g., welfare, disability, general health legislation etc.).

FINANCING

Mental health expenditures by the government health department/ministry are 0.61% of the total health budget. Mental hospital expenditures are not available.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE DELIVERY

Primary Care

Prescription regulations authorize primary health care doctors to prescribe and/or to continue prescription of psychotherapeutic medicines but with restrictions. In contrast, the department of health does not authorize primary health care nurses to prescribe and/or to continue prescription of psychotherapeutic medicines. Similarly, official policy does not permit primary health care nurses to independently diagnose and treat mental disorders within the primary care system.

The majority of primary health care doctors and nurses have not received official in-service training on mental health within the last five years. Officially approved manuals on the management and treatment of mental disorders are not available in the majority of primary health care clinics. Official referral procedures for referring persons from primary care to secondary/tertiary care exist as do referral procedures from tertiary/secondary to primary care.

Mental Health Services

Availability of mental health facilities

	Total number of facilities/beds	Rate per 100,000 population	Number of facilities/beds reserved for children and adolescents only	Rate per 100,000 population
Mental health outpatient facilities	59	0.58	0	0.0
Day treatment facilities	1	0.01	0	0.0
Psychiatric beds in general hospitals	54	0.53	4	0.04
Community residential facilities	1	0.01	0	0.0
Beds/places in community residential facilities	2	0.02	0	0.0
Mental hospitals	1	0.01	0	0.0
Beds in mental hospitals	263	2.57	0	0.0

Access to care

	Rates per 100,000 population)	Females (%)	Under age 18 (%)
Persons treated in mental health outpatient facilities	384.1	UN	UN
Persons treated in mental health day treatment facilities	3.05	UN	UN
Admissions to psychiatric beds in general hospitals	13.52	UN	UN
Persons staying in community residential facilities at the end of the year	0.02	UN	UN
Admissions to mental hospitals	17.35	UN	UN

Long term care in mental hospitals (% of persons staying):

Less than 1 year	96.9%
More than 1 and less than 5 years	0.4%
More than 5 years	2.7%

Data collected in 2011

UN = information unavailable, NA = item not applicable

HUMAN RESOURCES

Workforce and training

	Health professionals working in the mental health sector Rate per 100,000	Training of health professions in educational institutions Rate per 100,000
Psychiatrists	1.33	0.07
Medical doctors, not specialized in psychiatry	UN	UN
Nurses	UN	UN
Psychologists	3.27	UN
Social workers	UN	UN
Occupational therapists	UN	UN
Other health workers	UN	NA

Informal human resources (Family and User Associations)

	User	Family
Present in the country?	No	Yes
Number of members	NA	15
Participation in the formulation/implementation of policy/plan/legislation?	NA	not routinely

MEDICINES

Expenditures for medicines for mental and behavioral disorders at country level

Type of Medicines	Expenditures at country level per year and per 100,000 population (in USD)
All the psychotherapeutic medicines ¹	UN
Medicines used for bipolar disorders ²	UN
Medicines for psychotic disorders ³	UN
Medicines used for general anxiety ⁴	UN
Medicines used for mood disorders ⁵	UN

¹ N03AG01, N05A, N05B, N05C, N06A

² N03AG01, N05A, N05B, N05C, N06A

³ N05A (excluding N05AN)

⁴ N05B & N05C

⁵ N06A

Data collected in 2011

UN = information unavailable, NA = item not applicable

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

	Data on number of people/ activities are collected and reported	Data on age and gender are collected and reported	Data on patient's diagnosis are collected and reported
Persons with mental disorders treated in primary health care	No	No	No
Interventions (psychopharmacological and psychosocial) delivered in primary health care for people with mental disorders	No	No	No
Persons treated in mental health outpatient facilities	No	No	No
Contacts in mental health outpatient facilities	No	No	No
Persons treated in mental health day treatment facilities	No	No	No
Admissions in general hospitals with psychiatric beds	No	No	No
Admissions in mental hospitals	Yes	Yes	Yes
Days spent in mental hospitals	Yes	Yes	Yes
Admissions in community residential facilities	No	No	No

Note: A specific report focusing on mental health activities has been published by the Health Department or any other responsible government unit in the last three years.

Data collected in 2011

UN = information unavailable, NA = item not applicable