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## Venezuela Public Health Issue

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## Venezuela



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## Quick Facts

**Location:** South America, surrounded by Guyana, Columbia, Brazil, and the Caribbean Sea

- **Population:** Approximately 31.57 million

- **Ethnic background:** 50% Mestizo Venezuelan, 43% European Venezuelan, African Ancestry Venezuelan 4.5%, 2.3% Indigenous Venezuelan.

**Religion & Population:** Of the approximately 32 million citizens that live in Venezuela, 50 percent of the populations roots are from Venezuela while the other 50 percent migrated to Venezuela from Europe, Africa, the Amazon Rainforest , India, Japan and China (Too, 2016). While the citizens have come from all over the world, 70% of the population identified themselves as Roman Catholic, 29% as Protestant and the other 1% was unidentified. (Venezuela, 2017).

**National Challenges Faced:** Venezuela has to import their medical supplies from other countries like Argentina, Cuba, Uruguay, and China but the currency exchange rules in Venezuela is slowing the process down. The slow process is due to the tight control over the money supply that the government has implemented toward its citizens, and until Venezuela gives the other countries a tangible currency they refuse to send in new shipments of supplies. Internally this causes hospitals to run out of supplies, and externally this causes bad relationships with the neighboring countries. (Lohman, 2015).

**Government:** Venezuela is a federal presidential republic. The chief executive is the President of **Venezuela** who is both head of state and head of government. Executive power is exercised by the President. Legislative power is vested in the National Assembly. The citizens branch makes up the third branch.

**Primary Public Health Issues:** The public health problem within Venezuela is a lack of the proper medical supplies needed to help patients. Medicines, syringes, needles, antibiotics, and more are getting reused within the hospitals to maximize the amount of patients that can be helped because the country can't afford to get new supplies due to the exchange rules being enforced by the government themselves. (Lohman, 2015)

**Risks and Outcomes:** Because of the lack of the proper medical supplies, everyone is equally at risk of getting passed diseases through supplies being used more than once. Unlike everyone else, the poor is having the hardest time getting a hold of the proper supplies. Since the medical supplies are limited the price for them is higher, and that results in the poor not being able to afford the the necessary care. This ultimately results in



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hospitals, schools, and everyday citizens unable to get the help that is needed, creating an everlasting circle of people getting untreated and spreading disease throughout the country. (Lohman, 2015).

**Identification of the Problem:** The problem was identified by the citizens within the country when they no longer could buy the medical supplies needed to recover from a sickness/illness. After the citizens noticed the lack of medical supplies, the hospitals began to stop receiving medical supplies. Resulting in only 1 out of 11 hospitals having the proper medical supplies needed to help citizens in need. Leaving most of Venezuela helpless no matter their income.

**Intervention and Government Involvement:** Because Venezuela is a Federal Presidential Democratic State, and the President is both the head of the government and the state and can be re-elected as much as he desires (World Atlas, 2015) the only way to bring an ending to the problem would be voting him out of office, or overthrowing the government to get a new man in office that will change the currency exchange rules in place. I believe the citizens of Venezuela must continue to protest in hopes their country will get the supplies needed to help end the spread of disease or else there may never be change in the country and the disease will continue to spread.

#### **Resources**

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