A message from the Lead Partner for the Health Sector - PwC Mexico

Situations such as: an ageing population, the growth in the middle class, the emerging and re-emerging of infectious diseases (like ebola), current problems in mother-and-baby health, the incidence of chronic degenerative diseases, the growing crisis in mental health and the health expenditure burden in times of tax restrictions - all these elements are causing intense pressure in health systems, whether in Mexico, Latin America, USA, Europe and practically everywhere.

The GDP in Hispanic America is 360 billion dollars (BUSD). In 2012, the total expenditure in health amounted to something in the region of 225 BUSD and this will reach 310 in 2018 – an enormous increase of 25%. If we consider that there are 360 million souls living in Hispanic America, and we do the maths, that means a per capita spend of 624 dollars, 775 in 2018, against the current 4,600 in the OECD, this reveals a gap of almost 8 times. Therefore, it would seem unreal to imagine an increase in health spend of that size in such a short time.

In view of our current reality, all the actors in the health sector face an enormous challenge, which invites us to put into place an innovative system that can guarantee quality health services for our peoples.

Yet when faced with great challenges, new opportunities surely arise. These might be technological advancement, a possible increased analysis of big data in health, the empowerment of those who take major responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, as well as the appearance of a significant number of new non-traditional players in the health market. This new panorama fills us with a sense of optimism.

José Alarcón Irigoyen

A run through the current health scenario with Carlos Abelleyra Cordero

Chief Executive of Aspen Labs Latin America

The future growth in the pharmaceutical industry will come from the developing markets in Latin America.

Looking back over your career, what aspects of your pharmaceutical experience have helped you to face the current challenges in Latin America for Aspen Labs?

In Spanish-speaking Latin America, Aspen is a company still taking shape, so that my experience in having worked in companies with well-established processes taught me the necessary discipline to ensure the correct execution of Aspen’s implantation plan in the Region.

On the other hand, during 30 years I have had the opportunity get to know about multiple therapeutic areas, which has allowed me to understand their dynamics and to focus efforts on those with the greatest growth potential.

In your opinion, what are the principal elements of change in the pharmaceutical industry in Mexico?

Mexico is facing various challenges at the same time, not only from the economic viewpoint (that is, the growing expenditure in health), but also this is coinciding with an ageing population, leading to a greater incidence in chronic diseases. Even though there are still almost 2 million births per year, prevention will be the deciding factor in containing costs.

From the commercial angle, the power that generics now have is changing the dynamics, as well as the huge influence that sales points now have. Added to these elements, the level of innovation has dropped significantly and this means that product differentiation is reducing day-by-day.

Carlos Abelleyra has worked as Managing Director of Wyeth, Executive Director of AMIIF, General Director of CANIFARMA and since 2013 he is Managing Director for Latin America at Aspen Labs, which is aiming to reach 1,000 million dollars in sales in the Region within the next few years.
How would you describe the connection between the pharmaceutical and the infant nutrition industries?

Doctors are the cornerstone in the handling of illnesses. However, with the mountain of information available today to the patient, a doctor is always required to advise on the adequate use of medicines. In infant nutrition, the situation is the same. The doctor plays a key role in ensuring that babies develop correctly. For this reason, our objective is to keep the medical community up-to-date on the latest developments in the pharmaceutical and infant nutrition industries.

What do you consider are the principal dynamics in the OTC market in Mexico?

While the doctor is the most important element in treating diseases, the availability of information about certain illnesses allows for the sale without prescription of certain products in an efficient and secure manner. Due to this, in my opinion, the OTC market will experience positive dynamics. Brand loyalty is the key element in this segment and we can achieve this by always ensuring that we communicate to the public the product benefits in an ethical way.

Many transnational companies continue to focus on established markets. Why did Aspen Labs decide to lay their bets on Latin America?

The continuous growth in these markets is very attractive and company product portfolios are aimed at the most dynamic therapeutic areas in the Region. As an organisation, we firmly believe that future industrial growth must come from developing markets.

Thinking about Latin America as a whole, which countries do you consider present more promise and opportunity and why?

