

Report: why health care costs are lower in Europe than US

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(HealthDay)—European residents have access to the same health care

services as U.S. residents but pay much less, and this is related to several specific factors, according to a report published by INDIGOMED on April 25.

Researchers examined the differing costs for health care for patients in the United States and Western Europe and explored the reasons for these differences.

The researchers note that in 2013, the [average person](#) living in the United States spent \$1,074 on out-of-pocket [health care](#) costs. Residents in France and the Netherlands spent less than 25 percent of this amount (\$277 and \$270, respectively). According to the report, factors accounting for this difference include the cost of medical staff, with the average wage much higher in the United States than Europe; the cost of researching, developing, and purchasing medical technology, with European health systems adopting technologies more quickly because of faster approval regulatory paths; and the price of pharmaceuticals, which are much higher in the United States.

"A national system that negotiates with medical providers, including both independent providers such as medical specialists or institutions such as hospitals or pharmaceutical companies, can have, for the same services or products, a strong advantage for the population in terms of quality and prices," according to the report. "This is the main reason behind the huge difference in medical costs."

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