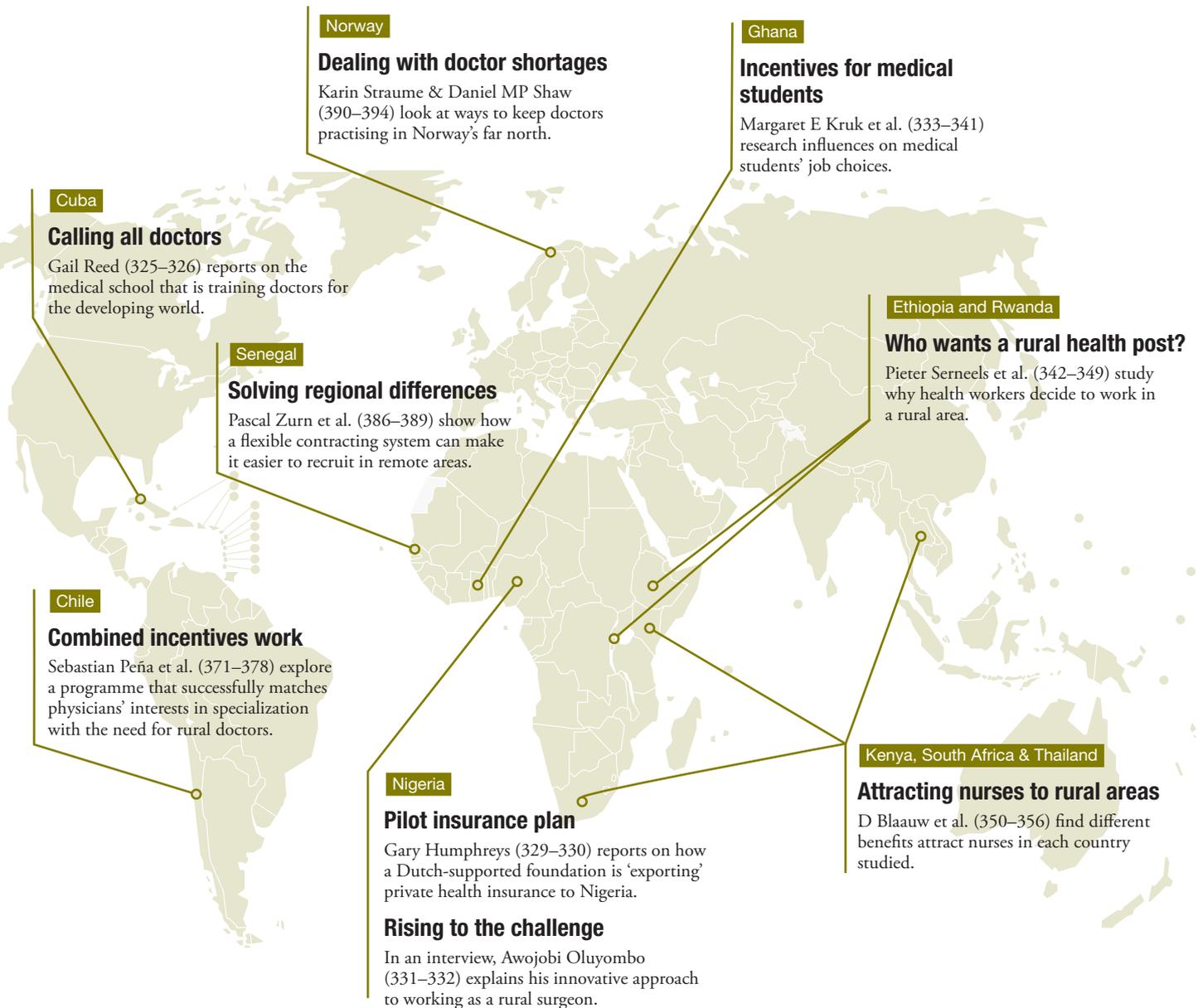


This issue addresses the special theme of **retaining health workers in remote and rural areas**. Manuel M Dayrit et al. (322) discuss this global challenge, particularly in countries with critical shortages of health workers. Lincoln C Chen (323) describes the uneven distribution of health workers and the challenges that countries face.



Where have all the nurses gone?

Kathryn Senior (327–328) reports on the global shortage of nurses and how some countries are working to change this.

Getting staff to stay in rural areas

Carmen Dolea et al. (379–385) analyse the effectiveness of policies to attract and keep health workers. Luis Huicho et al. (357–363) propose a framework to measure the effect these policies.

Decentralized health financing

Mahjabeen Haji et al. (397–399) look at how the design of health financing systems can help keep health workers in their posts.

The role of medical schools

James Rourke (395–396) discusses ways medical schools can encourage rural practice.

Does compulsory service work?

Seble Frehywot et al. (364–370) describe ways that governments are using compulsory service to place health workers in remote and rural areas.

Where do we stand on the Millennium Development Goals?

Carla AbouZahr & Ties Boerma (324) suggest reasons for varied progress towards the health-related targets.