

1. Record Nr.	UNISALENT0991002034169707536
Autore	Trabucchi, Alberto
Titolo	Istituzioni di diritto civile / Alberto Trabucchi
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Padova : CEDAM, 1994
Descrizione fisica	xxiv, 900 p. ; 25 cm.
Collana	Manuali di scienze giuridiche
Classificazione	PR-I/A
Disciplina	346.45
Soggetti	Diritto civile
Lingua di pubblicazione	Italiano
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
2. Record Nr.	UNINA9910969850903321
Autore	Tsounta Evridiki
Titolo	Universal Health Care 101 : : Lessons for the Eastern Caribbean and Beyond / / Evridiki Tsounta
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, D.C. : , : International Monetary Fund, , 2009
ISBN	9786612842825 9781462326518 146232651X 9781452790435 1452790434 9781451872088 1451872089 9781282842823 128284282X
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (37 p.)
Collana	IMF Working Papers
Disciplina	332.1
Soggetti	Medical economics Medical care, Cost of Aging Analysis of Health Care Markets Demography Economics of the Elderly

Economics of the Handicapped
Expenditure
Expenditures, Public
Health care spending
Health care
Health economics
Health Policy
Health systems & services
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Health: Government Policy
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Population aging
Population and demographics
Public finance & taxation
Public Finance
Public Health
Regulation
Social security contributions
Social security
Taxation
Taxes
Welfare & benefit systems
Taiwan Province of China

Lingua di pubblicazione

Inglese

Formato

Materiale a stampa

Livello bibliografico

Monografia

Note generali

Description based upon print version of record.

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;

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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.