

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910164340003321
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Titolo	Payment and philanthropy in British healthcare, 1918-48 // George Campbell Gosling
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Manchester University Press, 2017 Manchester : , : Manchester University Press, , 2017 ©2017
ISBN	9781526114358 9781526114327
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xi, 221 pages) : map, charts, portraits
Collana	Social histories of medicine
Disciplina	362.10941
Soggetti	Medical care - Great Britain - History - 20th century Medical care, Cost of - Great Britain - History - 20th century Medical fees - Great Britain - History - 20th century Social medicine - Great Britain - History - 20th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Sommario/riassunto	"There were only three decades in British history when it was the norm for patients to pay the hospital; those between the end of the First World War and the establishment of the National Health Service in 1948. At a time when payment is claiming a greater place than ever before within the NHS, this book uses a case study of the wealthy southern city of Bristol as the starting point for the first in-depth investigation of the workings, scale and meaning of payment in British hospitals before the NHS. Payment and philanthropy in British healthcare, 1918-48 questions what it meant to be asked to contribute financially to the hospital by the medical social worker, known then as the Lady Almoner, or to subscribe to a pseudo-insurance hospital contributory scheme. It challenges the false assumption that middle-class paying patients crowded out the sick poor. Hopes and fears, at the time and since, that this would have an empowering or democratising effect or that commercial medicine would bring about the end of medical charity, were all wide of the mark. In fact, payment

and philanthropy found a surprisingly traditional accommodation, which ensured the rise of universal healthcare was mitigated and mediated by long-standing class distinctions while financial contribution became a new marker of good citizenship. Anyone interested in these changing notions of citizenship, charity and money, as well as the hospital as a social institution within the community in early twentieth-century Britain, will find this book a valuable companion" --OAPEN.
