

Financing For Universal Health Coverage: Literature Review

Slamet Budiarto¹, Anhari Achadi², Mahlil Ruby³, Fery Rahman¹



¹Doctoral Student of Public Health at Faculty of Public Health, Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia

²Professor, Department of Health Policy Administration, Faculty of Public Health Universitas Indonesia

³Director of Health Social Security Agency, Indonesia

Abstract— As an important factor in achieving a safe life, health has always been the main topic in various conditions. However, one of the obstacles that can threaten these health goals is financial. This literature review discusses how to finance for universal health coverage. This study uses various references, such as journals, reports, news, and scientific articles. This paper describes a systematic analysis starting from the theoretical framework, cost, urgency, and importance of financing for universal health coverage, and discussion. The results show that there is a need for effective financial allocations and regulations to achieve the goal of financing for universal health coverage. In order to obtain references in establishing these financial regulations, Chile and China can be examples of consistently achieving health coverage. Success in achieving universal health coverage will achieve the goal of health security for the entire global community.

Keywords— Universal Health Coverage, Financing, Promoting and Protecting Health

1. Introduction

Health is an important aspect of survival. Humans always strive to be able to maintain and ensure health, including health insurance. Based on the report by WHO, promoting and protecting health is a basic thing in human welfare. In addition, health also plays an important role in the economic and social improvement of a country ⁽¹⁾. Health becomes the basis for achieving a quality of life aimed at global security. In this global context, health is focused on improving and equitable health for every individual in the world ⁽²⁾. In order to achieve universal health coverage, proper financing planning is required.

Financing is one of the fundamental bases needed so that universal health coverage can be fulfilled. Problems in the financing sector are often a problem in fulfilling human health, both in general or in special conditions such as the global pandemic phenomenon that occurred at the end of 2019, namely Covid-19. Unpreparedness of the financing strategy can cause health fulfillment to be threatened and cause casualties, which can be handled more quickly and accurately.

On the other hand, financing for universal health coverage itself is still not generally understood. Financial knowledge is still based on the need to meet daily needs without preparing for future plans. This phenomenon is the reason behind the lack of preparation of the global community in facing various possible unpredictable health threats. Health insurance for every individual in the world becomes difficult to apply if the awareness of the importance of health is still not understood. The implementation of the economic aspect is still not properly implemented by the community. The health care system is a complex concept and network and requires a variety of in-depth studies to achieve effective health goals ⁽³⁾.

In order to achieve an understanding and knowledge of financing for universal health coverage, a systematic review of literature is needed to provide a general and specific overview that is

beneficial to humans. This method can help provide an overview of the implementation of economic aspects that are useful in achieving financing for universal health coverage. This research collects various data and case studies that focus on the application of financing for universal health coverage in order to achieve a deeper understanding.

2. Method

This literature review uses various sites and sources to obtain relevant data in explaining universal health coverage, such as journals, reports, news, and scientific articles. After obtaining 105 references, it was found that there are as many as 12 references that can be used to meet the needs of this literature review.

