

Rural poor allowed to delay hospital fee payment

China's National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC) issued a new guideline on March 2 allowing patients in poor rural areas to receive medical treatment without paying the treatment fees upfront. Provincial health and family planning administrative departments are required to finish the official plan by the end of March, and the program will be implemented before the end of April.

According to the program's description, only poor, rural patients who have basic medical insurance can take advantage of the favorable policy. Patients who do utilize the policy will receive their medical treatment in designated medical institutions around the county.

Hospitalized patients must meet strict requirements. They have to provide documents including a health insurance card, valid ID card and proof of their economic status before being admitted to any hospital. Patients can receive treatment after signing a "pay after treatment" agreement.

The program also offers flexible payment methods. When a patient is discharged from the hospital, the designated medical institution immediately subtracts the portion of the treatment fee covered by insurance from the patient's bill. The patient is only expected to pay for individual expenses, and the medical institution then returns the patient's documents in a timely manner. For those who cannot pay their treatment fees all at once, there is an option to pay in installments.

Another facet of the program requires the establishment of a county-level payment system for impoverished patients, which is intended to gradually promote the development of provincial and cross-provincial settlement systems.

The program will punish malicious debtors through a credit system. A blacklist of offenders will be maintained, and designated medical institutions have the right to stop favorable policy coverage for people on the list. They can also report the offenders to medical insurance departments.

Nutrition program benefits over 36 mln students

More than 36 million students from 134,000 primary and junior high schools in

impoverished rural regions have benefited from China's nutrition improvement program since its implementation in 2011, the Ministry of Education (MOE) said recently.

The program was initially launched by the MOE, the Ministry of Finance, and 13 other departments on a pilot basis in a bid to address malnutrition of rural students receiving compulsory education.

It has so far reached 1,590 counties in 29 provinces, according to the progress report released by the MOE. Thanks to five years of efforts, the students have been freed from hunger malnutrition.

The Chinese Center For Disease Control And Prevention, after tracking the students in piloted areas, found that children who benefited from the program are taller and heavier than the rural average.

Data shows that from 2012 to 2015, male students on average increased in height and weight by 1.2 cm and 0.7 kg respectively while female students increased by 1.4 cm and 0.8 kg.

In the given period, anaemia rates dropped to 7.8 percent from 17 percent. Better nutrition has also aided their efficiency and enthusiasm for their studies.

Since the plan was launched in 2011, nearly 160 billion yuan in subsidies were allocated to support the national plan, reward piloted areas, improve students' meals and subsidize impoverished children.

[Xi calls on Shanghai to lead way](#)

President Xi Jinping said China will continue to open up in all respects, particularly in further liberalizing and facilitating trade and investment, while calling on Sunday for Shanghai to take a leading role in deepening reform and boosting innovation. Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks during a panel discussion with Shanghai lawmakers at the National People's Congress annual plenary session.

"The door of China's opening-up will not close," Xi said, mentioning that creating the pilot free trade zone in Shanghai was a strategic move by the CPC Central Committee.

The zone, inaugurated in 2013, has seen about 40,000 new enterprises emerge.

Shanghai also should make a difference in deepening free trade zone reforms, advancing the construction of scientific innovation centers and social governance innovation, and strengthening CPC discipline, Xi said.

The president said the city should be bold in its pilot projects, expanding its role as a testing ground for further reform and opening-up. He also urged the city to push forward with free trade and facilitation of investment. Its free trade zone should become a bridgehead for the country's Belt and Road Initiative and help market entities go global, he said. That way, Shanghai can achieve innovative results that can be adopted by other regions.

China faced a complex global situation and downward pressure on its domestic economy in the past year, but the nation kept "seeking progress while maintaining stability", pushed forward on supply-side structural reform, and achieved its goals of economic and social development, Xi said.

The president recognized the achievements of Shanghai authorities in the past year in areas such as boosting innovation, optimizing economic structures and deepening reform.

The key to the supply-side structural reform is innovation, Xi said. He urged breakthroughs in key technology areas. He also advocated educational reform to create the talent needed for the country's development.

Xi said Shanghai should explore new ways of social governance that fit a super municipality. He suggested use of information technology, including the internet and big data, to enhance intelligent city management to make the city more orderly, safer and cleaner.

The president also vowed to strengthen the discipline of the Communist Party of China. Party leaders must shoulder their responsibility in clean-governance supervision, he said.

