

UNIVERSAL AND AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE: FAR FROM A REALITY

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@eupatientsforum
#Access2030

“ A STRONG PATIENTS’ VOICE TO
DRIVE BETTER HEALTH IN EUROPE ”



Access to Healthcare Survey



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Key Findings linked to Affordability of Healthcare

Too many patients in the EU are confronted to financial hardship as a result of healthcare costs

- Difficulty in affording **specific services** when needed
- **Reducing household spending** on essential needs, such as food or clothing
- **Forgoing or postponing healthcare visits or treatment** because of costs
- Healthcare coverage gaps: **Out-of-pocket payments for unmet needs**

"There are very expensive medicines uncovered by insurance, for melanoma patients... and others." - A family carer from Romania

"I am over the eligibility limit to qualify me for a medical card so I have to pay for all my healthcare and dental costs but my salary is insufficient to cover all the costs. On top of this I have to pay for private medical insurance to avoid very lengthy waiting lists in the public healthcare system and pay for private services unavailable in the public healthcare system" - A patient from Ireland



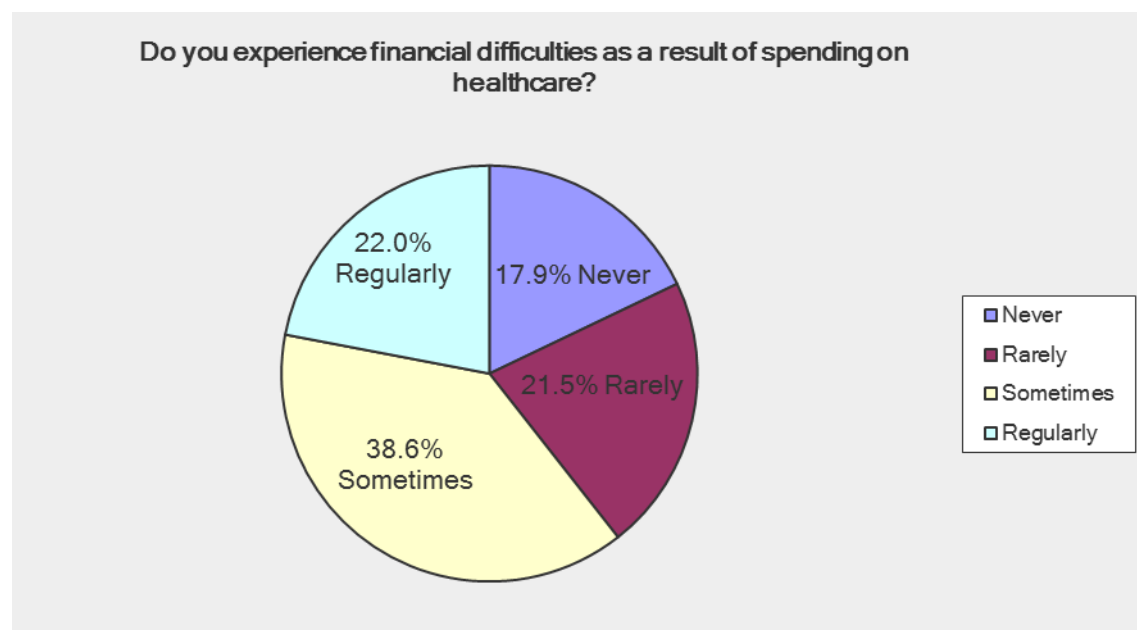
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Financial hardship as a result of healthcare costs



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About **60%** of respondents have **faced financial difficulties at least 'sometimes'** as a result of spending on healthcare.



"In my case, most of the medicines and specialists' visits are free due to the state system in Malta." - A patient from Malta

"If I weren't in such a good financial state, it would have been much worse because most of the healthcare is done privately due to long queues in public healthcare system or insufficient programs (for example physiotherapy)" - A patient from Poland

Figure: Financial difficulties (4 pre-defined answers)

"In Latvia, government pays for many services, and, if you are lucky enough to get them, it's just about 4 euros per visit at doctor/specialist. The problem is huge waiting times, which push people to choose self-paid visits (which is then 20-25-35 euros, and many state paid services are denied for such visits - like lab tests, etc.)" - A patient from Latvia

Financial hardship as a result of healthcare costs



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- **41%** of respondents reported **reducing household spending on essential needs**, such as food or clothing to be able to cover healthcare costs
- **40%** of respondents reported **forgoing or postponing healthcare visits** because of costs in the past 12 months at least one time, among these 14% did so 3 times or more
- **36%** of respondents reported **forgoing or postponing treatments** at least once, and 13% did this at least three times

"Some costs are covered by the public system such as visits to the rheumatologist. While I was waiting to see the rheumatologist there were multiple trips to the GPS and Physio which I had to cover the cost of myself." - A patient from Ireland

"I don't have a private or complementary health insurance because they are too expensive and do not cover chronic diseases which amount the most for the total cost of care in our household." -A patient from Portugal

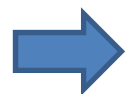
Patients with 1 condition vs. Patients with several conditions



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Patients with multimorbidities and patients with lower income are more vulnerable to the risk of meeting barriers in accessing healthcare

