

Present status of medical specialties in the Chilean public health system Estado actual de las especialidades médicas en Chile: Realidad en el sistema público no municipalizado

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To adequately plan the post graduate training of physicians, we need to know the needs for specialists in the country and the most prevalent diseases and causes of consultations. In 2004, the National System of Health Services assessed the number of hours and types of specialties available, their regional distribution and calculated an approximate number of physicians in charge of those specialties, determining an equivalent per 44 weekly hours of physician. This number of hours is the maximum that a physician is allowed to work per week. Fifty six percent of specialists correspond to basic specialties (3,688 physicians equivalent to 44 hours, 33% to primary specialties (2,205 physicians) and 10% to subspecialties (666 physicians). The regional distribution of basic specialties is proportional to the population of each region. However, there are gaps in the distribution of primary specialties and subspecialties. The demand for specialists, assessed measuring the yield in minutes of