More than 1000 Welsh businesses benefit from free ICT advice service

The Superfast Business Wales service is backed by the Welsh Government and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Part of the Business Wales service, it provides Welsh SMEs with comprehensive ICT advice and guidance about how they can use online technologies such as cloud computing, online apps and software, social media, mobile working, and much more, to grow and develop their businesses further.

The service is independent and free and includes access to an online needs review, masterclasses and workshops, 1:1 ICT support, and a full website diagnostic. Businesses can also download the new Software Directory, as well as a number of online tools, guides and top tips available on the website: business.wales.gov.uk/superfastbusinesswales.

To date, 1081 businesses have received a telephone consultation with an

online business adviser, 860 businesses have attended workshops and masterclasses, and 545 have received 1:1 advice from a digital business adviser.

Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James said:

“I’m pleased over a thousand businesses have taken advantage of the Superfast Business Wales service since it was launched a year ago and I would encourage more to do so. The service offers free independent advice and guidance on how to make the best use of the digital technology which is becoming ever more important in the business world.

“Superfast broadband can make a real difference to the way business communicates with its customers and helps to deliver a better quality and more efficient service. The Welsh Government is committed to investing in superfast broadband infrastructure which is vital in supporting growth and prosperity in Wales.”

Monmouthshire-based consultancy business Chris Jones Regeneration has benefited from the free service. Chris Jones said:

“The workshop enabled us to check where we were in terms of the wide platform of digital technologies, helped validate activities we were doing well, and identify gaps that required plugging.

“The 1-1 session with a digital business adviser which followed was holistic and client-focused from the start. My adviser identified ways of making efficiencies and working smarter in relation to customer reach and relationship handling. She also looked at project management and visualization tools and provided advice on low cost digital solutions. A diagnostic report was prepared with some clear realistic actions for the business to implement over a period of time.

“Overall the service was personal, responsive and above all action based.”

New specialist subjects for 2017 include: How to grow your food and drink business with digital technology, Cyber security, Data Protection and CRM systems, and How to grow your construction business with digital technology.

To find out more and to register onto the Superfast Business Wales service call 0300 060 3000, email superfast@businesswales.org.uk or visit [Superfast Business Wales](#).

Jahr der Legenden 2017 – at the world's largest travel show

The show is attended by 120,000 trade and media visitors and around 26,000 consumers. Visit Wales will host meetings with the German, Swiss and Austrian travel trade, press and media over the first 3 days, and promote Wales to consumers over the final 2 days of the show. The team will be joined on the stand by industry partners Blaenavon World Heritage Site, Cambria DMC, Cadw, and Destination Conwy

This year, Wales will host one of the world's greatest annual sporting events, the UEFA Champions League Final. The countdown is on to Wales hosting this prestigious sporting event in June, and Visit Wales will be showcasing the men's and women's UEFA Champions League Final trophies to ITB Berlin from 8- 12 March.

Visitors to the stand will have the opportunity to have a photo taken with the trophies and Visit Wales will be running a prize draw to win a legendary week in Wales for two people during June with tickets to the Women's and Men's UEFA Champions League Final. The competition will also be promoted in the German and UK markets throughout March and April as part of the UEFA Champions League marketing activity.

Attendance at ITB is one element of a marketing drive in Germany. January to March is a key booking period for German visitors to Wales, and the campaign aims to inspire potential visitors to come to Wales in 2017. The new TV advert featuring Welsh Hollywood star Luke Evans, which has been well received since its launch, will also be shown to visitors at ITB.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates, said:

“During these times of great change we are committed to promoting Wales to the world like never before – taking our nation's story out to new audiences with creativity and confidence. Germany is one of Wales' three key overseas markets. In 2015, Wales attracted 96,500 visitors from Germany who spent £30 million in the Welsh economy. We're looking forward to a legendary sporting summer – and hosting the UEFA Champions League Final – the single biggest sporting event in the world this year will be the highlight. ITB gives us an excellent platform to raise awareness of the event coming to Wales this year and we have international campaigns planned in the build up, during and post UEFA Champions League Final which will aim to maximise the impact of hosting the event for Wales, and drive longer term visitor benefits from the UK, German, French and Spanish Markets.”

A digital marketing campaign focusing on the theme of Legends runs until the

end of March, attracting visitors to the Visit Wales website and [Facebook page](#). Print campaigns will include a supplement partnership with VisitBritain and women's lifestyle magazine 'Brigitte' and a direct marketing campaign to Visit Wales' database. Visit Wales will also work with influential partners such as Flybe, P&O Ferries, Dertour, Tui Wolters Reisen, DFDS Seaways and KLM Germany.