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DEVELOPMENT OF HOSPITAL LABORATORIES:
EXTENSION OF AVAILABLE SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY

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The subject of our study was the analysis of laboratory work in Madrid hospitals related to the community. Most of Spain's hospitals belong to the Social Security Plan or are affiliated with it.

As a result of the study we reached the following conclusions:

1. The most important function of the hospital in our immediate area is the diagnosis and treatment of acute illness.
2. A geographical division exists in Madrid and neighbouring communities regarding emergencies and ambulatory cases.
3. In the foregoing, the hospital laboratory plays a very important function.
4. Although the Social and Preventive Medicine Programme began in 1973 in the Social Security Hospitals, its development has been very slow and the laboratory takes a minimal part in health examinations and epidemiological studies.
5. The hospital laboratory has cooperated to some extent with other hospital departments regarding hospital community research.