Clearly, Colombia and Peru are turning out to be important contributors to the Region. The growth in investment in healthcare that they have will allow these countries to favour growth. However, the market dynamics are generally positive, with the exception of those with a complicated economic situation, such as Venezuela.

What are the market characteristics in Mexico that favour an increased demand, whether in pharmaceuticals, OTC or nutrition?

Clearly the rate of growth and the ageing population, as well as the health investment in all countries.

While, looking at absolute values, the size of investment may appear low in comparison with developed countries, the recent growth rates make continue to make the country look more attractive. On the other hand, the access to more and better education generates awareness in the population for them to take care of their health, which in turn causes them to take care of their health and, in the end, this will lead to an increase in demand.

What have been the main factors in Aspen Lab’s development that have led to the recent round of acquisitions by the company?

Analysing the different therapeutic areas and market needs led to new proposals that might be well received in the different countries we serve.

From now until 2018, what do you consider are the main risks in Mexico that might hinder the health market from developing?

It is indispensable to start bringing together criteria from the National Healthcare System since the level of healthcare given differs between one institution and the next, as well as the variables for purchasing products.

As regards private healthcare, to leave the decision to the point of sale as to what product should be used is a huge risk, not only from the commercial viewpoint but also more importantly from the doctor’s point of view. We need to be careful about self-medication.

Finally, we should consider the investment in health, as well as define the best route to do it. When creating infrastructure, we need to accompany this with a healthcare plan that takes into account all the services and medicines for the population.

The population growth and ageing index as well as investments in health in countries in the Latin American market are favouring a growth in demand for quality medicines, making this a very attractive Region for the pharmaceutical sector.
A shift in the regulatory map
Anticipatory Will for Senior Citizens

“Ageing is linked to development. Healthy elderly people are a resource for their families, their communities and the economy.”
The Brasilia Declaration on Healthy Ageing, WHO 1996

In the world, there are close to 600 million people over 60 and 400 million of them live in developing countries. By 2020, the first figure will have grown to a thousand million and the second to more than 700 million, according to figures from the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Demographic ageing, expressed as the increase in the population who are 60 years old or more and as the proportion compared with total population, is not a minor issue. In Mexico, there are more people over 60 than there are under five. The decrease in the death rate, combined with technological and medical advances has contributed to the start of an authentic population revolution, because now we live longer.

This situation has profound economic, political, social cultural and legal consequences and furthermore it requires a new type of health policy directed towards offering more and better healthcare services to senior citizens, whose demands are multiple and diverse, including a dignified life from beginning to end.

Among the consequences of ageing, the growing unbalance between the working population and senior citizens stands out, which will impose powerful pressures on the health and social security systems

By definition, age-related diseases are those whose pathology refers directly to people ageing. The most common of these are heart disease, osteoporosis and osteoarthritis, however it is very common that senior citizens suffer from some disability or more than five illnesses at the same time.

In view of this need, the National Programme of Action for Ageing 2013 – 2018 was created, which has the aim of establishing a culture of healthy living, adjusted according to gender for senior citizens and particularly those with significant diseases. It does this by establishing prevention, health promotion and medical attention to improve the response capacity in heath for an ageing population, taking into account the following indicators:

1. A national reduction in the number of deaths of senior citizens due to pneumonia.
2. Mental health coverage in detecting depression.
3. The detection and control of diseases during campaigns such as the Health Week for Senior Citizens.
4. Mental health coverage as regards the detection of memory loss.
5. The detection of geriatric syndromes.

This challenge will require specialised infrastructure in order to give timely and quality medical care, appropriately trained personnel in all three levels of medical care as well as robust healthcare information systems that can identify the needs of the senior citizen population.

Anticipatory will legislation

On the other hand, senior citizens and their families may experience physical and emotional suffering in the later stages of chronic diseases. For this reason, the General Health Law contains specific provisions that any senior citizen in full possession of their faculties may at any time and independently of their state of health express their will in writing to receive or not to receive medical treatment. This applies if they might be in the terminal stage of any illness and might be unable at the time to express their will yet Doctors and relatives must their right to an anticipatory will under the law.

