

7.1.7. Healthcare

Regarding access to health services, the DVIP ranks Islamabad 30th of 129 districts. The report further declares that residents of Islamabad were able to access a BHU within five kilometres, a private doctor within 8 kilometres, and maternal, neonatal and child health facilities within 9 kilometres.2042 According to the Population & Housing Census 2023, primary healthcare facilities in Islamabad included Rural Health Centres (RHCs) and Basic Health Units (BHUs).2043 These first-contact facilities handle vaccinations, routine checkups, minor ailments as well as maternal health, and are mostly operated by the ICT administration.2044 The District Health Office Islamabad (DHO-ICT) lists 3 RHCs2045 and 13 BHUs.2046 The secondary health care Tehsil Head Quarters (THQs) and District Head Quarters (DHQs) hospitals provided emergency, obstetrics, diagnostics and inpatient services as well as services for patients referred by BHU's and RHCs. Tertiary healthcare hospitals – among them the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), a National Reference Centre with 30 medical departments and 22 specialties, and the Shifa International Hospital with its renowned liver transplant centre - provided more specialised inpatient care. Bed capacities in Islamabad were 8 693 beds in total, of which 5 901 were in private and 2 792 in public facilities.2047

The Prime Minister's Health Card programme for free, cashless healthcare was revived in the ICT in January 20262048 and extended to 20 additional hospitals.2049 The health cards covered inpatient healthcare services up to one million Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 3 028.8] per year at participating hospitals and clinics.2050 Khadija Anjum reported in an article from 2025 significantly higher accessibility to health care facilities for urban than for rural residents, but no gendered differences.2051 However, Abbasi and Jawed stated greater difficulties in accessing medical care for women and children than men.2052

In the overall Service Coverage Index (SCI) for 2023, Islamabad ranked first,2053 while it ranked second regarding service coverage of non-communicable diseases.2054 The tuberculosis treatment rate was 42.9 % and 18 laboratories offered diagnostic services.2055 The infant mortality rate was the lowest nationwide with 38 deaths per thousand live births.2056 The HIV treatment rate was 14.7 %.2057 By December 2024, the Federal Government Polyclinic and the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences offered antiretroviral therapy (ART) in the ICT.2058

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