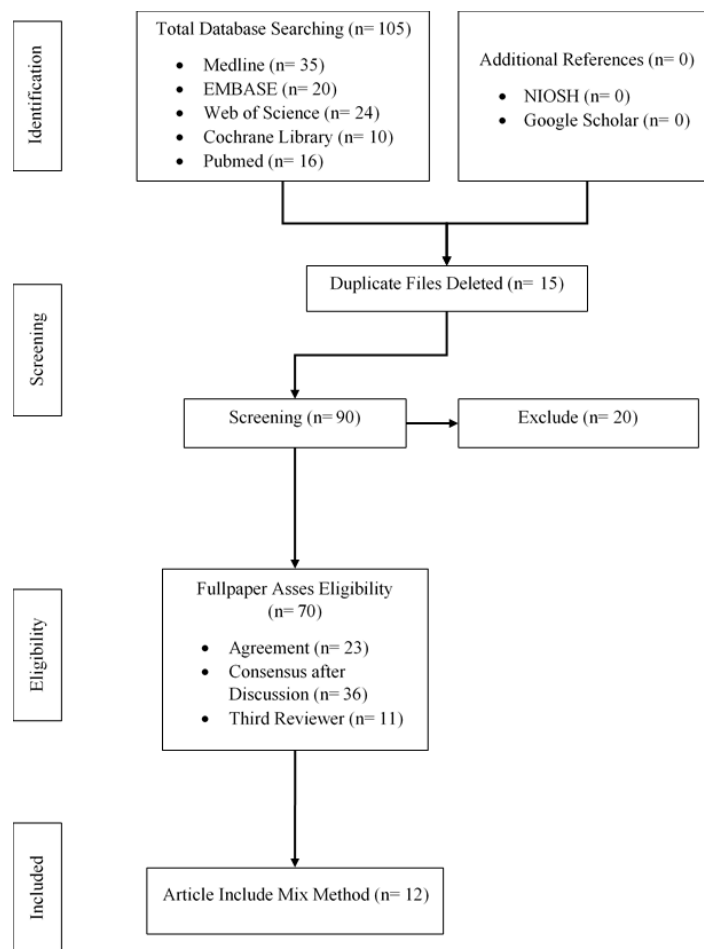


Figure 1 Literature Review Flow Chart

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for any study is not described in any article included in this Systematic literature review. This literature review has three main keywords, such as “universal health coverage”, “financing”, “promoting and protecting health”. This study will be focused on how financial implementation in order to achieve universal health coverage.

4. Result

This literature review found that there are three aspects that related to universal health coverage, such as the cost, urgency, and importance. This study mostly found the data from the World Health Organization as the international organization which handles and takes care of the global health, including the universal health coverage.

Cost of Universal Health Coverage in General

The United States is the only country that has a high income but does not provide facilities in the form of good health care for its citizens. About 80 million Americans do not have adequate health insurance, it is only natural that during a pandemic, America is not prepared to deal with it. This is indicated by the high number of COVID-19 cases that have occurred there.

In a 2020 study, it was found that quality healthcare for the entire nation would save at least 68,000 lives and 1.73 million years of life each year. All presidential officials agree on the importance of easy access to health for all citizens. The Medicare for All Act proposed by Senator Sanders establishes single-payer plans to offer health care without health insurance premiums, deductibles, or outright expenses. Although this plan is supported by most countries, it has not yet gained enough support in Congress to enact it ⁽⁴⁾.

Using previously developed health care cost model in the US, 4 and updating the plan to US \$ 2020, there was calculation that achieving universal coverage without conversion to a single payer system would increase the national health care budget by US \$ 149 billion annually, relative to status quo. This would increase the overall health care budget to more than \$3.6 trillion annually, compared to the \$3.0 trillion estimate for Medicare for All ⁽⁴⁾.

Urgency of Universal Health Coverage

The beginning of Universal Health Coverage was devoted to financing health financing in Low and Middle Income Countries, with a particular focus on financing reforms to support the achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Health Economists working in 20 low- and middle-income countries will facilitate important cross-country comparisons which will ultimately increase the quality and recognition of our research and training in the health sector.

The aim of the Universal Health Coverage is to expand policy information on how Low and Middle Income Countries can develop a fair health financing system that can bring them closer to universal health coverage.

With this Universal Health Coverage, several outputs will be achieved, namely ⁽⁵⁾:

- Fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange between health economists who specialize in health financing in LMICs;
- Strengthening analytical capacity for health financing research – particularly among early- and mid-career researchers and women at LMIC; and
- Share and criticize new methods for conducting equity-focused evaluations of health financing systems and reforms;
- Contribute to the international policy debate on financing for universal health coverage; and
- Share educational resources and materials among members and beyond.

