

Please cite as: EUAA, '7.5. Healthcare ' in *COI Report - Bangladesh: Country Focus*, August 2025.

7.5. Healthcare

As reported by local media in 2025, the health sector faces a number of challenges, including inadequate funding, a shortage of health workers, high out-of-pocket expenses, unequal access to services, weak governance674 and a shortage of trained medical professionals.675 According to World Bank data, as reported by experts cited by local media, only 61 % if the population had access to basic healthcare services in 2022. The same source reported on the doctor density being 0.8 doctors per 1 000 people (in contrast to WHO's recommendation of 4.45 doctors), and 80 % of healthcare being provided by the private sector.676 Hundreds of thousands reportedly travel abroad each year to seek medical care. According to a 2023 study on medical tourism, many sought healthcare abroad since they did not trust the national healthcare system, 'inadequate or outdated medical resources, logistical inefficiencies, and long waiting times', and perceived cost-effectiveness and better care abroad.677 Based on the research conducted by Sohini Bose, Associate Fellow at Observer Research Foundation, the main challenges facing the medical sector included insufficient medical personnel, poor quality of healthcare infrastructure, corruption, and lack of healthcare in rural areas. Medical tourism from Bangladesh to India had however declined since August 2024 due to political reasons.678

In November 2024, the interim government formed a 12-member Health Sector Reform Commission,679 tasked with providing recommendations on how to make health services 'more people-oriented, accessible, and universal'. On 6 May 2025, the commission submitted its report, inter alia recommending making primary healthcare a constitutional obligation, free healthcare, and forming an independent and permanent Health Commission to formulate essential policies and strategies and to oversee the health sector.680

More information on healthcare in Bangladesh is available in the 2023 EUAA MedCOI report: Healthcare Provision in Bangladesh and several topical MedCOI reports.

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