

I'VE FALLEN AND I CAN'T GET UP:

HANDLING A MEDICAL EMERGENCY AND
GETTING BACK ON YOUR FEET IN MICHOACÁN



April McGee & Connie Paraskeva

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STOP!

If you are having a medical emergency
right now, close this document and
IMMEDIATELY refer to the Medical
Emergency Checklist on your refrigerator.

What checklist??!! *The checklist you'll create by reading this
guide as you PREPARE for a medical emergency.*

This guide is NOT a quick reference for the actual
moment of an emergency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guidebook would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of many wonderful people in our community.

Special thanks to those who provided content recommendations, eagle-eyed editing and creative graphic design expertise.

It's been a labor of love and we trust it will prevent delays, frustration and confusion should you have a medical emergency.

Purpose

Assembling the information is just the first step. The real goal is to have that information in a handy format that enables you, or whoever finds you in distress, to quickly get help. This guidebook makes it easy by listing the information you need to gather and by providing printable blank templates to fill in and keep on hand:

- [illegible]

Disclaimers

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We interviewed people on both the giving and receiving ends of emergency and recuperative services in the Morelia/Pátzcuaro area: medical and legal professionals, first responders, caregivers, care recipients, etc. This guide is our best distillation of their knowledge and experiences. It is meant to serve as a map with signposts to help you navigate the Michoacán healthcare system before, during, and after a medical emergency. Since it is not a comprehensive resource manual, readers will want to determine which services and resources best fit their circumstances.

Also note that the list of health care providers in Chapter 4 of this guide is *not* exhaustive. To find additional providers:

- Search the posts on [MichoacanNet](#), a digital community bulletin board that serves our local community, for referrals to the kind of doctor you're seeking.
- View the [Medical Resources list](#) published by Mark Emmer on MichoacanNet. If you have problems opening the file, be sure you are *logged in* to your MichoacanNet account before clicking the link.

Also, be aware that the focus of this guide is to prepare for, deal with, and recuperate from a medical emergency. It does *not* cover the topic of what to do in case of death. That topic is covered in a document titled "[Rumor Has It: Dying in Mexico/Michoacán Seminar Booklet](#)," which also resides in the Files section of MichoacanNet along with other resources that deal with death and dying in Mexico.

You can find additional information on the topic of handling a death in Mexico at the "[Dying in Mexico](#)" website.

Future Updates: Although this Medical Emergency guide (published in March 2026) might well benefit from future updates, none are planned.

Introduction

Do you have a plan in place in case you are suddenly physically or mentally incapacitated?

- What if you were found unresponsive or suffered an accident in your home? How will first responders get into your home to help you?
- If you were found unconscious in the street, how would they know who to contact?
- Suppose you have a medical crisis and need to get to a hospital right away. Which hospital would you go to? How would you get there?

- What if you needed to be admitted overnight—or longer? Who should be notified? And who would know how to contact them?
- Who will make sure your home and/or vehicle is secured? Who will care for your pets?

In case of a lengthy hospital stay or recovery period,

- Who will make sure your medical and household bills are paid?
- What if you need in-home care after being released?
- What if you need a wheelchair or walker to get you back on your feet?

Are you prepared for such a medical emergency? Most of us are not. The many differences between the healthcare system in Mexico and the one you may be used to in your country of origin call for extra considerations as you plan for a medical emergency. For example, the Mexican healthcare system carries fewer rigid formalities than we may be used to, which offers both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, it tends to place greater responsibility on patients to manage their own medical records, retain their medical history, and maintain communication among their various healthcare providers. On the other hand, the informal structure facilitates access to physicians outside of office hours and the direct involvement of physicians in coordinating the medical services their patients require.

Advance planning for a medical emergency may seem overwhelming, and some of the recommended steps may seem worrisome. But please realize that if you let it sit on the back burner too long, you run the risk of not being sufficiently prepared for the anomalies of the Mexican healthcare system in a crisis, when you may be incapacitated and vulnerable. In turn, it can be very stressful for friends and family who want to help but don't have access to the necessary information and documents.

We've intentionally made this guide as comprehensive as possible. So, yes, there's a lot to digest, and it may seem daunting. Therefore, we suggest reading the guide in segments rather than from cover to cover all at once. Also, consider reviewing the segments with a friend or spouse; that way you can compare notes and feel assured that all the main issues are clear.

Please use this guide to get started with the most important steps:

- Assemble your personal and medical information. Then fill out and print your Emergency Wallet Card and Emergency Checklist Sheet.
- Identify and inform a reliable network of local folks from among your circle of trusted contacts to serve as your "emergency safety net." If you are new to

Michoacán, don't worry; we provide some tips for getting started in assembling your network. ([p. 13](#))

Acronyms

The following acronyms are used throughout this guide and are explained in their relevant sections.

Trusted Local Contact (TLC) is explained on [p. 11](#)

Constant Care Buddy (CCB) is explained on [p. 19](#)

Healthcare Proxy (HP) is explained on [p. 19-20](#)

Patient Concierge (PC) is explained on [p. 24](#)

CHAPTER 1: PREPARING FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

A. Gather Your Medical Emergency Information

One Hour's Work You Can Do Right Now: Fill in Your Personal Info

When a medical emergency occurs, you'll need a trusted circle of local contacts to help you through the crisis. That circle of friends will need essential details about you. A key goal of this guidebook is to help you gather this potentially lifesaving information and have it handy. While not everyone in your circle needs—nor should have—access to all your highly sensitive info, some basic personal information will need to be shared. For example, medical personnel will require your name, chronic conditions, and allergies, and your trusted circle of contacts will need to know your best options for emergency transport.

To make it easy, we've prepared two different formats for your medical emergency information: a wallet card to carry with you, and an emergency checklist to put on your refrigerator (descriptions below). Get started filling in your personal information right away, e.g., full legal name, phone number, date of birth, allergies, medications, etc.

However, be sure to *wait* before filling in: 1) the names of your trusted circle of contacts and 2) your emergency transportation preferences. *Why wait?* You'll want to carefully read the sections describing the crucial criteria for filling those responsibilities. (See [Section B: "Identify and Empower Trusted Local Contacts"](#) and [Appendix E: "Emergency Transportation Options"](#)) But you can start right away by filling in your personal information for the Medical Emergency Wallet Card and Checklist noted below.

Medical Emergency Wallet Card:

- A wallet-size card with personal information such as your name, chronic conditions, and allergies. Keep this card in your wallet or purse at all times.
- See [Appendix B](#) for a template of the Medical Emergency Wallet Card to fill out and print.

INFORMACIÓN DE EMERGENCIA

NOMBRE: _____ F. Nacimiento: _____

Tel: _____ Tel: _____

CONTACTOS DE EMERGENCIA

1. _____ Tel: _____

2. _____ Tel: _____

3. _____ Tel: _____

4. _____ Tel: _____

MÉDICO PRINCIPAL: _____ Tel 2: _____

Tel 1: _____

HOSPITAL PREFERIDO: _____

Dirección: _____

LADO A

Medical Emergency Checklist:

- An 8 x 11 sheet of paper with the Wallet Card information *plus* the name and contact info for your emergency transport options, primary doctor and TLCs.
- See [Appendix C](#) for a template of the Medical Emergency Checklist to fill out and print.

