

European countries implementing cost-sharing

August 1 2016



(HealthDay)—European health systems are requiring an increase in cost-

sharing measures for patients 50 years of age and older, according to research published in the July issue of *Health Affairs*.

Raffaele Palladino, M.D., from Imperial College London, and colleagues analyzed data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe to examine changes from 2006-2007 to 2013 in out-of-pocket expenditures among people aged ≥ 50 years in eleven European countries.

The researchers found increases in both the proportion of older European citizens who incurred out-of-pocket expenditures and in mean out-of-pocket expenditures over the study period. There was also a significant increase over time in the percentage of people who incurred catastrophic health expenditures (>30 percent of the household income) in the Czech Republic, Italy, and Spain. Compared to the highest income quintile, poorer populations were less likely to incur an out-of-pocket expenditure. Poorer populations also reported lower mean out-of-pocket expenditures, suggesting that measures are in place to provide poorer people some financial protection.

"These findings indicate the substantial weakening of financial protection for people ages 50 and older in European [health](#) systems after the Great Recession," the authors write.

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Citation: European countries implementing cost-sharing (2016, August 1) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-08-european-countries-cost-sharing.html>

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