

# Research Report

Commitee: Human Rights Council

Topic: “The Question of establishing health care as a human right to everyone and avoiding financial exploitation”

## General Information

Ever since 1948 health has been considered a human right written down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This also entails the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Equal treatment and the lack of discrimination should therefore be guaranteed.

Unfortunately, the current situation in a lot of countries does not reflect this ideal. Limited access to healthcare is a detrimental issue that affects poorer countries at a significantly higher level. Although efforts are made, they do not suffice leaving millions of people without proper care. This issue is closely tied to others such as the gap between rich and poor. All over the world, people have to spend fortunes to be able to get the help they need. There is a desperate need to choose a more humane approach that can establish healthcare as a right all over the world.

## Key Countries and Organizations

**World Health Organization (WHO):** The WHO supports countries in integrating human rights into health systems, programs, and policies. It provides guidance on health-related human rights issues while helping strengthen national health systems to ensure services are accessible, acceptable, and high-quality for all. Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the WHO develops tools to identify marginalized groups and promote accountability through social participation. It also assists countries in leveraging international and regional human rights mechanisms to advance health-related rights.

**The Netherlands:** The Dutch healthcare system, established by the 2006 Health Insurance Act, guarantees all residents access to comprehensive basic insurance, managed by private, competitive, not-for-profit insurers. Profits are either reinvested or returned as lower premiums. The system is based on universal access, compulsory insurance, and high-quality care. As a result, the Netherlands were ranked as the second-best healthcare system among high-income nations, in a Commonwealth Fund ranking.

**United States of America:** The U.S. spends heavily on healthcare but delivers below-average outcomes, with 7.6% of its population uninsured—unique among high-income nations. Public division over government-provided coverage and a highly individualistic culture complicate efforts for universal healthcare. Despite accounting for 42% of global health spending, the U.S.

system underperforms, highlighting the need for sustainable solutions as global healthcare costs rise.

## Explanation of Key Terms

**Health care:** The systematic and coordinated delivery of healthcare services designed to address the medical needs of individuals or entire communities.

**Health Care Index:** The Health Care Index is a statistical assessment of the overall quality of a healthcare system. It evaluates factors such as healthcare infrastructure, the competencies of healthcare professionals (including doctors, nurses, and other medical staff), annual per capita costs (in USD), the availability of quality medicines, and the government's preparedness. Medical Bankruptcy: Medical bankruptcies happen when individuals are compelled to file for bankruptcy due to the financial burden of medical expenses.

**Universal Health care:** Universal health care is a system designed to ensure medical services are accessible to all individuals. It is typically provided by the government, regardless of a person's ability to pay, and is primarily funded through taxes. While some services may be offered free of charge, participants might still be required to pay premiums or copayments. However, overall costs tend to be lower compared to non-universal systems, as the majority of funding comes from taxpayer contributions.

## Useful Sources

<https://www.statista.com/topics/9017/global-health-care-systems-comparison/#topicOverview>

[https://www.who.int/health-topics/human-rights#tab=tab\\_2](https://www.who.int/health-topics/human-rights#tab=tab_2)

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<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/11/10/americans-are-drowning-in-medical-debt-what-to-know-if-you-need-help.html>

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<https://www.who.int/news/item/13-12-2017-world-bank-and-who-half-the-world-lacks-access-to-essential-health-services-100-million-still-pushed-into-extreme-poverty-because-of-health-expenses>