

Cayman Islands



The Cayman Islands, a British Overseas Territory, comprises the islands of Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac, and Little Cayman. The territory is located in the western Caribbean Sea, about 240 km south of Cuba and 290 km west of Jamaica. The total land area is 250 km². Grand Cayman is the largest and most populous island, with an area of 197 km². The country has a parliamentary democratic form of government. The Governor, who represents the Queen of the United Kingdom, heads the territorial government and presides over the Cabinet. The capital is George Town (located on Grand Cayman), and the country is divided into nine administrative districts.

The Cayman Islands enjoys a relatively high standard of living, as reflected in an annual per capita gross national income of US\$ 45,100 in 2009.

The high standard of living, together with the high level of general and specialized medical care universally available in the Cayman Islands, or overseas if necessary, have contributed to the relatively good health of the population.

Between 2006 and 2010, the general mortality rate fell from 3.5 deaths per 1,000 population to 2.8. The infant mortality rate in 2007 was 5.1 deaths per 1,000 live births. Only one maternal death was reported in the past decade.

No vector-borne diseases are endemic to the Cayman Islands, and the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases has been low.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

HEALTH DETERMINANTS AND INEQUALITIES

Poverty is low in the Cayman Islands (1.9%), but 3.7% of the population is considered to live in vulnerable conditions. The cost of food is high, since little of it is produced locally.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN SECURITY

In 2007, the country had 100% coverage of improved drinking water through a variety of sources: piped household connections (84.2%); cisterns, rainwater, or trucks (7.2%); wells (7.6%); and other sources (1.1%).

Three landfills were in operation as of 2011. Total waste handled during the period was at its highest levels in 2007–2008 (151,601 tons) and 2008–2009 (126,177 tons). The figure fell to 69,304 in 2010–2011, nearly the same as in 2006–2007 (71,834 tons).

The country is vulnerable to natural disasters, especially hurricanes. In 2008, Hurricane Paloma caused considerable economic and infrastructure damage in Cayman Brac, although no deaths were reported.

HEALTH CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

There were 19 cases of dengue between 2006 and 2010, 4 of them imported; dengue is not endemic on the islands. During this same time, there were five cases of malaria

Selected basic indicators, Cayman Islands, 2007–2010.

Indicator	Value
Population 2010 (thousands)	54.4
Poverty rate (%) (2009)	1.9
Literacy rate (%) (2007)	98.9
Life expectancy at birth (years) (2010)	80.6
General mortality rate (per 1,000 population) (2010)	2.8
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) (2007)	5.1
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births) (2009)	0.0
Physicians per 1,000 population (2008)	2.7
Hospital beds per 1,000 population (2009)	2.8
DPT3 immunization coverage (%) (2008)	89
Births attended by trained personnel (%) (2010)	100

and nine confirmed cases of tuberculosis (five men and four women). In 2009, there were 129 cases of influenza A(H1N1), with one death. Only one case of influenza A(H1N1) was reported in 2010.

On average, 10% of all births were premature. A total of 19 infant deaths (12 boys and 7 girls) were reported during 2006–2010.

In 2009, the pentavalent conjugate pneumococcal vaccine was routinely administered to infants for the first time. That same year, rotavirus vaccine also began to be administered in the Cayman Islands.

HEALTH POLICIES, THE HEALTH SYSTEM, AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

In 2009, the Ministry of Health and Human Services was expanded to become the Ministry of Health, Environment, Youth, Sports, and Culture, which continues its leadership and regulatory role in the Cayman Islands health services.

The Ministry of Health convened the “Health Care 20/20” Conference, held in 2010 and 2011, to identify ways to keep health care affordable and maintain high quality. An initiative was also under way to develop a comprehensive health plan for the islands.

Patient insurance covers medical expenditures, depending on the insurer and the type of plan the patient has. Health care services are available to citizens and non-citizens on an equal basis.

The operational budget of the Health Services Authority increased from US\$ 77.8 million in 2006–2007 to US\$ 100.2 million in 2008–2009.

Health care services are performed by the Health Services Authority, a corporation of the British Crown,

CayHealth Program Provides Access to Health Care

Launched in 2010, the CayHealth Program is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Community Affairs of the Cayman Islands.

CayHealth will enable patients to schedule all their appointments with a preferred general practitioner, who will also coordinate their access to specialists and overseas care, if required.

CayHealth brings health care to the people in their districts so they do not have to travel to the Cayman Islands Hospital. This will save time and improve access to quality health care. In addition, residents will be able to fill their prescriptions at the district health centers, thereby avoiding unnecessary wait times. Finally, CayHealth will increase access to health education and healthy lifestyle programs.

The program also proposes to follow the progress of patients who suffer from chronic, noncommunicable diseases. This should reduce the number of medical consultations and emergency room visits, as well as the number of self-referrals to specialists.

and the private sector. The Health Services Authority provides care for patients through the 124-bed Cayman Islands Hospital, the territory's main health care facility. Faith Hospital has 18 beds and serves residents of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. There are five district clinics: four on Grand Cayman and one on Little Cayman. There is also a private hospital, the Chrissie Tomlinson Memorial Hospital, as well as about 40 private medical offices with general practice and specialized physicians.

There is universal coverage of delivery with skilled personnel. Almost all births (97%) occur in public hospitals, with only 3% in private facilities.

In 2010, the "Be Fit Cayman!" public wellness campaign was conducted to encourage the adoption of healthy lifestyles based on healthful eating habits and physical exercise.

As a response to the lack of policy on human resources development, in 2009–2010 the government launched a comprehensive organizational plan to increase the hiring and retention of citizens of the Cayman Islands.

