

Mindset for IELTS Level 3 Skills Modules

Unit 2: Writing Exercise 10

WRITING TASK 2

You should spend 40 minutes on this task

In many societies in the world, the population is ageing rapidly and this is leading to an unsustainable increase in the cost of public healthcare.

A nation's population should pay for their healthcare provision in the future.

To what extent do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words

This model answer has been prepared by an examiner as a very good answer. However, please note that this is just one answer out of many possible approaches.

Advances in medical science are resulting in prolonged lifespans but there is a knock-on effect for public health services with many hospitals struggling to cope with an aging populace. Many countries enjoy the benefits of free or subsidised national public health services. However, there are some within senior health management who claim that such provision will become unsustainable, and I firmly agree that changes need to be made in order to reflect this changing reality.

Despite the notion that healthcare should be 'free', such care is predominantly funded by the taxpayer. To give a specific example, a recent report in my country established that almost 40% of the nation's tax

spending is distributed to healthcare and some 80% of that figure is reserved for treating the elderly. This is a disproportionate amount of money which has greatly increased the burden on the state and existing funding is no longer sufficient to meet these needs. This in turn impacts on the standard of care that can be provided as shown by numerous negative media reports about the conditions for both staff and patients. If we want quality healthcare then, clearly this financial burden needs to be alleviated.

One way to do so would be to increase the contributions made by citizens through increased taxation. Alternatively governments could encourage those who can afford it to take up private healthcare arrangements. By switching to a private model, the well-off can afford a higher quality of care, while at the same time relieving pressure on public services for those who do not have the means to go private.

One thing is for certain, an ageing population has increased the pressure on existing health provision. If we are going to maintain the standards of healthcare that we are used to, more funding needs to be found either through taxation and alternative forms of provision should be considered. Otherwise, standards will fall and people's lives will be put at risk.

(323 words)