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Universal GP care in Ireland: potential cost implications

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Description

Ireland is unusual in a European context in not providing free or heavily subsidised General Practitioner (GP) care for the total population. While medical and GP-visit cardholders are entitled to GP visits free at the point of use, those without a card must pay the full cost associated with accessing GP services. In 2016 an all-party parliamentary committee (Houses of the Oireachtas Committee on the Future of Healthcare) was established with the aim of achieving a single long-term vision for healthcare and the direction of health policy in Ireland. One of the recommendations of the committee's final Sláintecare Report, published in May 2017, was the introduction of universal GP care, which was equated to access to GP care for all without cost. The aim of this analysis is to quantify the potential cost implications of implementing universal GP care in Ireland.

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