

Healthcare systems

'Healthcare systems in individual countries of the world show great diversity. That is why healthcare is unique in every country. The goal of health systems is to improve health. However, the health of the population is relatively little affected by the healthcare system (15 %). Other determinants of health have a greater influence on the health status of the population, namely lifestyle (50 %) or genetic factors (20 %). The environment has roughly the same influence as healthcare (15 %).

Connection between economy and health

The quality and availability of health care is closely related to the economy. We usually express a given country's healthcare costs as a percentage of GDP. A direct proportion applies here, i.e. as health care costs rise, so does health care. Rich countries invest an average larger share of GDP in healthcare (about 9 %, in the Czech Republic 8 %), thereby increasing the chances of the population for better and more affordable healthcare and health maintenance. However, this direct ratio only applies up to about 10 % of GDP. Further growth in health care costs is no longer matched by improvements in health care (e.g. in the US, where health care costs are about 17 % of GDP, health care is relatively less affordable).

We must also take into account the distribution of wealth among the population. The best health is not in the countries that are absolutely the richest, but in those countries that are rich and where there is relatively less income inequality (Scandinavia, France, Austria, Germany). A popular indicator of income distribution (income inequality) is the GINI index. The value of this indicator ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 means absolute equality, when every person owns the same wealth, and conversely, 1 means absolute inequality, when the richest person owns 100% of the wealth. The Czech Republic has one of the highest levels of equality (GINI 0.26), other countries such as Sweden (0.27), Germany (0.29), OECD average (0.32), Spain and Japan (0.34), Great Britain (0.35), USA (0.40), Turkey (0.41), Chile (0.50).

Current trends in health care

- Public policy – striving for a multi-departmental approach, striving for important political decisions to take health impacts into account;
- preventive care – investment in nationwide campaigns to support healthy eating, non-smoking; limiting advertising of cigarettes, alcohol, etc.;
- growth of costs and efforts to regulate them;
- support and development of primary care, its links to other segments, efforts to solve as many problems as possible at the community level;
- intensification of hospital care – shortening of hospitalization, decrease in acute beds, decrease in the number of hospitals, their restructuring (development of follow-up care, rehabilitation, etc.);
- improving quality – introducing monitoring of health care quality indicators at the national level, accreditation of workplaces, certification of medical equipment, international comparison (OECD).

Links

Related Articles

- Basic models of health systems in the world, categories, comparison
- National Health Service, Characteristics
- Health systems based on universal health insurance
- Market healthcare, liberal model

References

- Teaching materials of the Institute of Public Health and Medical Law of the 1st Faculty of Medicine, UK [1] (<http://usm.lf1.cuni.cz/~ppetri/index.html>);
- lecture "Healthcare systems", PhDr. Helena Hnilicová, Ph.D.