

### **A Map of Respiratory Home Care in Spain**

**To the Editor:** Indications for home oxygen therapy have barely changed in the last 20 years. There have, however, been considerable technological advances. Aside from outlets for oxygen therapy and portable liquid oxygen systems, a recent addition to the market is the portable oxygen concentrator, which allows patients with chronic respiratory insufficiency much greater freedom of movement. The image of a patient with chronic respiratory disease who has little chance of leading an active life is fast disappearing and addressing this issue poses a challenge that modern society must accept.<sup>1-3</sup>

The greater mobility of these patients causes technical, bureaucratic, and financial problems.<sup>4</sup> One particularly interesting aspect is the need to know the distribution of home respiratory treatment suppliers in Spain. In all likelihood, our patients will travel and so will require oxygen therapy systems to be installed wherever they reside temporarily. They will also need to coordinate the refilling of liquid oxygen systems while traveling. Portable liquid oxygen systems may be refilled from the side or bottom, raising questions of incompatibility if the system is different from that of the supplier in the province where the patient is traveling. Knowing an oxygen supplier's range of service is extremely important, as it may even influence the choice of destination. Travel is less complicated for patients receiving treatment with home mechanical ventilation and portable concentrators because they must carry their equipment with them. The power supply their devices require is not difficult to find outside the home. Patients usually negotiate with the supplier to carry their own equipment away from home, although they may risk being left with no technical service if traveling beyond the supplier's service area. Consequently, it is important for these patients to be informed of service areas.<sup>5-6</sup>

In May 2006, the suppliers of home oxygen therapy in Spain were as follows (in alphabetical order): Air Liquide, Carbueros Médica, Contse, GasMedi, Linde, Oxigensalud, and Oximesa. The Table shows that their distribution varies considerably in different provinces and even in different Spanish autonomous communities. Such variation is most noticeable in the Autonomous Community of Valencia, where each province has a different supplier (in Alicante, Carbueros Médica; in Castellón, Oximesa; and in Valencia, GasMedi and Air Liquide). Although there is only 1 home oxygen therapy supplier in most provinces, in 12 there are 2 or more, which somewhat complicates the issue. Patients should be aware of supplier availability in these provinces and particularly at their chosen destination. In Madrid, patients should contact Carbueros Médica, Oximesa, or GasMedi, depending on their place of accommodation. These data were provided by Carbueros Médica and reflect the current home oxygen therapy market in Spain, in May 2006.

## Distribution of Home Respiratory Treatment Suppliers by Province

Province	Supplier	Province	Supplier
A Coruña	Oximesa	Jaén	Oximesa
Álava	Oximesa	La Rioja	Oximesa, GasMedi
Albacete	Oximesa	Las Palmas	Carbuos Médica
Alicante	Carbuos Médica	León	Carbuos Médica
Almería	GasMedi (Torrecárdenas Hospital), Air Liquide (Olvera and El Ejido Hospitals)	Lérida	Contse, Oxigenosalud
Asturias	GasMedi	Lugo	Air Liquide
Ávila	Carbuos Médica	Madrid	Carbuos Médica, GasMedi, Oximesa
Badajoz	Air Liquide	Malaga	Air Liquide, GasMedi, Oximesa
Barcelona	Carbuos Médica, Oximesa, Contse, Air Liquide, Oxigenosalud, GasMedi	Murcia	Air Liquide, GasMedi, Linde
Burgos	Oximesa	Navarre	GasMedi
Cáceres	Air Liquide	Orense	GasMedi
Cádiz	Oximesa	Palencia	Contse, Oxigenosalud
Cantabria	Oximesa	Pontevedra	Oximesa
Castellón	Oximesa	Salamanca	GasMedi
Ciudad Real	Carbuos Médica	Santa Cruz de Tenerife	Carbuos Médica (DOT) GasMedi (sleep)
Córdoba	Linde (Hospital de Pozoblanco), Oximesa (Hospital de Cabra)	Segovia	Carbuos Médica
Cuenca	Oximesa	Seville	Carbuos Médica, Linde, Air Liquide
Gerona	Contse, Oxigenosalud Carbuos Médica	Soria	GasMedi
Granada	Oximesa	Tarragona	GasMedi
Guadalajara	Carbuos Médica	Teruel	GasMedi
Guipúzcoa	Carbuos Médica	Toledo	Carbuos Médica
Huelva	Oximesa	Valencia	Air Liquide (DOT) GasMedi (sleep)
Huesca	Carbuos Médica	Valladolid	Contse, Oxigenosalud
Balearic Islands	Carbuos Médica, GasMedi	Vizcaya	GasMedi
		Zamora	GasMedi
		Zaragoza	Carbuos Médica

Abbreviation: DOT, domiciliary oxygen therapy.

A better understanding of the map of home oxygen therapy in Spain will enable us to advise patients about important aspects such as the location of the same supplier that provides service at their place of usual residence or whether, for example, they will be required to change supplier or oxygen therapy system at their holiday location. This map will become an indispensable working tool in our clinical practice.

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