The Importance of Financing for Universal Health Coverage

Currently, millions of people cannot access health services because of costs. In fact, many people get poor service at the hospital. Health financing policies are carefully designed and implemented to help address this problem. For example, adequate and timely disbursement of funds to service providers can help ensure adequate staff and medicines to treat patients.

In this regard, the importance of financial arrangements for Universal Health Coverage are ⁽⁶⁾:

- Revenue increases (sources of funds, including government budgets, mandatory or

- voluntary prepaid insurance schemes, and external assistance)
- Fundraising (accumulation of prepaid funds on behalf of some or all)
- Purchase of services and facilities (payment or allocation of resources to health care providers)

With the existence of financial arrangements for Universal Health Coverage, it is hoped that the world community will have the right to recover and be healthy. Health is everyone's right.

4. Discussion

The importance of health as the right of every human being encourages various efforts to meet the needs and protection of health. In its implementation, the health system requires two conditions in order to meet the needs and improve health, namely (1) ease of access for a person to appropriate and effective health services and (2) protection against financial hardship for someone due to the use of services ⁽⁷⁾. In addition to the importance of access to health services, finance is also one of the factors that can prevent a person from getting health assurance. Therefore, in-depth analysis is needed in order to achieve effective financing for universal health coverage.

This health financial problem can certainly threaten various countries, both developed and developing countries. For developing countries, of course this is a separate concern. In order to deal with difficulties due to financial problems, there is a concept that can be used to respond to the needs of developing countries to improve access and health services, namely Demand Side Financing (DSF). This concept is considered to be able to help increase the utilization of health services by placing purchasing power and the choice of providers directly in the recipient's hands. Thus, there is a direct relationship between the subsidy, the beneficiary, and the purpose of the subsidy. The DSF concept can be carried out by consumers (vouchers, cash transfers, and tax deductions) or by providers (capitation payments and referral vouchers), and can be given before or after the use of health services ⁽⁸⁾.

In order to achieve the goal of financing for universal health coverage, there are two countries that can be used as examples by implementing effective financial regulations, namely Chile and China. Chile has started a new set of reforms, one of which focuses on increasing equity in the financing system ⁽⁹⁾. The Chilean government implemented a strategy with a decentralized system with control of financing and programs originating from the head office. With this arrangement, a complex bureaucratic system will emerge and require administrative support. However, because all civilian authorities are under the control of the military and the Minister of Health appointed by the army, the existence of trade unions and other social organization activities is limited ⁽¹⁰⁾. In addition, the government also stipulates a rule by law that all workers must pay 7% of their monthly wages to public (FONASA) or private (ISAPRES) health insurance. Apart from the community, FONASA also received contributions from the Ministry of Finance to support the poor and run various public health programs ⁽¹¹⁾.

Apart from Chile, China has also implemented effective financial regulations to achieve health coverage by setting a blueprint for health system reform and development in April 2009. In order to achieve universal health coverage, China has made various developments including collaborating with international organizations. On a national scale, the government has created a health insurance scheme with NCMS and MFA since 2003. Both of these strategies aim to protect people from difficulties in obtaining health from the financial sector. In addition, the government has also increased education for health workers, especially in rural areas. As for international programs, China participates in two programs related to universal coverage policy, such as the Health Policy Support Project (HPSP) and the Urban Health and Poverty Project (UHPP) ⁽¹²⁾.

5. Conclusion

This literature review shows that universal health coverage often experiences problems due to financial problems. The costs required to provide health services for the community are large and are used as costs that cannot be separated from one's needs. Even though there is health insurance, not all levels of society are able to meet this financing, especially for low and middle income countries. This phenomenon encourages the birth of Universal Health Coverage to achieve the goal of health security for the entire global community. One of the concepts that can be used to increase health coverage for developing countries is the Demand Side Financing (DSF). In addition, there are two countries that can become

examples of improving health coverage, namely Chile and China. The two countries have established strict and effective financial policies, as well as forging international cooperation to achieve universal health coverage.

6. Conflict of Interest

The author states that there is no conflict of interest in this study.

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