- Display this 8 x 11 Medical Emergency Checklist prominently on your refrigerator as well as in the entryways of your home, and place a copy in your car's glove box.

B. Identify and Empower Trusted Local Contacts (TLCs)

In a medical emergency, you will likely need to rely on local friends and family—folks who can act on your behalf while you're out of commission. For example, you may need someone to secure your home and possessions, oversee your property maintenance, pay your bills, and care for your pets. You may also need someone to physically stay with you in the room during your hospital stay, take notes for you during follow-up medical appointments, or arrange in-home care for when you return home.

You need to coordinate in advance who will carry out these functions for you, and make sure they have the necessary information and documents to do so. Among these people may be a spouse, a partner, close friends, or neighbors. We'll refer to those people who act on your behalf as your Trusted Local Contacts, also known as your TLCs.



Here in Mexico, family is everything. As expats, we may not have family here, so we must cultivate a local network of both expats and locals to fill that role when it comes to a medical emergency. We need to rely on one another. That's where TLCs come in. Your TLCs will help coordinate your medical care in and out of the hospital until you are well enough to do so yourself. We recommend identifying a minimum of four TLCs so they can spread among themselves the various tasks needed. Also, not all of them may be available when you need them, so having four increases the chances of their fulfilling all your needs. Selecting your TLCs may seem laborious, but it is critical. And ultimately, it will save you, your friends, and your loved ones many future headaches.

Having 4 TLCs seems like a lot.**Do I really need that many?**

YES, and here's why:

- Here in Mexico, it's often expected that someone will stay at your bedside 24 hours a day throughout your hospital stay.
- Your TLCs will also coordinate your medical and financial affairs during and beyond your hospital stay, arrange in-home care, communicate with your family, etc.

You'll need enough people to work in shifts to cover all these responsibilities among themselves. That way, no one person will be overburdened.

When forming your network of TLCs, remember you can reciprocate by offering to be on their TLC team in return. You can also offer reimbursement to potential TLCs for costs they may incur for transportation or lost income while assisting you.

It bears noting that some of us live in outlying areas, while others of us may not have daily contact with anyone nearby; therefore, you may opt to conduct daily "I'm OK" check-ins with your TLCs (or others) via WhatsApp, Messenger, email, or phone call. Several folks in our area have implemented "Mutual Care Clubs" for this very purpose and find that it gives them an added layer of security should an emergency occur when they are alone.

Tips for Assembling Your Network of Trusted Local Contacts (TLCs)

Are you new to the area and don't have a network yet? Find opportunities to form local bonds by joining interest groups consisting of locals as well as expats, for example:

- Attend local classes and seminars that interest you.
- Join (or start) a local language exchange group.
- Find a local exercise group to join, e.g., aerobics, pickleball, Zumba, yoga.
- Sign up for local travel excursions that are announced on MichoacanNet.
- Join volunteer organizations, e.g., soup kitchens, animal spay/neuter campaigns.

Tips for Selecting Your TLCs

Consider local friends with at least one of the following traits:

- Are trustworthy, available, calm in an emergency, vibrant, and bilingual.
- Have access to a car and can get to you quickly.
- Have a cell phone and use WhatsApp.

Considerations for Selecting Trusted Local Contacts (TLCs)

Be sure to choose TLCs who meet as many of the following criteria as possible. Not every TLC must fulfill all these criteria, but each of these criteria should be met by at least one TLC:

- Can get to your home and local hospital quickly in an emergency.
- Ideally has a car for subsequent travel to the hospital and for medical errands.
- Has a cell phone, carries it with them, and is competent using the internet and phone apps, including use of the "location sharing" feature on map apps and/or WhatsApp (so they can transmit your location if they are with you).
- Speaks Spanish well enough to communicate clearly with first responders and/or healthcare providers (with a low risk of miscommunication).
- Is known to function well under pressure or in a crisis.
- Is ideally 5-7 years your junior, or in vibrant health. This will increase the chance they'll be alive and healthy when you eventually need their support.
- Is someone you trust with your house and car keys and confidential information such as your credit and debit cards, PINs, and access to your money (cash or electronically). (See [Chapter 3B](#) on Payment Up Front for Hospital Admission for details on why this is so important.)
- Spends most of their time in Michoacán (vs. someone who travels several months a year and would be less likely to be available when you need them).
- Is fully bilingual and able to communicate with non-Spanish speaking family members outside of Mexico who want to be closely involved in your medical care.

For any criteria met by only one of your TLCs, you would be wise to identify a backup person who also has those attributes.

Preparing Your Trusted Local Contacts (TLCs)

Once you have identified your TLCs:

- Meet with each TLC candidate to explain their intended responsibilities. Discuss what you'll need for managing your home, pets, and medical affairs as you recuperate. Explain that the TLC's responsibilities may increase with the severity of your healthcare needs. Obviously, get their consent before listing them as a contact.
- Provide each TLC with a copy of your Medical Emergency Checklist in both paper and digital format to be stored in a secure location. If data privacy and security are major concerns, consider saving the checklist as a separate password-protected PDF that you give to your TLCs along with the password. This gives them easy digital access to your information without having to always carry your physical checklist around.
- Walk each TLC through the checklist in detail. Pay particular attention to your prioritized emergency transport options. In an emergency, speed is of the essence, so TLCs need to be clear on who to call first, depending on whether you're in a centrally located or more remote area.
- Provide all your TLCs with each other's contact information and as much critical information as feasible to facilitate their coordination of your care. If any of the TLCs has a non-Mexican phone service, make sure the others know how to dial it.
- Provide a spare house key to at least one TLC and show them where you keep your car keys in case they need to drive you to the hospital.
- For the TLC(s) whom you trust with access to your funds, show them where you keep your credit and debit cards (along with their PINs).
 - This will ensure that your medical and other expenses can be paid until you're able to resume doing so yourself. If you keep cash on hand, at least one TLC must know how to access it. Keep in mind that payment for ambulance transport may be required at the moment the service is provided. (For an idea of these costs, see [Appendix E: Emergency Transport Options](#).)
 - If you prefer to limit TLC access to your funds, you could hold funds in a separate account specifically for emergencies; just be sure you've arranged a way to replenish that account should the costs of your care begin to exceed the funds in that account.

- If you wish to have any family members made aware of your emergency, inform your TLCs of the names and contact information of one or two family members you would like them to notify of your health status and recovery progress. Make sure at least one TLC has a phone plan that can call outside of Mexico for this purpose. Likewise, share the names of all your TLCs with those family members as soon as possible.
- Consider giving at least one of your TLCs and/or family members access to the passwords and PINs for your computer, tablet, and/or cell phone. Why? In carrying out your ongoing affairs, your TLC and/or family members may need to retrieve documents electronically or have digital access to your bank accounts from your device.
- Provide TLCs with access to physical documents: passport, residency card, birth certificate, apostilled documents.
- All TLCs should know who you've arranged to look after your animals while you are out of commission. Provide them with the pet carer's name, address, and phone number.
- If you have a non-Mexican health insurance policy that requires immediate notification when you are hospitalized, make sure that one of your TLCs has the contact information to notify the insurer, and that their phone can make calls outside of Mexico.
- If you have SkyMed emergency air transport, provide your TLCs with SkyMed's phone number and instructions on what to tell them.
- Touch base with all your TLCs at least once a year to determine: Are they still willing and able to carry out the required duties? Do they still live locally? Has anything else changed that will prevent them from continuing as a TLC? Update your TLC list as necessary.