The Cayman Islands Medical and Dental Society conducts regular continuing medical education activities. Similarly, the Cayman Islands Nurses Association offers continuing education to both members and nonmembers.

KNOWLEDGE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INFORMATION

The country has modern technological equipment and staff trained to operate it, so it is possible to offer blood and urine analyses, computed tomography (CT scans), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), x-rays, bone density exams, digital mammography, echocardiograms, and treadmill and thallium stress tests.

MAIN CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

Although the country enjoys a high gross national income, the income is unevenly distributed (Gini coefficient 0.4).

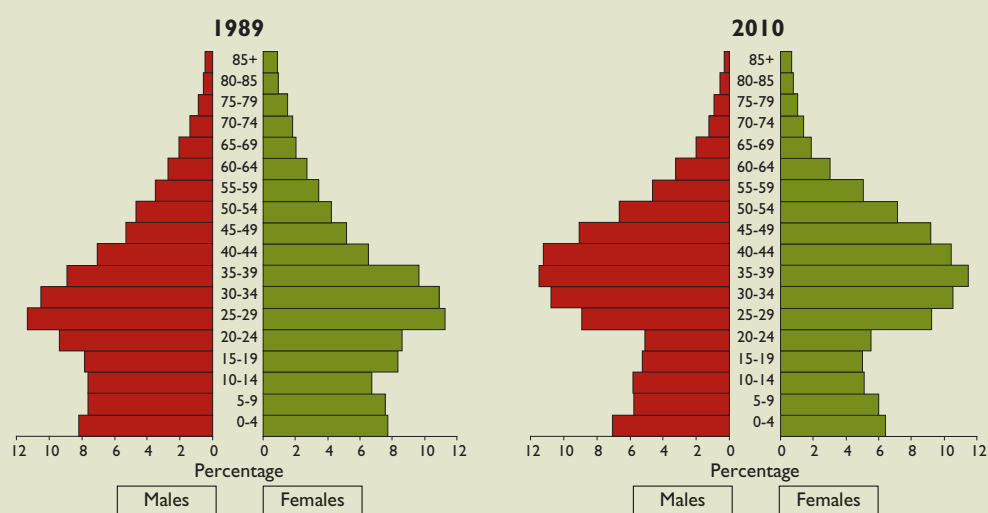
The main health problems facing the country are noncommunicable diseases, including cardiovascular dis-

eases, malignant neoplasms, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity. Patients with high blood pressure increased from 2,581 in 2006 to 3,273 in 2010, while the number of diabetics increased from 1,450 to 1,691 in the same period.

The number of deaths from cardiovascular diseases remained relatively stable during 2006–2010, with 30 deaths in 2006 and 31 in 2010.

There were 199 deaths from malignant neoplasms between 2006 and 2010: malignant neoplasms of the lung accounted for 22.6% of deaths (75.5% men and 24.5%

Population structure, by age and sex, Cayman Islands, 1989 and 2010.



women) and prostate cancer for 15.1%, followed by cancers of the breast (10.1%) and uterine cervix (2.0%).

External causes (traffic accidents and homicide) were the leading cause of mortality (33.3%) among people aged 20–64. Other causes of death in that age group were malignant neoplasms and diseases of the circulatory system.

In the population over 65 years of age, who made up 9% of the population in 2010, the leading causes of death in both sexes were cardiovascular disease, malignant neoplasms, diseases of the respiratory system, and accidental falls. No morbidity data are available for this age group.

Between 1985 and 2010, there were 96 cases of HIV infection (53 men and 43 women). Of these, 50 progressed to AIDS (26 men and 24 women), and there were 35 deaths (21 men and 14 women). The main modes of transmission were heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual, at 64%, 19%, and 8%, respectively. During 2006–2010, there were 26 new HIV infections (0.9 per 10,000 population), 12 new cases of AIDS (0.4 per 10,000 population), and 10 AIDS-related deaths.

In 2010, 17% of the children of the Cayman Islands were overweight or obese and 25% were found at risk of being overweight. Among children aged 11 to 13, 20.6% were obese, 15.6% were overweight, and 6.2% had less than normal weight. Among those aged 15 to 19, the leading causes of death were traffic accidents, homicide, and suicide. In 2011, there were 304 live births to mothers under the age of 18.

Outpatient visits for mental disorders increased from 1,640 in 2006 to 1,705 in 2010. The most frequent diagnoses were depression, anxiety disorders, and schizophrenia.

Although surveys of schoolchildren show that consumption of alcoholic beverages declined from 45.5% in 2006 to 39.2% in 2010, they also show that tobacco consumption increased from 6.8% to 14.4% in the same period. With regard to use of illegal drugs, the percentage increased from 9.7% in 2006 to 12.8% in 2010.

Given the lack of certain secondary and tertiary services in the country, the Health Services Authority needs to adopt mechanisms to facilitate specialized treatment abroad. All essential health care products are imported.

The number of traffic accidents increased from 1,186 in 2006 to 1,430 in 2010, for a total of 6,851 during the period. In 2006, 7.4% of all arrests were related to the trafficking or use of illegal drugs and by 2010 that figure had risen to 10.7%.

The number of physicians at George Town Hospital decreased during the 2006–2010 period, but the number in the private sector increased. Similarly, the number of nurses decreased in the main hospital and increased in the private sector.

The government intends to establish a tertiary care hospital (center of excellence) in the Cayman Islands to provide cardiology and oncology care services which, as of 2010, had to be sought abroad. Such a facility would reduce the cost of specialized care for the Caymanian population.