

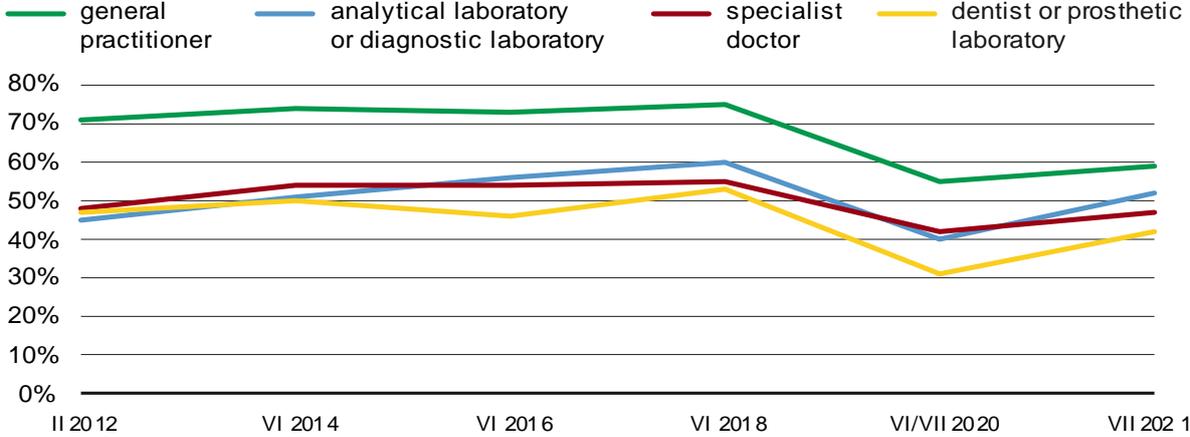
## **Use of health benefits and insurance**

During the six months preceding the survey (i.e. in the first half of 2021), more than three-quarters of respondents (78%) at least once consulted a doctor, used the services of a dentist or prosthetist, or performed tests in analytical laboratories or diagnostic laboratories due to illness or poor health of their own or their child.

Almost three-fifths (59%) consulted a general practitioner at least once during this time. Almost half (47%) called on a specialist doctor. Almost the same number of respondents (46%) used the services of an analytical laboratory, and almost one-third (30%) had diagnostic tests such as ultrasound, X-ray, tomography, gastroscopy, etc. In total, 52% of adult Poles had some kind of diagnostic tests, either in a laboratory or carried out by specialized units. Over two-fifths (42%) visited a dentist or prosthetist. In the first half of 2021, Poles used health services significantly more often than in the corresponding period of the previous year, i.e. in the period when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. The frequency of use of medical services during the pandemic still remains much lower than registered earlier. The disproportion between the result recorded before the pandemic and at present concerns to the greatest extent the services of primary care physicians. In 2014–

2018, from 73% to 75% of all adult Poles used the services of these doctors in the six-month period. Today, this percentage is 16 points lower.

**Proportion of respondents who used the services of:**



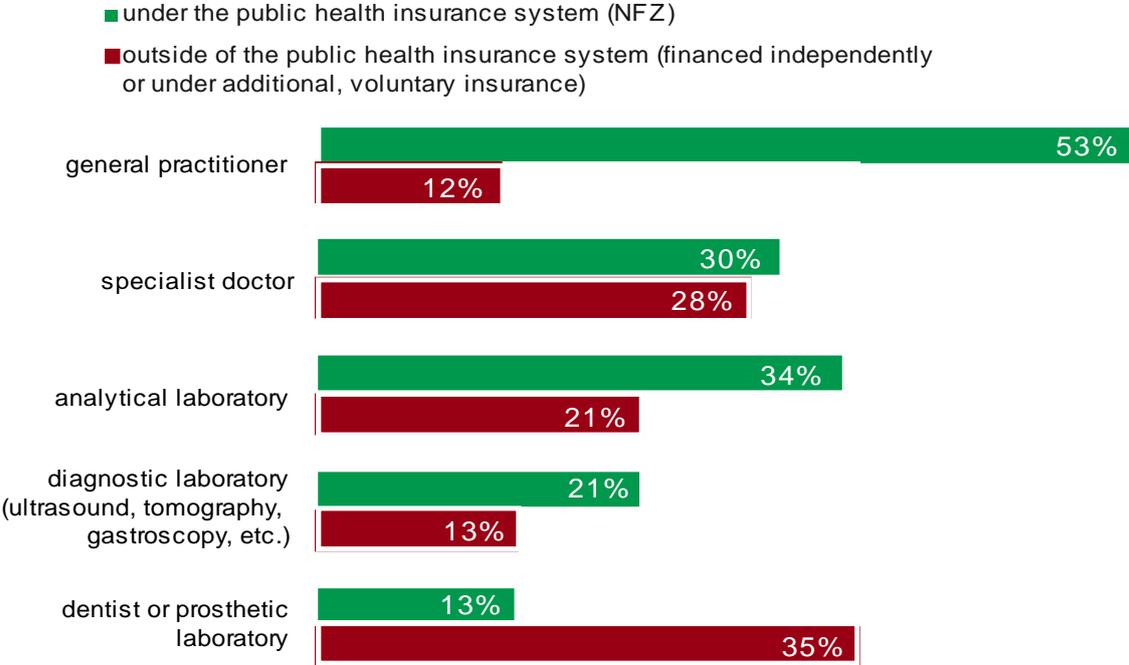
Almost two-thirds of Poles (65%) in the first half of this year used some benefits available under the general health insurance. Most often these were the advice of a primary care physician or a paediatrician (53%). Three out of ten respondents (30%) consulted a specialist doctor at least once. One-third (34%) used the services of an analytical laboratory, and one-fifth (21%) had other diagnostic tests, such as X-ray, USG, tomography, gastroscopy or other. A smaller number of people, i.e. one-seventh (13%), used the services of a dentist or prosthetist under the general health insurance.

In the last six months, almost half of people (49%) used at least once some medical services outside of the general health insurance system, for which they paid out of their own pocket or which were available under additional insurance paid individually or financed by the employer. As before, the services of a dentist or a prosthetic laboratory were the most frequently used by patients (35%). More than one-fourth (28%) consulted a specialist doctor outside of public health system. One-fifth (21%) used the services of an analytical laboratory on this basis, and one-seventh (13%) underwent some other diagnostic tests, e.g. ultrasound, had tomography, gastroscopy, etc. Fewer patients (12%) visited a general practitioners on this basis.

As the data show, dental care is the only medical service usually paid for by patients themselves or offered under additional health insurance. All the other benefits discussed

are usually provided by the state. The prevalence of public service provision is greatest in the case of general practice, while it is relatively small in the case of specialist doctors.

**Percentage of users, in the six months preceding the survey, of health benefits and services ...**



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Use of Healthcare Services and Insurance", September 2021. Fieldwork for national sample: July 2021, N=1166. The random sample is representative for adult population of Poland.