How TLCs Should Prepare Themselves

As a Trusted Local Contact, you'll be one of the people arranging care for your friend or loved one. Also, you may be asked to pay their household and medical bills until they can resume doing so themselves. Therefore, make sure you understand what is entailed, so you'll know what steps to take. Start by having a conversation with your friend or loved one to review their filled-out Medical Emergency Checklist. Be sure you are clear about the emergency transport options they've specified, their preferred hospital, and whom to notify immediately about their medical emergency, e.g., family members and insurance providers.

Also make sure that one or more of their TLCs knows what arrangements your friend or loved one has made to have money on hand to pay medical bills and/or household maintenance while they're incapacitated. Be sure you know which TLC has this responsibility. If you are the one who's been asked to handle these payments, before taking on that role, have a candid discussion with your friend or loved one about:

- Their budget for medical care, i.e., have they determined that their preferred hospitals and post-hospital service providers are within their budget?
- How you will access their preferred payment methods: cash, credit cards (including PINs), designated bank accounts, or electronic payment services. Confirm that you have access to these funds until they're able to do so themselves.

C. Establish a Relationship with a Primary Doctor

In Mexico, your relationship with your primary doctor is more important than you may realize. Even if you have doctors outside of Mexico, *within* Mexico, your primary doctor plays a pivotal role in coordinating your hospital admission, treatment, and discharge—as well as making referrals to specialists. If you are someone who currently receives all or most of your medical care outside of Mexico, think about connecting with a local doctor here as well. You might start by asking friends whom they recommend. Perhaps set up an initial consultation with several recommended physicians to see whom you “click” with. Maybe have the doctor order lab tests or bloodwork to start an informed conversation about your overall health with an eye toward having regular appointments with a doctor of your choosing. Eventually, consider letting your trusted physician know your end-of-life wishes as well. The goal is to have a trusted physician who knows you and your wishes. These are just a few examples of how to get started in establishing a close doctor-patient connection. Remember, relationship is key, so see your primary doctor regularly and make sure they're familiar with your physical condition and healthcare needs.

In this guide, we do not rank or rate hospitals or service providers by level of service, quality, or affordability; as such, we encourage you to talk with your primary doctor to help you decide which hospitals meet both your healthcare needs and your budget. This will help you decide which hospital to designate as your preferred hospital (explained immediately below) for emergency care, so be sure to discuss this topic with your primary doctor well before an emergency occurs.

D. Designate Your Preferred Hospital

Local emergency medical transport services will likely ask which hospital you wish to be taken to. For example, someone living in Pátzcuaro may wish to go to a hospital in Morelia, especially if their primary care physician practices there. Determine in advance which hospital you prefer to be taken to. Consider factors such as cost, distance, service level, and whether your doctor practices there. Provide the hospital's name and address to your TLCs. Those with IMSS coverage will be taken to a nearby IMSS facility. (IMSS: Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social)

NOTE: Be aware that in a severe, time-critical emergency, the emergency medical transport may take you to the closest available medical facility rather than your preferred hospital.

E. Assemble Your Binder of Sensitive Information

An additional step to help your TLCs help you during and after a medical emergency is to gather all the important documents needed for managing your healthcare and other affairs. Remember at least one of your TLCs will need to access information such as how to pay your bills and where you keep your medical records. To help you assemble this essential information, we have developed a template for your Binder of Sensitive Information, which includes selected personal data, financial details, and medical records compiled into a physical or virtual binder or folder.

- The binder template consists of a cover page, a table of contents, and a list of section labels to help keep the information organized.



- Keep the binder in a designated location in your home that is known to at least one of your TLCs and possibly a trusted family member as well.
- See [Appendix D](#) for a template of the “Binder of Sensitive Information” to fill out and print.

F. Prepare a GO Bag

Your GO Bag contains toiletries and other items you’ll need during a hospital stay:

- One or two changes of clothes (underwear, comfy clothes, slippers, etc.)
- An extra pair of eyeglasses, if applicable
- Hygiene items (toothbrush, toothpaste, comb/brush, lotion, deodorant, etc.)
 - Be aware that in some public hospitals, such as Hospital Civil or IMSS, it’s customary that you bring your own personal care items such as soap, shampoo, hair conditioner, toilet paper, Kleenex, etc.
- Electronics (phone charger, headphones, portable battery pack)
- Copies of key ID documents, e.g., passport, Mexican residency card, health insurance information
- List of medications you take, and copies of any prescriptions
- Copy of your Medical Emergency Checklist (the 8 x 11 sheet)
- Relevant medical records, X-rays, scans, etc.



Store your GO Bag in an easily accessible spot. Be sure all your TLCs know where you keep your GO Bag.

G. If You Have Pets, Arrange a Pet Carer

Who will look after your pets in your absence? Will the pet carer come to your home daily? Or take your pet(s) to be looked after in their home? Arrange ahead of time who will fulfill this role. Provide their contact information to all of your TLCs.

Some commercial boarding facilities, like Mascotel in Morelia, require proof of vaccination and ideally a veterinary contact. Include a reference to your pet’s vaccination booklet among the materials you provide your TLCs.

H. Select Your Constant Care Buddy (CCB)

Imagine yourself sick, weak, and possibly on strong medication in the hospital—or in need of ongoing rounds of doctor visits or physical therapy sessions *after* hospitalization. Who will help you to arrange, keep track of, and get to those sessions? Having a designated person to coordinate those tasks is ideal. We refer to that person as your Constant Care Buddy (CCB). The best candidate for this role would be one of your TLCs. Selecting the TLC with the strongest Spanish, availability, and organizational skills as your CCB will be a huge asset in managing your healthcare during and after a hospital stay.

Your CCB may also be someone other than a TLC. It may even be someone you hire to take on that role, e.g., a Patient Concierge (PC). (See [Patient Concierge on p. 24.](#))

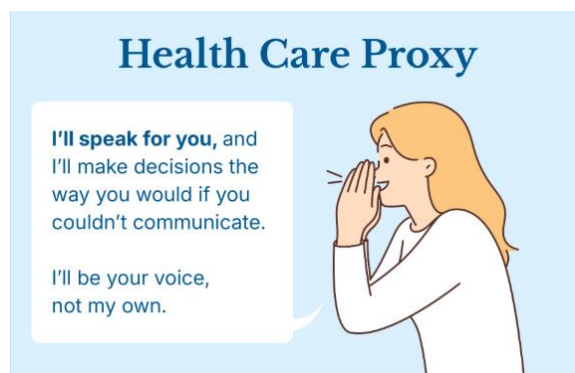


The CCB will help maintain clear and consistent channels of communication with your medical professionals and help integrate all medical services, diagnoses, dietary needs, and other medical advice into existing medical records and your daily care. This is particularly important following a surgery, when pain medications can induce brain fog, or worse. Your CCB can also help set and track follow-up appointments, lab tests, and doctor's visits once you are discharged. This person may also help you review your hospital bill upon discharge. For consistency's sake, ideally a single person would fill this role during your recovery; however, if that isn't possible, designate and inform two people in advance. Then jointly discuss your needs with them so they can coordinate with each other.

