

PATIENT PAYMENTS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
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Policy paper Lithuania: Patient payment policy in Lithuania

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Abstract:

There is a limited list of official patient payments in Lithuania. At the same time, patient co-payments for the use of health care services, which are currently collected, are not clearly regulated. There is also some evidence on informal patient payments in the country.

In general, it is observed that the opinion on patient payment policies depends more on the personal experience of the individuals rather than on the individual attribution to particular social group. Overall, there is no homogeneous opinion regarding patient payments in Lithuania and there is a strong polarisation (from strong opposition to enthusiastic support) among stakeholders. However, health care providers positively support the introduction of official patient payments. Stakeholders believe that patient co-payments might not necessarily solve the problem of the quality of health care services. These official payments would not solve deeply entrenched practice of existing informal payments.

Overall policy recommendations: clarification of conceptual and legal framework for patient payment policy is necessary. More transparency in health care (e.g. on defining prices of services and medicines) is needed. Various social groups request for higher patient empowerment within health care system.

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