

# Government pays 45 percent of health costs

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A U.S. government study in Washington has suggested the federal government currently pays 45 percent of the nation's health costs.

The study, which comes amid increasing agitation for the government to pay more of the country's health costs, said the amount paid by the government is expected to increase to 50 percent within the next 10 years, the Wall Street Journal reported Wednesday.

The study authors said the government's increasing healthcare costs can be attributed to Medicare's prescription drug program, the growth of the State Children's Health Insurance Program and other similar initiatives, cutbacks in employer-sponsored coverage and increased spending by Medicaid users.

They said the findings support claims that the United States is slowly moving towards a single-payer system.

"We are moving incrementally away from traditional sources of insurance, such as employer-based coverage, to a system comprising more federal and state government-provided healthcare," said the study's authors, who work for the agency that runs Medicare.

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