One of the major challenges after disasters is the rapid recovery of the lost health services. Chile faced this problem after the earthquake and tsunami of 27 February 2010. The hospitals of Talca, Curicó, Cauquenes, Hualañé, San Antonio de Putaendo, Angol, Chillán, San Carlos and Félix Bulnes were completely destroyed and many others had multiple and significant damages.

Thirty days after the earthquake, recovery began for those hospital installations that were severely damaged. Available technical alternatives worldwide were analyzed and the concept of “accelerated recovery” was introduced into Chilean health structures. In less than 10 months, and with an investment of approximately US$60 million, the rehabilitation of the most damaged hospitals was achieved. Chile rehabilitated 26,320 m2 of floor space, 863 beds, 16 surgery wings with the highest technology levels, rooms for resuscitation of critical patients, units for invasive digestive or urological endoscopic procedures, etc.

Over 8,000 surgeries were performed in these hospitals until the end of 2011. More than 20,000 patients were discharged and the healthcare efficiency was improved, benefiting 3,018,131 people.

The Chilean experience in hospital recovery using this technology has made it possible to reestablish lost public health network services with great speed, providing very good quality health solutions. This experience has been incorporated into the portfolio of hospital designs as a rapid, modern, efficient and high-tech solution.

You can download the report written by Luis Castillo, Peter Waldo Iturriaga Ihl and the Ministry of Health of Chile here (
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For more information contact Ciro Ugarte (ugarteci@paho.org).