By anticipatory will we mean the unilateral declaration of will by an adult or free person in possession of their full faculties whereby he/she declares in advance their wishes in relation to healthcare and treatment, in the event that they may find themselves in a situation where they cannot express their view at the time. This declaration respects their autonomy and refers particularly to being in the terminal phase of a fatal disease or as the result of an accident.

To cover these cases, the Mexico City Government issued the Law for Anticipatory Will in order to regulate the appropriate respect towards the wishes of a person in full control of their faculties. Doctors and relatives should obey this when deciding whether medical treatment or procedures should take place in order to prolong their life. They must ensure that the anticipatory will is set out in writing according to specific lines of action, so that the management of hospitals, whether public or private, apply the necessary measures in order to guarantee that they receive the anticipatory will document with all due formality. This should include its certification by a Public Notary, its inclusion in the medical records and its referral for consideration to the Bioethics Committee of the institution. There they will consider if it can proceed so that medical staff can start palliative treatment that does not cause death and apply minimal measures including controlled analgesics, as well as arranging for the support services of a thanatologist.

*With the above procedure, the authorities seek to guarantee the free will of the patient.*
Media Register

COFECE authorises the merger between Walgreens and Alliance Boots

The Federal Commission for Economic Competition authorised the merger between Walgreens, the largest pharmacy chain in the USA, and Alliance Boots, the British company that owns Farmacias Ahumada and Farmacias Benevides. The COFECE decision states that it has “authorised the conglomerate advised by Walgreen Co, Walgreen Scotland Investments LP, Walgreen Swiss International GmbH (together referred to as Walgreens) with Alliance Boots GmbH y AB Acquisitions Holdings Limited. (El Universal, November 2014).

The proposal to reform the General Health Law might reach Congress in February 2015

Congressman Mario Alberto Davila Delgado (PAN party), Chairman of the Select Committee on Health, advised that he is waiting for the President’s initiative to reform the National Health System in an integrated way, using universalisation and the portability of medical services.

He considered that “it is likely that the President’s initiative will reach Congress at the beginning of February 2015, when the last session of the LXII Legislature starts”.

Davila Delgado guaranteed that the analysis and debate of the proposal shall take place in a detailed, precise and responsible way, with the aim of achieving a legal framework in health that will attend to the needs of all users in different institutions, according to their individual decisions.

He emphasised that up until now public policies in health “have not been adequate. Other countries have more consolidated and more united health systems. We are too fragmented and we need to create a public policy directed specifically where we want to go: to establish a preventative lifestyle, to attend to illnesses and to move forward with a healthcare culture.”

He added that, in view of the illnesses that Mexicans suffer from, an integral health reform is required that favours the concept of prevention as a top priority in reducing the annual cost of attending to chronic degenerative diseases and their consequences. These cause disability and cost the lives of millions of people, in addition to being a heavy burden on public spending. (La Prensa, January 2015).
**The Health Ministry acts against medical malpractice**

The Ministry of Health has prepared a Decree to reform the General Health Law, through which it will convert the National Commission on Medical Arbitration (CONAMED) into a body with associated faculties to review, officially investigate and fine medical malpractice. Furthermore, this anticipates the creation of a Federal Commission for the Regulation and Supervision of Medical Establishments and Services, which will certify and guarantee the quality of health services supplied by doctors and health institutions. Both entities will function as decentralised bodies and their Directors will be Commissioners proposed by the Ministry of Health and approved by the President. (24 Horas, October 2014).

**The regulations of the new Health Law will raise the quality of Seguro Popular**

In January, the regulations of a new General Health Law as regards social security will go into effect, resulting from an effort by the current administration to make the use of resources more transparent and to contribute towards increasing the quality of care that Seguro Popular users receive.

