



PHOTO & CAPTION

Bringing Quality Healthcare to the Poor



Photo: USAID/Stephanie Molina

When Jaquelin Albuquerque's son was bitten by a rabid dog, she knew where to turn for help. She took him straight to the vaccine clinic in a newly refurbished hospital in nearby Hato Mayor, a city in the Dominican Republic's eastern region. There, he received a rabies vaccine, and Jaquelin could take comfort in the nurse's reassurance that her son would be fine.

Knowing where to go had not always been that simple. Poor families in that region had been struggling with a deteriorated health infrastructure for many years. Hospitals and clinics were often unsanitary and poorly maintained, and the scarce equipment available was gravely inadequate, and sometimes it even malfunctioned. Hospital staff, nurses, doctors, and administrators lacked training and resources, resulting in long waits and often poor care.

In 2001, USAID teamed up with the Dominican Republic's Ministry of Health to address some of the region's health issues. As part of the effort, USAID and other partners developed and launched a social security system that would provide healthcare to the country's poorest

populations. The program placed a special emphasis on immunization.

Now, over 180,000 poor Dominicans are registered for subsidized healthcare, 14 hospitals throughout the region are offering high quality and patient-oriented care, and 15 immunization clinics certified by the Pan American Health Organization are helping protect children from disease.

Jaquelin Albuquerque holds her son as he receives a rabies shot in the newly refurbished local hospital.

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