

# Financing rural health services in China in the context of economic reform

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First published: May/June 1995

<https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3380070307>

## Abstract

The changes which have taken place in the Chinese economy since the late 1970s have affected rural health services in a number of ways: local prepayment schemes have collapsed and most people pay in cash for medical care; health facilities have more autonomy from the government; and political mobilization for health has decreased. In the less developed parts of the country poor households cannot get the health services they require and health facilities face financial problems. China's policy makers face an imposing agenda of issues which could lead them towards a fundamental redefinition of the relationships between users and providers of health services, third-party payers, local government health departments and local professional and community organizations.

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