



Health

Health service provision in the West Bank and Gaza is divided among public providers (Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior), multiple private (hospitals, clinics) and NGO providers, incl. UNRWA.

The health sector **suffers** from a **regular shortage** of medications, equipment (even as basic as syringes and rubber gloves), specialist physicians, and medical personnel. Key **chronic problems** are financial constraints, poor maintenance of equipment, Israeli restrictions regarding access to health facilities for staff, patients and medical commodities, and regarding construction or rehabilitation of health infrastructure, especially in Area C and Gaza. In **Gaza**, the shortage of fuel and power further limits the operation of emergency generators and ambulances. An increasing number of patients are transferred for treatment outside of Palestine – to Israel, Egypt or Jordan.

Main Health Indicators

	WBGS	WB	GS
Hospitals (2014)	80	50	30
of which: Government (Min. of Health)	26	13	13
NGO	35	21	14
UNRWA	1	1	0
Military Medical Services	3	0	3
Private	15	15	0
of which: General	43	29	14
Specialized	20	7	13
Rehabilitation	4	3	1
Maternity	13	11	2
Hospital Beds (2015)	6,006	3,607	2,399
Hospitals beds per 10,000 pop. (2015)	13.8	12.6	13.2
Bed Occupancy Rate (%) (2015)	88.2	92.6	84.4
Average Duration (days)	2.9	2.3	3.9
Number of Primary Health Centers (2015)	760	608	152
of which: Government (Min. of Health)	471	422	49
NGO	206	129	77
UNRWA	62	41	21
Military Medical Services	21	16	5
Population per Primary Health Centers	5,819		
Number of Physicians (general and specialist)	10,049	7,368	2,679
Physicians per 10,000 population (2015)	21.5		
Number of Dentists	2,667	2,454	213
Dentists per 10,000 population (2015)	5.7		
Number of Pharmacists	4,522	3,958	564
Pharmacists per 10,000 population (2015)	9.7		
Number of Nurses / Midwives	9,418/1,039	6,104/723	3,314/316
Nursing/Midwifery per 10,000 pop. (2015)	20.1/2.2		
Crude Birth Rate per 1,000 population (2015)	28.8	26.7	31.8
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population (2015)	2.9	3.0	2.7
Total Fertility Rate (2014)	4.1	3.7	4.5
Infant Mortality Rate (<1 yr) per 1,000 live births (2014)	18	17.1	19.6
Child Mortality Rate (<5 yrs) per 1,000 live births (2014)	22	20	24
Life Expectancy at Birth male - female (2015)	73.5 (72 – 75)		
Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 live births (2015)	15.7	7.2	25.9
Cancer Incidence Rate per 100,000 (2015)	83.8		
No. of referrals outside MOH facilities (2014)	87,620	63,648	23,972
of which: for treatment abroad	12,131	6,510	5,621
(of which Israel / Jordan / Egypt)	(10,300/73/1,758)		
for treatment in East Jerusalem	36,729	27,150	9,579

Sources: Ministry of Health, *Health Annual Report Palestine 2015, 2016*; PCBS, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 - Final Report, 2015*; PCBS & Ministry of Health, *Press Release on International Health Day, 7 April 2016*.

■ Facts & Figures

- As of June 2016, Health and Social Work contributed **3.2%** to the **GDP** (excl. East Jerusalem) (WB: 2.6%, GS: 5.3%) (PCBS, *Quarterly National Accounts*, Q2-2016).
- **Health expenditure** in 2015 totaled NIS 1,352.943 million, 53.4% of which for salaries and wages, and 39% for use of goods and services (Palestinian Ministry of Finance, monthly report for Dec. 2015).
- The Palestinian health sector still **depends** greatly **on Israel** (in terms of tax transfers, influence over the PA budget, authorization of Palestinian medical personnel, import of medicines, and movement restrictions for patients, personnel, and ambulances). Accordingly, there are significant **disparities** in the Israeli and the Palestinian health sectors:

Disparities in the Health Sector – Israel vs. Palestine

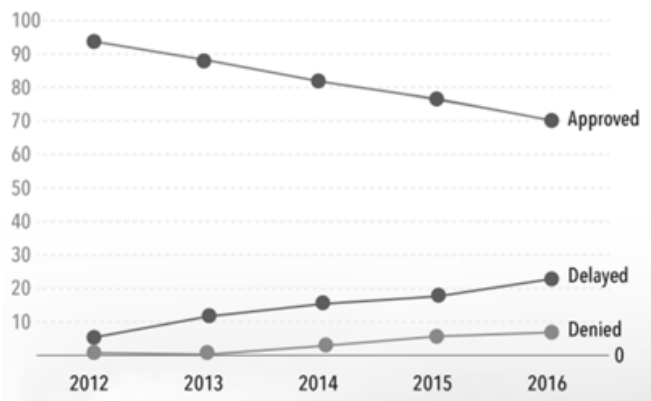
	Israel	Palestine
Government health expenditure in \$ - as % of the GDP	\$2,046 per capita 7.7%	\$248 per capita 16%
Life expectancy - men / women	79.9 / 83.6	71 / 73.9
Infant mortality per 1,000 births	3.7	18.8
Maternal death rate per 100,000 births	7	28
No. of hospital beds per 1,000 people	3.25	1.23
Physicians per 1,000 people	3.33	2.08
- Non-Specialist per 1,000 people	1.57	1.76
- Specialist per 1,000 people	1.86	0.22
Dentists per 1,000 people	1.05	0.52
Nurses per 1,000 inhabitants	4.8	1.9