I. Designate a Healthcare Proxy (HP)

If you are physically or mentally incapacitated, who will make healthcare decisions on your behalf? A Healthcare Proxy (HP) will be the person you designate to make healthcare decisions on your behalf if you are temporarily or permanently unable to

make those decisions for yourself. In choosing the person to fulfill this role, you are advised to take either or both of the following steps:



1. Have a notary develop an Advanced Healthcare Directive (*Voluntad Vital Anticipada*) which authorizes a Healthcare Proxy (HP) to make decisions on your behalf regarding medical treatments. Ideally, your Constant Care Buddy (CCB) would double as your Healthcare Proxy, but it could be anyone else whom you trust to carry out your wishes. These wishes might include the extent to which you wish to continue treatments that may not result in an acceptable quality of life (including Do Not Resuscitate), or whether you request to have final palliative care at home as opposed to in a hospital. This Advanced Healthcare Directive can be drawn up by a Mexican notary, in Spanish, and informally translated into English for ease of understanding by your family or friends.

For example, Morelia Public Notary 14, Patricia Soledad Servin Maldonado (Tel. 443-314-8580), is well versed in preparing these directives in both Spanish and English with the least cumbersome requirements for identification and other pre-requisites.

2. Ensure that your primary doctor understands your views toward extraordinary life-saving interventions, because Advanced Healthcare Directives are not always required or adhered to by physicians in Mexico. Therefore, having a long-term relationship with a local physician can also ease the stress around these decisions for your family and friends. The physician's long-term history with you can inform them of what quality of life means to you, and your preferences for extraordinary medical interventions.

On a related topic, some expats choose to make funeral arrangements in advance with one of their local funeral homes. If you have done so, be sure to notify your TLCs and your Healthcare Proxy (HP).

CHAPTER 2: IF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY OCCURS

Once you have identified your TLCs, walk them through the steps below to ensure they know what to do if you have a medical emergency.

Step 1: Consult the Medical Emergency Checklist for Phone Numbers to Call

If the emergency takes place in your home, whoever reaches you first should:

- Go to your refrigerator door and locate your Medical Emergency Checklist.
- Call the emergency medical transport phone numbers in the order you've listed them.

Step 2: Call All Essential Parties Listed on Your Emergency Checklist

While waiting for the emergency transportation to arrive, whoever reaches you first should **immediately** contact the following essential parties on your checklist:

- Your primary doctor
- Your health insurance agent (for any policy—Mexican or non-Mexican—that requires immediate notification in case of a medical emergency)
 - Give the agent your name and policy number, along with which hospital you are being taken to.
- All four of your Trusted Local Contacts. You can create a WhatsApp group of your TLCs on your phone to reach them all with just one message.

CHAPTER 3: IN CASE OF A HOSPITAL STAY

A. Hospital Admission: ID and Payment Requirements

Patient ID

- Original passport, Mexican residence card, or Instituto Nacional Electoral card (INE). Hospitals tend to require originals. We cannot confirm if all hospitals would accept copies.
- Some hospitals require the name and signature of the person who will stay in your hospital room for the duration of your stay. This person could be anyone

accompanying you to the hospital, regardless of how long they can stay with you. (Compliance with this requirement isn't usually strictly monitored and varies among hospitals. See more on this in [Chapter 3, Section B.](#))

Payment Up Front

Be aware that payment for medical emergency services here in Mexico may be vastly different from what you are used to in your home country. For example, you may have had medical insurance where you simply show your insurance card up front, and then once the bill is finalized you pay a portion of the total bill (i.e., a deductible and co-pay). Or you may come from a country where there is neither upfront payment nor direct billing for emergency services. In contrast, in Mexico, nearly all private hospitals require some form of partial advance payment.

Admission staff at Star Médica cite that a maximum of 100,000 PESOS would be required for patient admission. Hospital Angeles put this at 80,000 PESOS. These maximum amounts would be charged for serious emergency admission such as for significant heart failure, neurological impairment, or major injuries. Less serious cases could be admitted to these hospitals for 40,000 pesos. Lower amounts could be expected at lower-cost hospitals. Some people report having been able to receive a 15% discount for offering payment in cash. In summary, it is advisable to contact your credit card company to ensure your credit limit is high enough to cover a medical emergency and that it will function for large amounts in Mexico. You may wish to disclose to your TLCs the credit limit on each card.

We have already addressed in Chapter 1 the importance of ensuring that your TLCs have access to your cash and/or specific credit cards so they can make the payment required upon hospital admission. If the TLC accompanying you to the hospital does not have access to your cash or credit/debit cards and PINs, they *may* be permitted to sign a promissory note for payment of your final hospital costs (a *pagaré*). In most cases, the patient will make the final payment upon discharge when they have regained the physical capacity to do so. That said, the signatory of this note will be responsible for the payment should the patient die during the hospitalization or if for any other reason the patient does not cover the payment. This places a premium on our earlier advice to TLCs to have a frank conversation about the prospective patient's ability to pay for services at their preferred hospital. This conversation should include how reimbursement for payments the TLC might make on the patient's behalf will subsequently be made by either a family member or the patient's estate.

If you have a private Mexican insurance policy, the following will suffice in lieu of cash or credit card:

- Your Insurance Agent (name + phone number)
- Insurance Company
- Insurance Policy number

IMPORTANT: Most area hospitals **do not** recognize U.S./Canadian or other non-Mexican insurance companies, even if they have the same name. For example, MetLife Mexico is not the same as MetLife USA. If you only have health insurance from another country, you'll need to cover your own expenses and then seek reimbursement from your external insurer.

B. What to Expect During Your Hospital Stay

Managing Your Healthcare During Your Hospital Stay

The essential role of a Constant Care Buddy

Although you may opt to select your Constant Care Buddy (CCB) as the person who will take on the legal role of your Healthcare Proxy (HP), the duties under each role are distinct. The HP will be called upon at critical decision-making points in your care, while the CCB needs to be available to you on a more continuous basis during and after your hospital stay. The CCB also acts as your advocate among healthcare providers. The following aspects of your hospital stay place a greater degree of responsibility on the patient than in other countries and, therefore, call for a CCB:

Medical Records

- In Mexico, patients are responsible for maintaining their own medical records over time. Many doctors do not maintain patient records, so patients themselves must keep and provide these as well as lab results, X-rays, MRIs, and prescriptions. Also keep track of all medications you are allergic to or have experienced adverse reactions to in combination with certain other medications.
- Providers may not be careful about checking for drug interactions between existing medications and what is being prescribed. Many medications do not come with explanatory material in the box. The patient or TLC should learn to check new prescriptions routinely against a list of existing medications, using websites like drugs.com, Mayo, or Cleveland Clinic.

- It is also unlikely that your physician will provide printed pre- and post-op instructions. You will need to press for these instructions during your medical consultations and possibly follow up by seeking generic instructions for your type of surgery on the internet.

Medical Supplies

More so in *public* hospitals than in private ones, patients may need to procure some of their own medical supplies from an external pharmacy or elsewhere. This requires someone to buy these items and bring them back to the hospital. In *private* hospitals, patients may be given the option of procuring minor medical supplies as a cost-saving measure, e.g., gauze, bandages, intravenous saline solutions.