The National Commission for Social Protection in Health (CNPSS) will receive faculties so that, in the agreements it reaches with individual states, the state governments become responsible for administering and supervising the spending of financial resources. This is in addition to their responsibilities to carry out health promotion activities, to affiliate people to CNPSS as well as to establish, administer and update the National Register of Beneficiaries. They can also finance, coordinate and verify the integral healthcare offer; are accountable for returning unspent and unaccounted for federal resources and in general for the resources that they receive. Furthermore, CNPSS is considering carrying out three-monthly reconciliations with each state before liberating further resources, with the aim of comparing the resources sent with the National Register of Beneficiaries.

The CNPSS pointed out that, as part of the new regulations, it will preserve the right to transfer resources to the state governments in money or in kind. (La Jornada, January 2015).

**Merck buys Cubist in 8,400 million dollars**

The US pharmaceutical Company, Merck, has bought out Cubist in an agreement worth 8,400 million dollars plus debt, through which it will gain entry to the market called super microbes.

In a report published in 2003 by the Centers for the Control and Prevention of Diseases (CDCs), they estimated that each year 2 million people get sick from super microbes and 23,000 people die from these.

Both Merck and its rival AstraZeneca are focussing on new kinds of antibiotics to combat these bacteria. (La Cronica, December 2014).

**Mexico lays its bets on the global vaccine market**

Mexico has started to develop the technology to gain Access to the world market for the production, distribution and sale of vaccines, which according to WHO is worth 24 thousand million dollars. The country could be producing its first two vaccines by 2016.

In 2014, Mexico obtained its certification from WHO as a regional reference agency, thereby becoming part of a select group of countries that have international organisations have recognised as able to manufacture, revise, distribute and sell vaccines worldwide. This elite group of vaccine producers comprises of 28 countries, including USA, Japan, Germany, France, Canada, Denmark, Holland, Italy, Sweden and Russia. (24 Horas, January 2015).

**From 2015, the illegal sale of medicines becomes a federal crime**

In 2015, according to the National Chamber for the Pharmaceutical Industry (CANIFARMA), the illegal sales of medicines will constitute a federal crime, which should help to minimise their sale and the economic losses f around 10,000 million dollars that this activity represents.

According to CANIFARMA’s President Dagoberto Cortes Cervantes, this initiative will appear in the Official Gazette during the first quarter of 2015. (El Economista, December 2014).
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**Technomedicine**

**3D printing for medical devices and organs**

3D printing for medical devices and artificial organs is a tool that has developed over recent years due to technological advances and many expect an important growth in this in the medical devices market. Printers of this kind allow us to generate implants, such as artificial hip and knee joints and artificial teeth, to mention only a few applications, as well as artificial organs that can become personalised, since their design is according to the individual characteristics of each patient.

At present, 3D printers are at the research and development stage, but that does not stop us detecting a huge business opportunity that exists for this technological innovation. According to the report “3D printing for Healthcare: R&D, Industry and Market 2014 – 2024” published in 2014 by Visiongain, a Business intelligence supplier, estimates that by 2018 this market will be worth 4 thousand million dollars.

In the same report, we learn that in 2013 the value generated by the 3D printer market was 1,264 million dollars. Furthermore, the report predicted that, by 2014, there would be a decade of dramatic expansion in this market, due to the significant number of advantages this tool has by comparison with traditional manufacturing methods for medical implants.

Today, manufacturers do not produce 3D printers commercially but some instruments are available. In the US, various dental labs have invested in this kind of printer to scan patients’ teeth in order to create new teeth that are perfectly adapted. Furthermore, dentists use 3D printers to create exact replicas of jawbones and of teeth made of different materials such as medical ceramics, with the aim of using them to facilitate and help patients for longer periods in complex treatments.

Another example of the use of 3D printers is that which took place in England, where it was possible to create personalised metal jaw, pelvis and hipbones using this technique. In one of these cases, a group of surgeons used 3D printing technique to design a titanium pelvis to replace a patient’s original bones that had been lost due to bone cancer. In another case, students at a British university used 3D printers to design the first ever titanium hip replacement. They achieved this by using computerised X-rays to create the hip combined with a stem cell implant and there are hopes to obtain better outcomes using this vanguard technology.

