

Global health spending grows but more money needed for primary care - WHO

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Global spending on health is growing, with data from 2000-2016 showing more domestic public funding and less external financing, says a new WHO report. Health spending now accounts for 10% of the global gross domestic product.

Health spending includes government expenditure, out-of-pocket payments (people paying for their own care), and sources such as voluntary health insurance, employer-provided health programmes, and activities by non-governmental organizations.

“Increased domestic spending is essential for achieving universal health coverage and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals” - Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General

Governments provide on average 51% of a country's health spending, while more than 35% comes from out-of-pocket expenses, says the report, [Public Spending on Health: A Closer Look at Global Trends](#) [1]. One consequence of this is 100 million people pushed into extreme poverty each year. However, increasing domestic public funding for health in low- and middle-income countries means that reliance on out-of-pocket expenses is slowly declining around the world.

\$60 spent per person in lower-middle income countries

In middle-income countries, government health expenditure per capita has doubled since the year 2000. On average, governments spend US\$60 per person on health in lower-middle income countries (LMICs) and close to US\$270 per person in upper-middle income countries.

While health spending is rising almost 6% yearly in LMICs, versus 4% in high-income ones, low-income countries are lagging behind in public spending on health, found the report.

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"Increased domestic spending is essential for achieving universal health coverage and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. "But health spending is not a cost, it's an investment in poverty reduction, jobs, productivity, inclusive economic growth, and healthier, safer, fairer societies."

[See the report.](#) [1]

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