Universal Health Coverage

December 2018

Facts and Figures

Why UHC?
UHC improves health

Why now?
UHC is affordable

Achieving UHC:
Focus on quality & sustainability

The new challenge:
Rapid ageing

UHC Improves health
A positive association exists between life expectancy and core UHC components (population coverage, financial coverage and service coverage).

Life expectancy
Across 153 countries between 1995-2008, a 10% increase in health spending per person is associated with a gain of 3.5 months of life expectancy.

UHC is affordable for middle-income countries
Small increases in GDP/capita can make UHC much more attainable: a 1% increase in GDP/capita leads to an almost 6% increase in the probability of UHC. Japan, Korea, Chile, Colombia and Portugal all achieved UHC when GDP/capita was only around or below USD 10 000.

Channelling out-of-pocket (OOP) spending into mandatory pre-payment pools protects households from catastrophic health expenditure.

Private OOP spending accounts for over 60% of total health expenditure in many emerging countries.

Rapid ageing
The speed of ageing is accelerating and it will raise demands for health care.

In 1950, 12 working-age people supported one elderly person. By 2060, 2 working-age people will support one elderly person in OECD.

OECD countries took 65 years to double share of population aged over 65, BRIICS will only take about 20 years.

Focus on quality & sustainability

Critical assessment of which health services to cover

- Health coverage should be truly universal – giving the whole population access to affordable, high quality services

Build in financial sustainability from the start

- Spending on health has typically outpaced economic growth

Be innovative with service delivery

- Invest early in health promotion and disease prevention
- Shift services from hospitals and into primary and community care
- Modernize traditional health care provider roles
- Make best use of health data and information systems

1.8 billion
Number of people over 65 years old by 2060

Facts and Figures

For more information: www.oecd.org/health/universal-health-coverage.htm
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**UN population projections (Revision 2015).