

# *Argentinean hospitals on the verge of collapse*

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Buenos Aires, September 18 (RHC)-- In Argentina, medical groups have appealed to the government, asking for urgent intervention to avert mass closures of health centers in the country. Hospitals have been particularly hard by the country's economic crisis, presided over by neo-liberal President Mauricio Macri.

"The situation is catastrophic" said Jorge Cherro, President of the Association of Private Clinics, Sanatoriums and Hospitals (Adecra), one of the groups that launched the appeal. Cherro lays blame squarely at the feet of the Macri administration, saying, "This government has brought us to this catastrophic situation, they must adopt urgent, forceful and creative measures to save the sector."

One of the biggest problems facing the country's health system is that runaway inflation has made medical supplies hard to obtain within hospital budgets; furthermore, Cherro points out that some supplies from abroad do not even deliver to Argentina anymore because of pricing instability.

The private sector is said to be particularly vulnerable, and that a collapse there will trigger a crisis in the already struggling public sector. The medical groups who are part of the appeal say that the public system doesn't have anywhere near the capacity to absorb a private sector collapse.

Argentina's inflation has reached 50 percent, causing sharp rises in poverty and unemployment. The country's crisis follows the election of neoliberal President Mauricio Macri who took on a multibillion dollar

IMF loan. The subsequent privatizations and deregulation has triggered an inflationary crisis.

Angered by the country's spiralling economic crisis, voters are set to punish Macri at the upcoming presidential elections. Polls indicate that the progressive Fernandez-Kirchner ticket are on course for crushing first round victory.

The appeal which was sent to the government is signed by; Cedim (Chamber of Entities for Diagnosis and Outpatient Treatment), Copsal (of Healthcare Providers), Confecalisa (of Clinics, Sanatoriums and Private Hospitals), Cadime (of Medical Diagnostic Institutions), Cacep (of Clinics and Psychiatric Establishments) and AAEG (Association of Geriatric Establishments).

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