

LatAm Healthcare Pulse

Key data and perspectives on **patient care**

Colombia

GHI has been monitoring health care trends in Latin America throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Our team of analysts and in-country experts interview physicians, surgeons, hospital administrative personnel and medical staff on a regular basis to understand how the pandemic, supply chains, and government policy are affecting patient health outcomes and healthcare market dynamics.

In this brief, we report key insights and local medical perspectives from Colombia in the third quarter of 2021. We conduct our analysis based on primary research with experts in cardiology, neurology, endocrinology, otolaryngology, gynecology, and other areas of general surgery. GHI tracks fluctuations in hospital investment decision, purchasing patterns and procedure volumes from quarter to quarter. Findings from the second quarter are available [here](#).

"This is a pandemic in modern times, something that has not happened in the last hundred years. I believe we will see a gradual return to a new normal, where COVID is just another disease. This will go hand-in-hand with vaccines and possible treatments for this disease."

—Neurosurgeon, large private hospital, Bogotá, Colombia (Oct 2021)

Key data on COVID in Colombia

- **COVID Deaths (official Count):** >125,000
- **Excess Deaths attributed to COVID*:** >149,000
- **Vaccination rollout** – population having received first vaccine shot – 67.6%
- **Vaccination rollout**** – Fully vaccinated population – 45.9%
- **Herd immunization speed** – estimated date for herd immunization: Q2 2022

Sources: Americas Market Intelligence, Council of the Americas, The Economist.

*Estimate for the period from Apr 6, 2020 to Sept 5, 2021 (updated Nov 24, 2021). While official death counts have been reported in many outlets, several sources indicate that these tallies significantly underrepresent the true loss of life. One of these sources is The Economist, which has compared actual deaths to historic averages for the same period in prior years to estimate the excess number of deaths attributed to the virus.

**Estimate as of November 19, 2021

Key data on patient health outcomes Colombia

- **Patient and procedure volumes** for elective procedures are slowly returning to historic averages. However, various specialties are still experiencing a lag; by an estimated 25% for cardiovascular interventions; 30% in endocrinology; 35% in otolaryngology; 30% in neurosurgery; and 35% in gynecology.

"30% of procedures cannot be postponed: we continued operating on tumors, cerebral hemorrhages throughout the pandemic"

—**Neurosurgeon, large private hospital, Bogotá, Colombia** (Sept 2021).

- **The cost of specialized procedures** has remained stable. However, performing surgeries has become more cumbersome due to new hospital intake protocols, the mandatory use of protective gear in operating rooms, and systematic COVID-19 testing for patients and medical staff.
- Notwithstanding the impact of COVID on procedure volumes, the move toward more endovascular procedures continues; their benefits include faster patient recovery, lower risk, and shorter surgery times.

"The protocols regarding patient safety to operate changed due to the pandemic: patients must be tested, and we do too. We also have to use personal protective equipment in the O.R.: N95 masks, glasses, gloves, protective suits and gowns."

—**Cardiovascular surgeon, mid-size private hospital, Medellín, Colombia** (Sept 2021).

- Hospitals are shifting budget allocations away from COVID and ICU care toward other procedures. Historic purchasing patterns for medical devices in various elective procedures will resume in early 2022.

"In the last 6 months we did not renew medical devices. We try to reuse devices such as spoons, bayonet forceps, ear forceps, and syringes."

—**Otolaryngologist and nasal surgeon, private hospital, Bogotá, Colombia** (Sept 2021).

GHI will continue to report on noteworthy trends in-country. For more in-depth market intelligence and insights, please contact us directly at: info@globalhealthintelligence.com

About GHI

Global Health Intelligence (GHI) is the leading provider of data analytics for Latin American healthcare, specializing in the region's hospitals. Its databases deliver strategic market data for medical equipment/devices manufacturers that allow them to identify new sales opportunities, gauge demand for new products, understand their market share vs. those of their competitors, spot trends in the acquisition of products, determine market needs and more.