Source: Physicians for Human Rights, *Divide and Conquer: Inequality in Health*, January 2015.

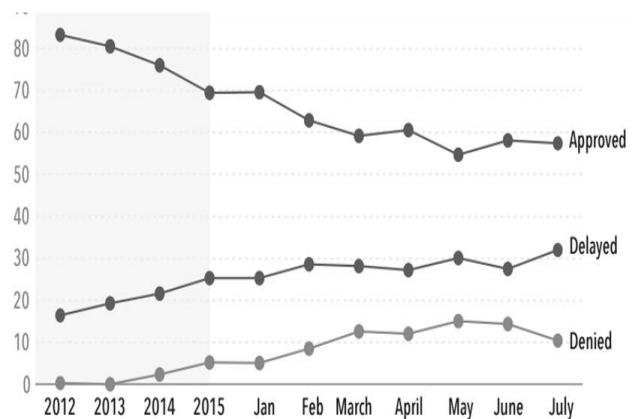
- The main **causes** of **infant mortality** are respiratory system infections, premature and low birth weight, congenital anomalies, incl. heart diseases, and of **child mortality** (<5 years) conditions in the prenatal period and congenital malformations (Ministry of Health, *Health Annual Report Palestine 2014,2015*). The grim situation in **Gaza** is reflected in a rising **infant mortality** for the first time in 50 years: from 12 per 1,000 live births in 2008 to 20.3 in 2013 - a development that is rarely observed outside communities affected by HIV epidemics (UNCTAD, *Report on UNCTAD's Assistance to the Palestinian People*, 2016).
- An estimated 7.4% of the children aged 0-4 are **stunted**, 1.4% are **underweight**, and 8.2% are **overweight** due to **malnutrition** (PCBS, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 – Final Report*, Dec. 2015).
- 95.5% of women aged 15-49 receive **ante-natal health care** during pregnancy at least 4 times. 99.3% of **births** take place in health institutions (20.3% by **Caesarean section**), and 90.7% receive post-natal services (*Ibid.*).
- 22% of women aged 20-24 had at least one life **birth before the age of 18** (WB: 19.6, GS: 25.1) (*Ibid.*).
- In 2014, 96.6% women **breastfed** their babies and 57.2% of married women aged 15-49 used some form of **family planning method** (WB: 59.8%, GS: 53.4%) (*Ibid.*).
- In 2011, there were some 113,000 people - 2.7% of the population - with **disabilities** in Palestine (WB: 75,000, GS: 38,000) (PCBS, *Press Release on International Day of Persons with Disabilities*, Dec. 2015).
- While the absolute *number* of approvals for **patient referrals** and companions out of **Gaza** has increased since 2012, the *rate* of approval has declined steadily. In 2016 (as of July), of 14,452 applications for patients (1/3 of them children under 18, 45.6% female, 15.7% over 60), 70.4% were approved, 6.8% denied and 22.8% had no response. Of the 15,434 applications for companions (minimum age: 55 years), 60.4% were approved, 11.2% denied and 28.5% delayed.

Israeli Responses to

Patient Permit Applications (%)



Patient Companion Applications (%)



Source: OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin, August 2016.

- Access to **health insurance** remains generally low with no health insurance coverage for nearly half of Palestinian society (PCBS: *Women & Men in Palestine, Issues & Statistics*, 2013).

Recommended Research Sources:

<http://www.moh.ps>

<http://www.emro.who.int/palestine> (WHO)

<http://www.palestinercs.org>

Lancet Series: *Health in the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2012*.

Ministry of Health, *Health Annual Report Palestine 2015*, October 2016.

Ministry of Health, *The Health Conditions of the Population of Occupied Palestine*, Report submitted to the 69th World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization, April 2016.

Physicians for Human Rights, *Divide and Conquer: Inequality in Health*, Jan. 2015 (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/256771352/Divide-Conquer-Inequality-in-Health-PHR-Israel>).

WHO, *Report of a Field Assessment of Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt)*, 2015.

WHO, monthly reports on referral of patients from the Gaza Strip.

WHO, *The Wall: Ten years of Dividing Palestinians in the oPT and Restricting Access to Health Care*, July 2014.