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Economics of the Elderly  
Economics of the Handicapped  
Non-labor Market Discrimination  
Public finance & taxation  
Health systems & services  
Health economics  
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Health care spending  
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Health  
Social security contributions  
Aging  
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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references.
Nota di contenuto	Contents; I. Introduction; II. What are the Available Financing Options for Universal Health Care?; III. The Challenges of Population Aging and the Epidemiological Transition; IV. What Would Be the Optimal Tax: General Taxation Versus Mandatory Payroll/ Social Security Contributions?; V. Providing Universal Coverage: A Single Provider or Numerous Providers?; Boxes; 1. National Health Insurance in Taiwan Province of China (POC); VI. Designing the Benefit Package; 2. The Targeting of Health Services to the Poor: An International Perspective VII. Preconditions for Successfully Implementing Health Care Reforms3. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE); 4. Examples of Planning and Gradually Extending Universal Health Care: Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of China; VIII. Conclusions; References; Tables; 1. Selected Countries with Universal Health Care; 2. Selected Caribbean Countries Planning Universal Health Care Coverage; 3. ECCU: Official Development Assistance for Health, 1973-2005; Figures; 1. ECCU: Long-Term Health Care Costs, 2005-35; 2. ECCU: Diabetes Prevalence by Age Group, 2000-30 3. ECCU: Cost of Treating Diabetes, 2000-30 Appendices; I. Proposed Universal Health Care System in St. Lucia; II. Projecting Long-term Health Care Costs Due to Population Aging; III. Estimating Age-adjusted Health Spending
Sommario/riassunto	Despite the increasing interest in universal health care, little is known about the optimal way to finance, design, and implement it. This paper

attempts to fill this gap by providing some general policy recommendations on this important issue. While most of the paper addresses the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) countries, its policy implications are applicable to any country. The paper finds that the best financing option is country-specific depending on a country's economic, cultural, institutional, demographic and epidemiological characteristics, as well as political economy considerations. However, taxation should be the primary financing source. It also concludes that an appropriate and realistic benefit package would need to be designed to ensure the system's financial viability. Regarding the optimal way to implement universal health care, certain preconditions are needed, including sound public administration, a small informal economy, and a transparent health financing system that builds social consensus.

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