It is important to note the medical importance of these printers, since this tool is able to generate skin, liver and kidney when used in conjunction with live human stem cells and, through a modelling process, it is possible to design entire implants for different parts of the human body.

The main advantage of these kinds of bone and implants is that they are completely compatible since they are made from primary cells from the human body.

It is worthwhile mentioning that, for the time being and as regards organs, it is only possible to print certain kinds of tissue, since the printing of entire organs for transplant is still at the research and development stage. Despite the fact that currently they are only developing pieces of tissue, this in itself is hugely significant due to the fact that these can be used in order to carry out toxicological lab analysis, which can lead to obtaining results in a shorter timescale.

At present, it is only possible to print certain kinds of tissue, since the printing of entire organs for transplant is still at the research and development stage.
We can see an example of the use of this technology in Mexico in different research centres. For example, at the Tissue Engineering Labs at Mexico’s Children’s Hospital where researchers are developing skin regeneration techniques. While this is still at the experimental stage, it is important to note that researchers are beginning to develop techniques and protocols based on the use of 3D printers, so that in the near future they can apply this method for developing tissue implants.

The advantages of using this innovative technique are primarily the reduction in costs in the skin transplant, since in other procedures where artificial skin is used tend to be more expensive.

On the other hand, the patient’s acceptance of the transplant and the recovery time is much more favourable due to the use of the patient’s own cells, which is more compatible and prevents infections.

From the point of view of an application in the near future depending on how research and development goes, a further advantage of using this technique is it helps satisfy the demand that people have to receive a transplanted organ. Scientists hope that 3D printers can generate more sophisticated organs, such as kidneys, the liver and even the heart.

In this way, this technology could help us face the serious problem we have of a large number of patients requiring organ transplants versus the small number of donors.

According to statistics from the National Transplant Centre (CENATRA), today there are 19,382 people who need to have an organ transplant, whereas the number of transplants that took place this year so far are 355 (National Register of Transplants), clearly this covers only 2% of the demand in our country.

As previously mentioned, the majority of the surgical procedures mentioned in this article are still at an experimental stage as clinical treatment protocols, but it definitely clear that this tool is being gradually introduced and future opportunities are promising.

PwC is at the forefront of knowledge regarding innovative medical devices and it therefore sees a huge opportunity for the development of this business area as a possible solution in the health sector.

At present, 3D printers are at the research and development stage, but that does not stop us detecting a huge business opportunity that exists for this technological innovation, whose value was estimated at 1,264 million dollars in 2013.
Diabetes

Pebisut is a medicine for the treatment of diabetic foot that prevents the spread of gangrene to varicose ulcers, so the researcher is preparing to enter the market following health authorisation by the Federal Commission for the Prevention of Health Risks (COFEPRIS).

At a press conference, the researcher and discoverer of this new medicine, Jorge Cueto, emphasised that he has proof that no other medicine exists with these qualities. Furthermore, the ease of treatment represents a time and money saving in curing this kind of wound.

Some of the characteristics of Pebisut are that the patient can simply apply it to the skin, without the need for any other instrument except a hygienic hysop, it lasts up to a year without refrigeration and it takes away the pain and burning thereby improving the quality of life of the patient.

He explained that “the product presentation is in the form of an ointment that only need an apoplicator, it is non-toxic since it is a naturally-biodegradable vegetable polymer and furthermore, there is no risk that the body might reject it.”

The product proved its efficacy after nine years of experiments at the Health Sciences Faculty Research Centre at the Anahuac University, first with lab rat trials and later with tests in over 100 patients.

The researcher has registered the patent in USA, Canada, the European Union and in Mexico.

Dengue fever

A team of scientists at imperial College London has discovered a new type of antibodies capable of neutralising all four strains of dengue fever, according to the British scientific journal Nature Immunology.

This new kind of antibodies found in humans neutralises the initial stage of the virus in the mosquitoes that proliferate the disease and therefore could lead to the development of vaccines against the disease and treatments.

During the study, the scientific team an alysed 145 samples of antibodies taken from patients infected with the virus and developed an immunological map. In this way, they found a good number of antibodies that are very effective in neutralising the virus.

