



Health Services

Medium Risk Sector



The provision of services in clinics, hospitals, etc.

Related Sectors:

- Pharmaceuticals



Production Processes

Health services (healthcare) covers all services for the prevention and treatment of illness. These services are provided in hospitals, physicians' and dentists' practices, medical and diagnostic laboratories and outpatient healthcare services, as well as in inpatient/residential care.

Clinical Research and Laboratory Services Medical and diagnostic tests and services are performed on a daily basis. The services may include chemical analysis, blood banks, hematology, microbiology, etc.

Surgical Services Surgical activities include anesthesia, preoperative services and surgery. Surgical procedures are used to diagnose or cure an illness or an injury, or to ease pain. Surgery requires technological equipment and precise instruments.

Non-Surgical Services Non-surgical services summarize those services where no manual or instrument-based procedures or treatment are conducted. It includes general medicine in individual private practices, radiology, rehabilitative services, physical therapy, cancer care services (oncology), etc.

Dentistry Dentistry services, which may include oral surgery, are provided in settings ranging from individual private practices to dental surgery centers.

Sustainability Issues

- Energy
- Water Use
- Emissions to Water
- Waste
- Emissions to Air
- Ecosystems
- Workplace Health & Safety
- Disaster Risk
- Site Contamination

Sector Rating

- High risk issue
- Medium risk issue
- Low risk issue

Risks & Opportunities

- Healthcare facilities generate infectious and hazardous waste.**
Between 75% and 90% of the waste produced by healthcare providers is non-risk waste, mostly from administrative and housekeeping functions. It can be disposed of as municipal waste. The remaining 10-25% of healthcare waste is regarded as hazardous and requires special treatment. It includes: Waste which contains pathogens, human tissues or fluids, pharmaceuticals and chemical substances, heavy metals (from batteries; broken thermometers and blood-pressure gauges) or radioactive substances (from radiotherapy or laboratory research).
- Wastewater may contain contagious pathogens, detergents and disinfectants.**
Wastewater which may contain chemicals (for example pharmaceuticals, disinfectants, detergents or film developer) must be collected and treated separately. Some liquid effluents might be returned to the manufacturer. Special care must be taken when dealing with liquid effluents which contain pathogens. They might be contagious. A dentist must pay attention to mercury and dental amalgam wastes.
- Contagious pathogens, pharmaceuticals, sharp instruments, radiological and chemical substances present major health and safety risks.**
Potential hazards include radiation, toxic chemicals, biological hazards, heat, noise, and dusts. Special care must be taken with regard to the risk of infection. Exposed are all healthcare employees including surgeons, doctors, dentists, nursing staff, cleaning staff and staff taking care of waste.