

HEALTHCARE ACCESS SURVEY REPORT

Executive Summary

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137 N. COTTONWOOD ST.
WOODLAND, CA 95695
(530)666-8645

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A total of 579 surveys were collected between August 15 and Oct 7, 2014. A high percentage of respondents (82%) considered themselves to be in good-to-excellent health. However, almost half (45%) of respondents suffered from a chronic health condition. Two-thirds of these respondents reported that their chronic conditions were under control, but a sizeable percentage (20%) indicated their chronic conditions were poorly managed.
- The percentage and number of persons without health insurance was larger than previously estimated in the US Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS). Whereas the 2013 one-year ACS estimate was that 15% of the population (about 30,000 persons) lacked health insurance, the current healthcare access survey suggested that a higher percentage of the population (20%) is without health insurance. Extrapolated to the entire county population, it would represent 41,000 persons or 11,000 more than the ACS estimate.
- One hundred and fifteen respondents (20%) had no health insurance. Among age groups with at least 10 respondents, persons aged 25 to 44 were more likely to lack health insurance (23%). A high proportion of Hispanic respondents (27%) also lacked health insurance. The city with the highest proportion of respondents without health insurance was Winters (26%), but about 20% of respondents in West Sacramento, Woodland and other communities excluding Davis also lacked health insurance.
- Respondents were more likely to lack health insurance if they were unemployed (26%) or part-time workers (22%) than if they worked full-time (15%). The occupations most likely to lack health insurance were workers in construction (31%), restaurant or fast food (30%), other occupations (27%) and agriculture (24%).
- Lack of health insurance was also the top reason for avoiding healthcare services or screening (26%). Other major reasons for avoiding healthcare services and screening were being too busy (21%), having to wait too long to see a doctor (21%), and having high out-of-pocket copays (19%).
- Among respondents without health insurance, despite the fact that almost half (48%) were at or below the federal poverty level (FPL), only 20% were planning to apply for health insurance through Covered California. Most did not know if they were eligible for Medi-Cal or Medicare. Only 18% of the uninsured with household incomes below the FPL planned to purchase health insurance through Covered California.
- Two-thirds (66%) of respondents had a usual source of medical care, meaning that a sizeable proportion (one-third) did not. The percentage of respondents who lacked a usual source of medical care was significantly higher if they also lacked health insurance (74%).
- A surprising 25% of respondents had used healthcare services at the Emergency Room (ER) in the past 12 months. While many respondents cited legitimate reasons for using the ER (a life-threatening illness or injury, or needing healthcare services outside regular business hours and on weekends), one-third of all reasons for ER visits fell into the following categories: not being able to obtain an urgent-care appointment in a timely manner, finding it more convenient to use the ER than waiting for an appointment, not having a regular doctor, and needing a prescription refilled.
- Wait times to obtain medical appointments were generally acceptable, and 58% of respondents were able to obtain an appointment within seven days of requesting one. However, 25% of respondents reported waiting two weeks or longer to obtain an appointment.
- Travel time to medical appointments was usually less than 30 minutes (for 81% of respondents), despite the rural nature of the Yolo County. For 7% of respondents, travel time to their medical provider exceeded 45 minutes. The median distance travelled to medical providers was 5 miles. In fact 56% of respondents fell into this category. However, 23% of respondents had to travel 15 miles or further to their medical provider.

- Many respondents (48%) lacked dental insurance, which appears to be a barrier to obtaining dental services. Only 28% of respondents without dental insurance saw a dentist in the past 12 months compared to 75% of respondents with dental insurance.
- Almost one in four respondents (24%) felt they needed to see a mental health provider, but only two-thirds of those who desired treatment actually received services. The top three barriers to obtaining mental health services were concern about the cost of treatment (47%), not knowing how to locate providers (38%), and fear of others finding out (21%).