

Taiwan may not sustain popular health insurance

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(AP)—A government official says Taiwan might be unable to support its highly-praised health insurance program because of a growing elderly population.

Cabinet Minister Hsueh Cherng-tay said late Wednesday the program's projected shortfall might be too much for the government to bear by 2025.

Taiwan's 23 million people pay minimal monthly premiums and receive largely free medical care for ailments ranging from the [common cold](#) to complex diseases. The government has subsidized shortfalls so far.

Hsueh says cutting-edge medical treatments have worsened the shortfalls and said Taiwan's [elderly population](#) grew 30 percent in the past decade and their health outlays shot up 90 percent.

Those 65 and older accounted for 11 percent of Taiwan's population in 2010. That's expected to grow to 20 percent in 2025.

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