



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Egypt - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 31 August 2009

Information on the health system

A 2009 *World Health Organization* report under the heading 'Health & Development', states:

"Most of the population has easy access to health care. Egypt has an extensive network of health facilities ensuring easy access to basic health services for its population. Management of the health system is highly centralized at the overstuffed Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP). Different public entities (MOHP, other ministries (Higher education, defence and Interior), the health Insurance Organization (HIO), private practitioners and nongovernmental organization (NGOs)) are involved in managing, financing and providing health services, without performance assessment mechanisms or quality assurance. The HIO covers only 50% of the population and there is a growing unregulated private sector. Nationally produced pharmaceuticals account for more than a third of health expenditure." (World Health Organization (2009) *Egypt: Country Cooperation Strategy, at a glance*)

The May 2009 *Amnesty International* Report under the heading 'Right to Health', states:

"On 4 September, a Cairo administrative court found the Prime Minister's transfer under a 2007 decree of the health care facilities of the public non-profit-making Health Insurance Organization, plus its assets and affiliated companies, to the Egyptian Healthcare Holding Company to be in violation of the state's duty to guarantee the right to health. It also found the transfer in breach of the Constitution and Egypt's obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The court reasoned that people who cannot afford health care would be deprived of it. The court also stated that the right to medical care at a reasonable price should govern a government's right to introduce new administrative methods." (Amnesty International (28 May 2009) *Amnesty International Report 2009 – Egypt*)

An April 2009 news article from the *Daily News Egypt* reports:

"CAIRO: Health insurance and the relationship between insurance companies and the capital markets was the focus of the second half of the Euromoney Egypt Insurance Conference Tuesday.

The one-day conference saw experts discuss the future of the insurance industry in Egypt, with the morning sessions focusing on growing the industry and issues of highway safety.

After a lunchtime speech by Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities Zahi Hawass, discussions zeroed in on health insurance and on the relationship between insurance companies and the capital markets.

Minister of Health Hatem El-Gabaly gave a keynote address in which he discussed a 10-year plan to roll out a partnership between the public and private sectors to provide more universal healthcare.

"We have gone a long way. We are one of the best developing countries in the world," said El-Gabaly, citing statistics of improved health.

But the minister acknowledged that growth in the healthcare industry has been uneven, with rural areas lagging behind urban ones." (Daily News Egypt (1 April 2009) *Egypt's Insurance Industry Prepares for New Healthcare System*)

An April 2007 news article from the *Daily News Egypt* reports:

"CAIRO: Medical solutions for Egypt's health care system were discussed at Siemens' First Annual Medical Solutions Awareness Day held Sunday in Giza.

"Children in school must be the first priority in health insurance," said Mohammed El Wetidy, senior vice president and head of medical solutions at Siemens Egypt, "and improving doctors' performance will lead to improvements in health care."

Siemens Egypt organized the event to raise awareness of "health care in Egypt and to inform ... about the latest technological developments in health care," according to El Wetidy." (Daily News Egypt (24 April 2007) *Medical solutions For Egypt's Health System*)

A 2005 *British Council* document reports:

"The Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population is undertaking an ambitious Health Sector Reform Programme (HSRP) to modernise the nation's health system. The British Council leads a consortium providing technical assistance to the Reform Programme, financed by the European Union. These entities provide health services from any of these entities providing they meet the strict service quality standards laid down by the programme. In the long term the service is expected to be funded by a new health insurance scheme, in which every Egyptian is a beneficiary." (British Council (2005) *Health Sector Reform Programme, Egypt*)

References:

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World Health Organization (2009) *Egypt: Country Cooperation Strategy, at a glance*

http://www.who.int/countryfocus/cooperation_strategy/ccsbrief_egy_en.pdf

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted:

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Amnesty International

BBC News

Daily News Egypt

European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI)

Freedom House

Human Rights Watch

International Crisis Group

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

IRIN News

Lexis Nexis

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database

UK Home Office

UNHCR Refworld

US Department of State