Hospital Room Companion

Public and private hospitals often require that a friend or family member stay with the patient around the clock. Although this is not consistently enforced, for serious illnesses or surgeries the patient will want this 24-hour support. Your CCB (or one of your TLCs) should reach out to your friends and family to arrange a round-the-clock schedule. When family or friends are not available as hospital room companions, private nurses can be hired for this purpose.

If you are unable to identify someone who can take on the role of a CCB during your hospital stay, you have the option of hiring a **Patient Concierge (PC)**. These are bilingual people who, for a fee, may be able to assume the responsibilities described above.

- Lisa Kolokoff (Morelia), Tel. 415-114-7088
- Samantha Toro (Pátzcuaro), Tel. 434-107-4252

How Blood Bank Donations Work

The blood quality in Michoacán is highly reliable. It is important to note that blood cannot be sold in Mexico. Certain fees may be charged when blood is provided but technically, blood is not legally sold. The information below may vary from that provided on the MichoacanNet Medical Directory since the availability of private blood banks has expanded over the past few years.

In Private Hospitals

Private hospitals that have their own blood banks can usually manage their blood supply without patient involvement. (Those that we know of are Star Médica, Hospital Angeles,

and Sanatorio La Luz.) They supply and bill you for the blood required in your treatment.

To maintain adequate blood supplies, the hospital may urge you to provide blood donors (of any blood type unless yours is rare) to recover the quantity of blood you received. Providing these donations within a certain timeframe will earn reimbursement for the cost of your blood. But if you cannot supply the blood donations, you will simply pay the full price for the blood you received.

The exception to this occurs when the quantity of blood needed exceeds the blood bank's supply. This is more likely to happen for negative blood types. In these cases, patients are required to supply donors of their specific blood type.

Private hospitals and clinics *without* their own blood banks may have a contract with a private blood bank. (Those that we know of are Victoria, Hospital Innova Médica, and Sanatorio Cuautla.) Although there are several in the Morelia/Pátzcuaro area, the private blood bank that we consulted about their procedures was NOVA. Their procedures for accessing blood vary depending on the terms of their contracts with the various private hospitals and clinics. As such, the physician who orders the blood from a private blood bank can inform the patient (or TLC or CCB) of any procedures they may need to follow to access the blood.

The rules surrounding the patient's replacement of the blood used during procedures are the same as those for private hospitals with their own blood banks.

NOVA has branches in Morelia (Tel. 443-730-0913), Pátzcuaro (Tel. 434-117-7435), Tiripetío (Tel. 443-690-6002), Huiramba (Tel. 434-156-5885), and Lagunillas (Tel. 434-156-5885).

In Public Hospitals

Public hospitals have their own blood banks, which are governed by strict rules. Although procedures may vary among different hospitals, the patients are almost always required to donate (personally or through others) the same quantity and blood type required for their treatment.

Discharge Payment Procedures

In private hospitals payment, or arrangements for final payment, of your bill must be made upon discharge, unless you were admitted under a Mexican health insurance policy.

- In general, payment may be made in cash or by credit or debit card. You will also need to present your ID (passport, residence card or INE).
- Your attending physician may bill you separately and not include their fees on the main hospital bill. The hospital may collect the physician's fee as part of the discharge procedure. Physician fees are generally required in cash or through electronic transfer of funds.
- IMPORTANT: If you have Mexican health insurance, be sure that either you and a TLC or CCB reviews the hospital bill (preferably with your insurance agent, at least by phone) to:
 1. note any charges you paid out-of-pocket,
 2. identify hospital charges not approved by the insurance company (TLC/CCB meals, medications deemed not relevant to care, etc.)
 3. verify any insurance deductible and coinsurance amounts being collected by the hospital on behalf of your insurer,
 4. review any discrepancies, and
 5. be sure you'll get reimbursed properly. This is equally important if you are paying the bill on your own, particularly to be sure that advance payments have been deducted from the bill.

NOTE: An official payment receipt (*factura*), and a current *Constancia de Situación Fiscal* (CSF) is normally required. For more details on the CSF, refer to the Mexican government website (www.gob.mx).

CHAPTER 4: POST-EMERGENCY CARE — LIST OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

We have identified the following service providers to help you get back on your feet after a medical emergency or planned critical procedure.

A. Medical Supply Stores

Morelia

- **Contigo**, Calle Samuel Ramos #455, Tel. 443-313-2448
- **Equipo Médico Morelia**, (open 24 hours), Ave. del Vivero #163, Tel. 443-299-6246
- **Express Medic Morelia**, (open 24 hours; specializes in oxygen equipment), Calle Pino Leiofilo #365, Tel. 443-156-6348
- **Médica Depot**, (open 24 hours), Calle Samuel Ramos #575, Tel. 443-317-2616
- **Rehabilitación Avanzada**, Calz. Ventura Puente #443, Tel. 443-315-0337

Pátzcuaro

Colovent, Calle Federico Tena #34, Tel. 434-116-5468 (sales only; specializes in supplies for wound care and colostomies)

- **Daimed**, Calle Irepan #3, Tel. 434-104-1027 (sales only)
- **Farma y Más**, Calle Obregón #48, Tel. 443-349-7230, 443-104-1357 (sales only)
- **Medical Rent**, Av. Obregón #145, Tel. 434-216-4600 (rentals and sales)
- **El Porvenir**, Libramiento near Ibarra, Tel. 434-342-5736 (steel and welding supply store with medical gases in tanks and oxygen concentrators for rent, as well as masks and cannulas)

B. In-Home Nursing Care

In-home nurses are available in Michoacán, both through agencies and by word of mouth. Agencies take responsibility for the quality of care, but hesitate to send nurses outside of Morelia and Pátzcuaro if shift changes occur after dark and/or where public transportation is scarce. Offers of transportation, extra pay, and flexibility with shift duration can facilitate availability. Be aware that many will not speak English.

Morelia

- **Agencia de Enfermería Ángeles** (24 hrs), Calle Rey Tariacuri #539, Col. Vista Bella, Tel. 443-164-6490, WhatsApp: 443-389-8448
- **Agencia de Enfermería y Atención Gerontológica** (24 hrs), Calle Isidro Huarte #1551, Col. Félix Ireta, Tel. 443-219-6745
- **Enfermería Geriátrica y General**, WhatsApp and cell phone: Tel. 459-103-6241
- **Salud y Cuidados en El Hogar** (24 hrs), Calle Isidro Huarte #1551, Tel. 443-219-6745

Pátzcuaro

- **Ángeles de Salud (Enfermeras a Domicilio)** Tel. 434-149-8244
- **Cinthia Espinoza**, Tel. 434-116-0103
- **Erick Adrian Saavedra**, Tel. 434-187-7612
- **Diana Laura Urtiz**, Tel. 434-155-8669
- **Jorge Ceras**, Tel. 434-170-8135
- **Loreta Villanueva**, Tel. 434-102-9404
- **Lupita Pinedas**, Tel. 434-102-9501
- **Luz María Aguilar Campos**, Tel. 434-246-2093
- **Maricela Granados Alcaez**, Tel. 434-188-2136
- **Nena Marisol**, Tel. 434-562-6336

C. Physical Therapy Centers

Physicians often work with and recommend their own cadre of physical therapists. These are a few of the centers that we located:

Morelia

- **Fisioterapia y Rehabilitación**, Calle Bartolomé de las Casas 636, Col. Centro, Tel. 443-221-8556; (Hugo Magaña is well recommended and speaks English)
- **MyoCare Fisioterapia**, Privada Eréndira #90, Col. Félix Ireta, Tel. 443-140-1109
- **Codegui**, Av. del Maestro #769, Col. Lomas de Hidalgo, Tel. 443-380-9447
- **Thési Fisioterapia**, Calle 5 #127, Tel. 443-206-5306
- **Sana-t (Centro de Rehabilitación Física y Emocional)**, Pinchuaní #70, Tel. 443-777-6739
- **Fi-ZONE Therapy**, Priv. de Avenida Universidad #2021, Tel. 443-227-7275
- **Equilibra Fisioterapia**, Fray Antonio de San Miguel Iglesias #86, Tel. 443-104-7014

Pátzcuaro

- **Axione Terapia Física y Rehabilitación**, Calle San José #20A, Tel. 434-107-5206
- **Centro de Rehabilitación para Discapacitados San Rafael**, Calle Jamuquen #2, Fracc. Abraham González, Pátzcuaro, Tel. 434-542-0459
- **Centro de Terapias Físicas**, Calle Benito Juárez #12, Dr. Luis Dante, Tel. 434-342-4133
- **Fisio Cent Clínica de Fisioterapia**, Calle Terán #5, Francisco Molina, Tel. 434-114-0404

- **ReActiva Fisioterapia**, Calle Francisco Villa #13, Tel. 434-152-5465

D. In-Home Physical Therapists

In addition to the following therapists, some of the centers listed above may provide in-home therapists when available.

Morelia

- **Lic. Heriberto Gutiérrez**, Tel. 443-614-7131
- **Alfredo Tenorio**, Tel. 434-349-2974

Pátzcuaro

- **Karla Garcia Domínguez**, Tel. 434-155-5870 (also works at Hospital Civil)
- **Francisco Molina**, Tel. 434-114-0404
- **Gil Torres**, Tel. 434-116-9830

E. Speech Therapy After a Stroke

The extent to which either of these physicians could assist with recovery of speech for non-Spanish speakers can be ascertained only after an initial assessment.

- **Dra. Araceli Ramírez**, Av. Montaña Monarca #331-Norte, Col. Jesús del Monte, Morelia, Tel. 443-271-8027
- **Dra. Irina Sairel Chavez Caro**, Star Médica, Morelia, Tel. 443-565-3536

F. Dementia Care

Dementia care is generally arranged through a patient's neurologist, who will determine the type of dementia and the care required. As dementia progresses, having in-home companions and nurses can delay the need for admission to a nursing home. It is also helpful to remember that patients can experience dementia-like symptoms due to other illnesses that are temporary and unrelated to dementia itself. For example, if the kidneys are failing, they permit certain toxins to infiltrate the bloodstream and cause confusion in the brain. But these symptoms will disappear once the kidney ailment is cured.

Most nursing homes in Morelia will accommodate patients with dementia unless the dementia manifests with aggression. In this case, in-home care with nurses experienced in treating and/or dealing with aggression may be the only option.

Although other neurologists listed in the MichoacanNet Medical Directory may be able to administer evaluations for dementia in English, we know for certain that Dr. Jaime León Rangel (Tel. 443-395-1584) can do so.

G. In-Home X-Ray Services

Morelia

- **Tte. Mariano Quevedo** 13, Mariano Michelena, Tel. 443-315-2788

Pátzcuaro

- **Ray-Lab**, Lib. Ignacio Zaragoza #8017, Tel. 443-866-0773 / 447-170-9481

CHAPTER 5: NURSING HOMES

The concept of nursing homes is ever growing in Morelia, though less so in Pátzcuaro. When nursing home names include the word “*residencia*,” their services are usually geared toward the autonomy of the resident (perhaps closer to independent living facilities), whereas “*asilos*” lean more toward comprehensive nursing care. Nursing homes almost always have waiting lists.

No one will be admitted to a nursing home without a *tutor responsable*, a person who guarantees responsibility for both the resident’s financial liabilities and medical decisions if and when the resident cannot carry out either responsibility. This could be your Healthcare Proxy. By this stage of your life, you will also want to grant power of attorney for your financial affairs to your Healthcare Proxy or someone else. As you think now about who this person could be, consider someone ideally 5–10 years your junior to ensure their availability as you age.

The nursing homes we found are:

Morelia

- **Residencia Vasco de Quiroga**, Rector Hidalgo 600, Tel. 443-327-3424
- **Asilo Casa Colibrí**, Calle Teniente Isidro Alemán #191, Tel. 443-184-8403
- **Casa del Sol**, Calle Nubes #33, Tel. (landline) 443-324-5638; WhatsApp 556-678-0038
- **Asilo Estancia del Bosque**, Calle Dr. Salvador González Herrejón #64, Tel. 443-317-4308

- **Casa de Reposo Bugambilias**, Av. Las Américas #109, Tels. 443 298-3932 and 443-683-6677
- **Casa Vivante**, Privada de Patzimba #39, Tel. 443-202-8469
- **Estancia Santa Lucía Bosque**, Calle Juan Ruiz de Alarcón #354, Tels. 443-145-7982 and 443-340-4914, www.estanciasantalucia.mx

Pátzcuaro

- **Hogar de Descanso Don Vasco**, Calle Morelia S/N (next to basketball court) Colonia Revolución, Tel. 434-342-2700.

CHAPTER 6: PALLIATIVE CARE FOR END OF LIFE

The Morelia-Pátzcuaro area regrettably does not have hospice centers. Nor were we able to locate a central source of palliative care nurses who could tend to patients at home. One experienced physician in Morelia said that there is no standard palliative care curriculum for Michoacán nursing schools in general. This doctor said that what are known as *cuidadores* (caretakers) can be hired for end-of-life care, but that there is no formal training for them. Nor is there any way of locating such people beyond word of mouth. This physician also cautioned against the hopes that regular in-home nurses can be successfully coached in palliative care, since their training and experience may lead them to administer medications and urge the patient to eat.

That said, the privately subsidized, low-cost **Hospital de Nuestra Señora de la Salud** in Morelia has a geriatric center that does send nursing students for in-home care (only in Morelia) of their patients, and these students are trained in palliative care methodologies.

In light of these findings, the best we can suggest for end-of-life palliative care at home is to seek advice from the patient's primary doctor or from a gerontologist (*médico geriatra*) whose services one might pursue in stages of declining health.

Morelia Gerontologists

- **Dr. Miguel Tenorio Juárez**, Alfareros de Capula #11-105 1 S/N, Tel. 443-330-1133
- **Dr. Francisco Vázquez Carbajal**, Calle Cuautla #800, Tel. 443-275-4474

- **Dr. Rodolfo Medina Méndez**, Hospital Ángeles, Av. Montaña Monarca Norte #331, Desarrollo Montaña Monarca, Tel. 443-688-3836

Pátzcuaro Gerontologist

Dr. Lena Hinojosa, Tel. 442-112-7742

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Gather Your Emergency Medical Information

Below is the important information you'll need to have on hand for a medical emergency. Use this information to fill out the Wallet Card, the 8 x 11 Checklist Sheet, and the Binder of Sensitive Information using the printable templates in Appendices B, C, and D below.