Artificial skin

A team of scientifics from USA and South Korea have created a form of artificial skin that can detect heat, pressure and humidity.

The material is a polymer that has a dense network of gold and sillica sensors inside. With more than 400 sensors per mm2, it constitutes the most sensitive material made so far. When interviewed by MIT Technology Review, Roozbeh Ghaffari, a member of the research team, said “if we these high resolution sensores on the tip of a finger, we can achieve the same sensation that a normal hand would transmit to the brain”.

The challenge is that this technology only covers a part of the process needed to make patients feel heat or pressure.

Even if the skin can capture these sensations, we are missing the method whereby this information can reach the central nervous system and the brain.

Dae-Hyeong Kim, a researcher at the Seoul National University, demonstrated a model of this interaction in a lab rat, showing that the Brain can indeed sense the information transmitted by the artificial skin, although the level of intensity is not clear.
**Vaccines**

Mexico has launched the first vaccine against herpes zoster, an illness caused by the same virus that causes chicken pox that is characterised by a painful skin rash in different parts of the body as well as a temperature, headache and stomach ache. Carlos Alberto Cano, Director of the Institute for Research into Ageing at the Javanian University of Bogata, highlighted that the vaccine, developed by MSD, is the first of its kind, since, when the virus affects the face, it can prevent complications in the eyes thus avoiding severe damage to vision.

**Cancer**

The General Hospital of the People’s Liberation Army in China announced that Chinese and other international scientists have identified for the first time in a chromosome the three loci (or positions) of genes related to squamous cell carcinomas of the larynx (LSCC).

According to information given by the hospital, the scientists used a study method related to the complete genome (known as GWAS) in order to determine the locus. This is the first time that scientists have used GWAS methodology for researching larynx cancer and the international journal Nature Genetics published the successful results in their 10th edition. The research will contribute to the early diagnosis and treatment of this disease on a molecular level.

**Diagnostics**

Google announced that it plans to work on a joint project to create a pill containing micro-particles that can travel in the bloodstream and seek out malignant tumours. The particles can then report conclusion to a sensor worn by the user.

The project is at an early stage. It constitutes the most recent efforts by Division X of the internet giant to try to apply new technologies to resolve large-scale problems.

The Division’s other projects include autonomous cars and contact lenses that can detect glucose in tears.

The Company added that they are able to magnetise the micro-particles and coat them with antibodies that they can adhere to proteins or cells that are specifically associated with particular diseases.

The sensor can track the magnetic fields of the particles.
The tax pathway

Reimbursement of remaining VAT within 20 working days for companies in the pharmaceutical sector

Background

In accordance with Section III of Art. 22 of the Law on Federal Income, in 2015, the Federal Tax Service (SAT) should establish an agile reimbursement of VAT. The reimbursement is normally requested by medicine producers or distributors and should take place in a term of 20 working days following the request.

Under these rules, the requirements in order to guarantee this benefit are established so that only those taxpayers who are up-to-date with their taxes can receive it and they need to supply the relevant information in order to prove their operations.

In this regard, the 2015 Fiscal Miscellany (RMF 2015) was published in the Official Gazette on 30 December 2014 that includes in rule 2.3.14 the guidelines, scope and requirements in order to qualify for the fast track procedures in reimbursement of VAT.

Requirements for qualifying to gain access to the fast track procedures for the reimbursement of VAT

Rule 2.3.14 of the RMF 2015 sets out that individuals or companies who work in the production and distribution of patented medicines, can obtain approval for the reimbursement of remaining VAT within 20 working days of receiving the request, only if they fulfil the following criteria:

a) That the reimbursement due was generated and declared with effect from 20 January.

b) That the production or distribution of medicines represents 90% of the total value of their acts and activities, excluding imports for the period under which they are requesting reimbursement.

c) That the payment of the outgoings that originated the accreditable VAT have taken place using cheques, credit card, debit card, service card or electronic transfer, except for those payments paid in cash to villages or rural zones, where there are no financial services available.

