

## NEWS FROM:

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## Information sheets explain health care financing in simple terms

Medical scheme members, particularly those who earn the lowest income, carry the greatest burden in funding health services. And lower-income medical scheme members contribute a higher percentage of their income than do higher-income members.

These are just two facts about health care financing explained in "Who Pays for Health Care in South Africa?" – one of four new information sheets compiled by the Health Economics Unit (HEU) at UCT and released last week. The HEU prepared the information sheets to contribute to public debate on health care financing in South Africa. They are written in non-technical language to be accessible to a wide range of people.

The three other information sheets in the series so far are:

- Public sector health care spending in South Africa
- Medical schemes' spending in South Africa
- The public-private health care mix in South Africa

All these information sheets are available to download and media are invited to quote from them or even publish them. To download the information sheets, [click here](#).

"Media are one of the target audiences we had in mind when we decided to create these information sheets," said Professor Di McIntyre, the founder and former director of the HEU, and a member of the ministerial advisory committee on the National Health Insurance (NHI). "Our mission is to give the public simple information tools to help them comment effectively on issues such as the NHI. This initiative especially will bring far-reaching change, so it requires input from as many communities as possible."

While no timeline has been set for upcoming information sheets, other topics to be covered will include:

- Who benefits from health services in South Africa?
- What does universal coverage mean?
- How do universal health systems generate funds?

- How do universal health systems pool funds?
- How do universal health systems purchase health services?
- What is being proposed by the ANC in terms of the National Health Insurance?

To receive notification of future information sheets, email [heu-info@uct.ac.za](mailto:heu-info@uct.ac.za).

Prof McIntyre is one of three academics to be honoured last month as the first recipients of UCT's new social responsiveness award. The award aims to encourage an enabling environment for social responsiveness at the university. Prof McIntyre has served on many policy committees, such as the 1994 Health Care Finance Advisory Committee, where her input contributed to the removal of user fees at public sector primary health care facilities. She also holds the South African research chair in health and wealth. "The inter-relationship between health and wealth (and conversely poverty and ill-health) highlights the importance of investing in the full range of social services, including health services, to promote healthy South Africans, which will in turn contribute to economic development she said.

The other two recipients of the social responsiveness award are Dr Lillian Artz, the director of the Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit, whose research led to major reforms in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act of 2007; and Dr Ailsa Holloway, the director of the Disaster Mitigation for Sustainable Livelihood Programme, which has helped reform disaster management legislation.

**ENDS**

***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

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