Your Personal Information

- Full legal name (plus nickname or name used locally, if you have one)
- Cell phone
- Date of birth (Day/Month/Year)
- Blood type
- Allergies (to food, medications, etc.)
- Chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, hypertension, asthma)
- Medications/Supplements (including dosage + frequency)

Your Emergency Contacts

- All four TLCs: Names and phone numbers
- Nearby neighbors with a vehicle: Names and phone numbers
- Primary doctor's name and phone number(s) (cell, office)
- Preferred local hospital: Name and address
- For those with private Mexican health insurance:
 - Insurance agent's name and phone number
 - Insurance company: Name and policy number

Your Sensitive/Private Information

In addition to your personal information and emergency contacts, sensitive or private information may also be required for conducting financial and/or legal transactions on your behalf. Whereas this kind of information may be too sensitive and personal to keep on open display, you can gather it together into a binder or folder and inform a TLC or trusted family member ahead of time as to where you keep that information, and how to access it when needed. Thus, in addition to the Wallet Card and Emergency Checklist Sheet, it will be to your benefit to assemble the sensitive/private information listed below and keep it in a binder or folder accessible only by those you designate.

Gather originals and multiple copies of the following documents:

- Passport

- Mexican permanent or temporary residence card (both sides)
- Mexican voter ID Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE), for those with Mexican citizenship (both sides)
- National ID from your home country (Social Security number for USA, Social Insurance number for Canada, etc.)
- Medicare card (for those with plans to be medevac'd to the US) or provincial health insurance card (for Canadians)
- Logins, passwords and PINs for your:
 - cell phone, tablet and computer
 - bank, credit card, and other financial accounts
 - email and social media accounts
- Medical records, e.g., lab results, X-rays, MRIs, CT scans, EKGs
 - Due to size and/or bulkiness, X-rays and scans may not fit in a binder. Instead, keep them with your GO Bag ([See p. 18](#))
- Advance Healthcare Directive, i.e., your Living Will

Once you've assembled the info above, print out the blank templates for the Wallet Card (Appendix B) and the Emergency Checklist Sheet (Appendix C). Fill both out completely and laminate (if possible).

The template for the Binder of Sensitive Information contains a cover page and title pages for each section, and gives examples of the kinds of documents to include in each section ([Appendix D](#)).

Appendix B: Medical Emergency Wallet Card Template

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1

Fill all fields and print
(preferably in color)*

2

Cut along dotted
line + fold in half

3

Laminate



Once completed, keep the card in your wallet,
purse, and glove compartment at all times

INFORMACIÓN DE EMERGENCIA  LADO A	INFORMACIÓN DE EMERGENCIA  LADO B
NOMBRE: _____ Tel: _____ F. Nacimiento: _____ CONTACTOS DE EMERGENCIA 1. _____ Tel: _____ 2. _____ Tel: _____ 3. _____ Tel: _____ 4. _____ Tel: _____ MÉDICO PRINCIPAL: _____ Tel 1: _____ Tel 2: _____ HOSPITAL PREFERIDO: _____ Dirección: _____	GRUPO SANGUÍNEO: _____ ALERGIAS: _____ CONDICIONES CRÓNICAS: ☐ Hipertensión ☐ Diabetes ☐ Otras _____ Especificar otras: _____ MEDICAMENTOS: _____ _____ AGENTE DE SEGURO MÉDICO (MÉXICO) Nombre: _____ Tel: _____ Póliza #: _____

***You have two options for filling out the Wallet Card:**

Option 1: Print this page then fill in all fields with a fine point pen.

Option 2: Type the information directly into the fillable fields above, then print.

If the print size appears too small to read easily, use **Option 1** above.

Appendix C: Medical Emergency Checklist Template

- Contains Wallet Card information, plus your backup emergency transport options
- Give copies of your Medical Emergency Checklist to all four TLCs, both as a paper copy and as a digital file.
- Display it on the refrigerator door, hang it near entryways inside your home, and keep a copy in your car's glove box.
- Create a brief script—in Spanish—with succinct directions to your home. Keep with the Medical Emergency Checklist.
- Tell any workers or regular visitors to your home about the Medical Emergency Checklist and the brief script in Spanish. Show them where you keep them, and how to use them.

You have two options for filling out the Medical Emergency Checklist:

- **Option 1:** Print the following page (preferably in color) and fill in the Checklist info by hand.
- **Option 2:** Type the info directly into the Checklist on the next page, then print it (preferably in color).

< See Next Page >

MEDICAL EMERGENCY CHECKLIST



NOMBRE/NAME: _____

Tel: _____ F. Nacimiento/ DOB: ____ / ____ / ____ (dd/mm/aaaa)
(dd/mm/yyyy)

OPCIONES DE TRANSPORTE DE EMERGENCIA / EMERGENCY TRANSPORT OPTIONS

(EJ., 911, AMBULANCIAS, TRANSPORTE PRIVADO, VECINOS / E.G., 911, AMBULANCES, PRIVATE TRANSPORT, NEIGHBORS)

1. _____ Tel: _____
2. _____ Tel: _____
3. _____ Tel: _____

CONTACTOS DE EMERGENCIA / EMERGENCY CONTACTS

1. _____ Tel: _____
2. _____ Tel: _____
3. _____ Tel: _____
4. _____ Tel: _____

MÉDICO PRINCIPAL/PRIMARY DOCTOR: _____

Tel 1: _____ Tel 2: _____

Dirección/Addr: _____

HOSPITAL PREFERIDO/PREFERRED HOSPITAL: _____

Dirección/Addr: _____

GRUPO SANGUÍNEO/BLOOD TYPE: _____ ALERGIAS/ALLERGIES: _____

COND. CRÓNICAS/CHRONIC CONDS: ☐ Hipertensión ☐ Diabetes ☐ Otras/Others

Especificar otras/Specify Others: _____

MEDICAMENTOS/MEDS: _____

ASEGURADORA/MEXICAN INSURANCE CO.: _____

Nombre de Agente/Agent Name: _____

Tel. de Agente: _____ Póliza/Policy #: _____

Appendix D: Binder of Sensitive Information Template

Contains the Medical Emergency Checklist, plus your sensitive/private information, e.g., copies of your passport, Mexican residence card (permanent or temporary), financial accounts, medical records, etc. Be sure to show your TLCs where you keep the originals of these documents for any hospital that does not accept copies.



If you're uncomfortable including such information in a physical binder or folder, create an encrypted digital version of all the information and documents in the binder, i.e., an electronic file requiring a digital password. Give the digital file and password to your primary Trusted Local Contact (TLC) and/or family member.

NOTE: While the binder *format* is optional (physical vs. digital), the private/sensitive information it contains is essential to those making arrangements on your behalf. The binder contents are intended only for your primary TLC, or a family member, so let them know where to find the physical binder or how to unlock and access the digital version.

For your convenience, print the Binder/Folder template below. It consists of the cover page and table of contents.

- If you decide to use a physical binder, you'll need to purchase a binder (or large folder) along with a packet of tab separators.
- Print the cover page for the binder and fill in your name (Fig. 1).
- Use the BOLD Headers in the Binder Table of Contents (Figs. 2 and 3) as the text for the binder separator tab labels which will help organize the information in your binder.