d) That they have the Advanced Electronic Signature (FIEL) and a prior positive resolution regarding fulfilling their tax obligations.

e) That in the previous 12 months to the presentation of the reimbursement request, the taxpayer has not been rejected partially or wholly for VAT reimbursement requests, for over 20% of an income worth five million pesos or more. This requirement is only applicable to those who have not previously presented a request for reimbursement.

f) That they have sent their accounts information by electronic means for the period for which they are requesting the reimbursement, that is catalogue of accounts, proven balance, invoices and subsidiary accounts.

g) Regarding the VAT derived from operations between related entities, they must prove the entire payment and the crediting of VAT transferred in such operations.

In the same way, the rule that we are quoting points out that the first request for reimbursement shall be resolved within approximately 40 days and only the subsequent ones within 20 days. For this reason, before presenting the first request for reimbursement, the taxpayer can ask the tax authority to check the information and documentation that they have so far. The tax authority can have a period of 15 working days to check documentation, yet this revision does not guarantee that the full submission will receive authorisation to proceed as a request for reimbursement.

Taxpayer to whom this scheme does not apply

It is worth mentioning that the fast-track benefit for obtaining reimbursement of VAT does not apply in the following cases:

a) To taxpayers who are listed in the SAT webpage because 1) they already have agreed fiscal debts, 2) they already have certain fiscal debts and can be demanded, have not been fully paid or guaranteed through any of the methods allowed under the Federal Tax Code, 3) that although they are registered as having a tax registration number, the authorities could not locate them at the address given, 4) that they have been condemned for having committed a tax felony, 5) that they are presumed guilty of emitting invoices for operations that did not take place and, due to this, they are listed on the SAT and DOF webpages.

b) When the reimbursement they are requesting is supported by invoices emitted by anyone who is listed at a) above.

c) When the taxpayer has had his tax certificate cancelled during the period for which the reimbursement is being requested, and

d) When the taxpayer works for or distributes herbal medicines or herbal remedies.

Final comments

Without a doubt, the fast-track term of 20 working days for companies in the pharmaceutical sector to obtain the reimbursement of accreditable VAT will benefit their finances and allow them to reduce the problem related to the average delay (40 working days) to obtain the reimbursement of this tax, which the majority of companies in this sector face. Consequently, it is important that companies in this sector observe the guidelines and requirements to gain immediate access to the fast-track scheme for receiving reimbursements of this tax.
Publications: sharing our knowledge

**Perspectives for the health sector in Mexico in 2015**

In 2015, our hopes for the Mexican health sector are that we shall see formal and decisive steps towards a transformation of this, based on the government’s commitment and the commitment of companies that operate in the system. Without a doubt, next year and for the rest of the current administration, the changes in the national health system will be notable and progressive.

Therefore, PwC Mexico’s health practice has prepared these perspectives looking at next year, from the viewpoint of health service providers, the pharmaceutical sector, the medical bodies, regulatory, medical devices sector, technology and medical insurers.

**Healthcare delivery of the future: How digital technology can bridge time and distance between clinicians and consumers**

Today, the health sector faces an overwhelming digital challenge, which consists in unleashing the power of technology to reinvent the way we deliver care to the patients. Healthcare companies need to connect their old systems with new technologies and combine data in order to generate useful and important knowledge for those in charge of delivering medical care.

In the new healthcare economy, digitally delivered care is no longer an accessory, but a fundamental part of business. Through health, hospital and pharmaceutical plans, industry leaders see the biggest changes happening in the way that medical care is granted.

Due to this, digital technology is building a bridge that can reduce times, shorten distances and decrease the gap between what patients expect and what doctors can offer.

**Health wearables: Early days**

While the Smartphone remains the preferred piece of equipment for US citizens, the world of technology is busy designing the next mobile devices that promise to entertain consumers, save money and help people to live healthier lives. The interest of technology companies in health and wellbeing has provoked the creation of a wide range of mobile devices, from fitness bands to supervise activity and sleep patterns to flexible patches that can detect body temperature, heartbeat frequency, hydration levels and more.
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