- **29.31%** of patients with several chronic conditions reported **regularly facing financial difficulty** due to spending on healthcare vs **18.91%** of patients with 1 condition
- **50%** of patients with several conditions declared having to **reduce spending on essential needs** to be able to cover healthcare costs vs **36.23%** of patients with one condition



Need to a holistic approach to access to health care and social services

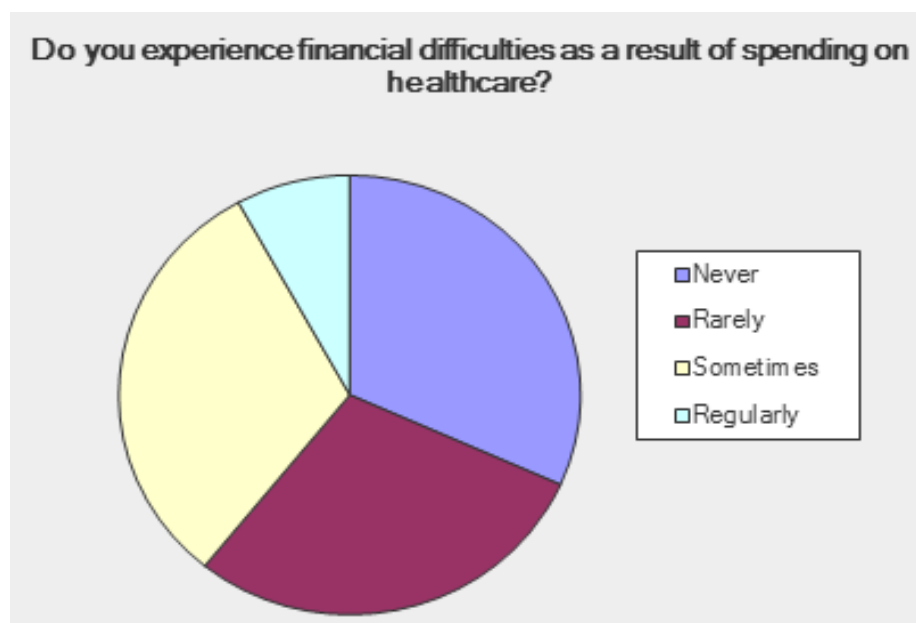
Differences by Income Group



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The survey indicates divergent experiences as to access to healthcare across the European Union

Easy Income Group

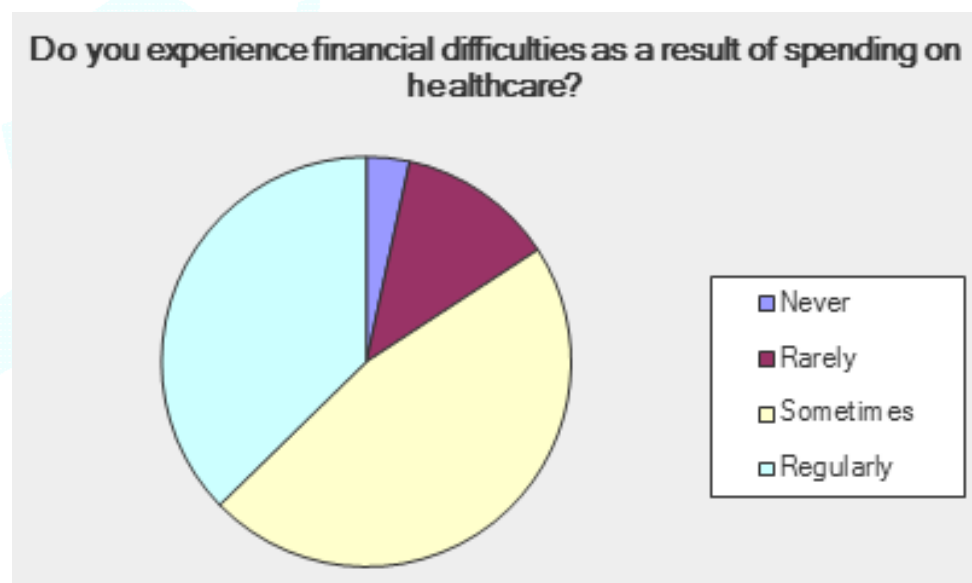


Experience of financial difficulties of respondents who can make ends meet fairly easily, easily or very easily

early diagnosis • best treatment • better quality of life • finding a cure

PHA EUROPE *for the patients*
European pulmonary hypertension association

Difficulty Income Group



Experience of financial difficulties of respondents who can make ends meet with some difficulty, with difficulty or with great difficulty

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Differences by Income Group



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The survey indicates divergent experiences as to access to healthcare across the European Union

- **64%** of patients from the “difficulty” income group declared having to **reduce spending on essential needs** due to spending on healthcare vs **19.1%** of patients from the “easy” group
- The “difficulty” income group also **postponed or did without receiving treatment or making healthcare visits** due to costs **significantly more** than the “easy” group

Conclusion - Health Inequalities



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The survey indicates divergent experiences as to access to healthcare across the European Union

- Differences by Income group
- Differences of patients with one chronic condition vs multiple chronic conditions
- Comparison of patients from Member States who joined the EU before and after 2004

Throughout the survey, results for various questions **do not illustrate important similarities in responses**, which seems to indicate that **patients face very different experiences when accessing healthcare in the European Union.**

Responses to open ended questions tend to confirm this finding and also indicate that **barriers to healthcare access are diverse and varied across and within EU Member States.**

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