In Case of **EMERGENCY**

**Vital Records
and Sensitive Information for:**

NAME: _____



Fig 1. Cover Page for Binder of Sensitive Information

BINDER TABS

YOUR MEDICAL EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

- Keep several extra copies in the binder

YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

(original [where practical] + several copies)

- Birth Certificate
- Marriage Certificate
- Passport For Country Of Origin

MÉXICO *(original [where practical] + several copies)*

- Mexican Passport
- INE Card
- Mexican Residence Card (Permanent Or Temporary)
- Mexican CURP #
- RFC #
- Constancia De Situación Fiscal
- Your local address in México

USA *(original [where practical] + several copies)*

- Social Security Card
- Medicare Card
- US Address

CANADÁ *(original [where practical] + several copies)*

- Social Insurance Number
- Provincial Health Card
- Canadian Address

IMPORTANT CONTACTS (Names + Telephone Numbers)

- Family Members
- Healthcare Providers
- Healthcare Proxy
- Notario/Notary or Abogado/Attorney

Fig 2. Use Bold Section Headers Above as Tab Separator Labels

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Credit Cards (Mexican/US/Canadian)
- Bank Accounts (Mexican/US/Canadian)
- Investment/Retirement Accounts
- Life Insurance Policies

MEDICAL RECORDS*

- Lab Results, EKG Results, X-Rays/MRI's/CT Scans, Mammograms, etc.
- Surgery Reports
- Major Medical Treatments
- Chronic Conditions
- Allergies
- Medications

*(*Due to size and/or bulkiness, some medical records may not fit in the binder. Keep them in a safe location and tell your TLCs where to find them.)*

LEGAL DOCUMENTS

- Power Of Attorney

END-OF-LIFE PLANNING

- Living Will/Advance Healthcare Directive
- Last Will & Testament
- Funeral/Burial/Cremation Arrangements

Fig 3. Use Bold Section Headers Above as Tab Separator Labels

Appendix E: Emergency Transport Options

Which emergency transport service should you call in case of a medical emergency? We wish it were as simple as instructing readers to call 911, but this is not the case for all of Michoacán. *Protección Civil* reports that the closest *certified* ambulance is automatically dispatched in response to 911 calls. But because of limited resources for 911 ambulance availability, an ambulance dispatched by 911 may not always arrive the fastest. As such, this section lays out alternative options for readers to choose from. We emphasize that we were unable to uncover comprehensive information on 911 ambulance services. For example, we could not locate a list of *certified* ambulance providers to help readers determine these services' proximity to their homes and, therefore, how soon they might arrive. Such a list would also have helped identify the highest quality services.

We urge you to select at least two of the options below and list them in order of preference on your Medical Emergency Checklist. As with all other information on the Checklist, make sure your TLCs, friends, workers, local family members, and anyone else who frequents your home fully understands your selected options. Also discuss any circumstances under which you may want to change the order of your preferences.

A) Calling 911

- For an emergency in **Morelia**, calling 911 is generally perceived as the most expedient option. That said, others prefer to call ambulances directly.
- In **Pátzcuaro**, we have received mixed reviews on satisfaction with 911 services.
- In **outlying areas**, we do not recommend calling 911 as the first option because:
 - The closest *certified* ambulance may be farther away than an *uncertified* alternative ambulance service, that is adequate for your needs.

What's the deal with calling 911?

While Mexico does have 911 service, we have heard multiple reports that the quality and response time may not be what you are accustomed to, especially if you live in an outlying area. Therefore, it's very important to be prepared to use other modes of transportation:

- Call an ambulance service directly
- Arrange a private transport service ahead of time
- Make arrangements with nearby neighbors with access to a car

- Since cell phone signals do not reach all rural areas, many people rely on the internet for phone communication. It is critical to bear in mind that **911 cannot be dialed through WhatsApp**. Nor can 911 receive GPS coordinates to an emergency location sent through WhatsApp.

People who live in outlying areas must unfortunately research ambulance services closest to their homes. Factors to consider in selecting services are:

- 24/7 service (including dispatch)
- Minimal ambulance equipment such as oxygen and defibrillator
- Certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) or paramedics
- Preferably more than one ambulance in service

B) Direct Calls to Ambulance Services

The services below offer 24/7 services and have well-equipped ambulances with certified EMTs.

Morelia

- **Ambulancias Metropolitanas AMBUMED**, Tel. 443-198-9743; WhatsApp 443-198-9743, 443-317-1515
- **UrMedic**, Tel. 443-313-9432; WhatsApp 443-279-3657
- **Cruz Roja Morelia** (free, but only serves Morelia) Tel. 443-314-5151

Pátzcuaro

- **Protección Civil**, Tel. 434-342-4498
- **Bora Clinic**, Tel. 434-117-3775, 434-117-3846 (this ambulance goes only to the Bora Clinic)

Be aware that private ambulance companies expect prompt payment, although some may accept verbal assurance of payment from a third party in cases where the patient is too incapacitated to produce a credit card or cash payment before transport. We recommend keeping 10,000 PESOS cash on hand in case verbal assurance is not accepted. All four TLCs should know how to access your 10,000 PESOS so whoever arrives first can access the funds.

C) Private Transport— *(Pátzcuaro only, all are bilingual)*

Several private transport providers are available in Pátzcuaro. They also transport to hospitals in Morelia.

- **Adrián Pérez Guzmán**, Tel. 434-128-4524
- **Homar Cruz**, Tel. 434-108-9752
- **Hugo Servín**, Tel. 434-119-4088
- **Juan González**, Tel. 434-100-8653

It's important to contact the bilingual private transport drivers ahead of time to establish a personal connection. They should know who you are and where you live in case you (or a TLC) need their services in an emergency.

D) Transport Using the Most Readily Available Car

In some situations (unless a neck or spinal injury is suspected) it may be most expedient to use your car or a neighbor's. Determine ahead of time if any of your nearby neighbors could drive you to the hospital in an emergency.

- Find out who has a reliable vehicle, spends much of their time at home, and would be willing to transport you to your preferred medical facility.
- Identify at least **two** willing neighbors. Get their names, addresses, and phone numbers, and list them on your Medical Emergency Checklist.

Prepare a Script for Calling Emergency Transport

For whatever transport options you choose, prepare a script with succinct directions to your home, in both Spanish and English, including landmarks and cross streets. Note the name and address of your preferred hospital as well. Keep this script with your Emergency Medical Checklist and/or inside your cell phone case.

Additionally, we offer some Spanish vocabulary below to help in describing the need for emergency transport.

I NEED AN AMBULANCE / Necesito una ambulancia

THE PATIENT HAS / La/El paciente tiene:

- **POSSIBLE HEART ATTACK / posible infarto**
- **NOT BREATHING / no respira**
- **MUCH BLOOD / mucha sangre**
- **CAR ACCIDENT / accidente de carro**

THE PATIENT / La/El paciente:

- **IS CONSCIOUS / está consciente**
- **IS UNCONSCIOUS / está inconsciente**
- **IS AN ADULT / es adulto**

- IS A CHILD / es niño

Appendix F: Medical Translation

- Translations of medical phrases: [Essential Spanish Health Vocabulary](#)
- The Expat Health Pulse app: The app translates spoken words between Spanish and English with a specialization in medical terms. It can be downloaded for free from the Google Play Store and Apple App Store.