



Benin – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 21 August 2012

Is treatment available in Benin for a child with respiratory lung disease and reflux oesophagitis?

Information specifically referring to the treatment of lung disease or reflux oesophagitis in Benin was not found among sources available to the Research and Information Unit.

The 2012 *Overseas Security Advisory Council* report on Benin, in a paragraph headed “Medical Emergencies”, states:

“Health care in Benin is not up to western standards. Most hospitals and medical facilities do not have the supplies and/or necessary drugs for treatment of major illnesses and injuries.” (Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) (25 February 2012) *Benin 2012 OSAC Crime and Safety Report*)

An undated document published on the *Project Bokonon* website states:

“As in many African nations and developing countries, medical conditions in Bénin are limited. The primary illnesses that affect the people of Benin are preventable, and often communicable in nature. According to the Benin Ministry of Health, the most common ailments (which are subsequently the most common causes of death) include malaria, malnutrition, and respiratory infections (e.g. tuberculosis). Due to a lack of general health education, many people – particularly women and children – often fall prey to a variety of diseases that can easily be averted. Local clinics and health facilities often lack proper medical supplies, resources, and infrastructure. Given these severe deficiencies, victims of disease frequently receive insufficient treatment, resulting in numerous unnecessary deaths.” (Project Bokonon (undated) *Medical Conditions in Bénin*)

An undated but apparently recent document published on the *Jhpiego* website states:

“Eager to be seen by a trained medical professional, men, women and children crowd around the door of a small clinic here. In a country where doctors and nurses are scarce, health care—especially prenatal and reproductive care—is at a premium. And for people living in slums, health care is often unattainable.” (Jhpiego (undated) *Benin Doctor’s Private Clinic Addresses Urban Health Needs*)

A report published by the *World Bank*, in a section headed “Health Sector Issues”, states:

“In terms of affordability of health services, a key factor is pricing of drug and health care. Again, various studies have found that drug prices in the government sector are usually higher than in the private one. The main reason is that revenues from selling drugs are currently the major resource of health facilities, given the limited funding received from the Ministry of Health. One of the consequences is that when some essential drugs have to be provided for free (i.e. new anti-malaria drugs), health workers are usually reluctant to prescribe them, because of the forgone revenues. Illegal payments are also widespread and amount for a significant portion of the final price paid by patients. There is no health coverage system in the country. The only mechanism for risk pooling is the above-mentioned Health Equity Fund (HEF) This Fund reimburses health facilities for free care services provided to the poorest. However, it suffers from (i) an allocation procedure that does not take into account population needs across regions; (ii) the absence of reliable mechanism to identify the poorest; and (iii) a lack of community involvement in monitoring its activities, which explains why most funding does not reach the poorest and are mostly misused. Improvements could therefore be gained in revising how the HEF is identifying the poorest.” (World Bank (6 February 2012) *Benin - Additional Financing for the Health System Performance Project*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit 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.

References:

Jhpiego (undated) *Benin Doctor's Private Clinic Addresses Urban Health Needs*

<http://www.jhpiego.org/en/content/benin-doctor%E2%80%99s-private-clinic-addresses-urban-health-needs>

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Project Bokonon (undated) *Medical Conditions in Bénin*

<http://www.projectbokonon.org/purpose/benin.medinfo.html>

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Google
Lexis Nexis
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Overseas Security Advisory Council
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database
Refugee Review Tribunal
US Department of State
World Bank
World Health Organisation