



Health Care in the US: Sources

Facts: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 50 million people did not have health insurance in 2010. Some of the groups that experienced the greatest loss of coverage were working adults between ages 35-64; people with annual incomes below \$49,999, Workers with no disability more likely to be uninsured (22.3% of workers without disabilities versus 17.3% of workers with a disability are uninsured). Hispanics continue to experience a disproportionate effect, as many are not eligible to obtain insurance (30.7% of Latinos go uncovered). Also, 20.8% of the Black population remains uncovered, 18.1% of Asians, and 11.7% of non-Hispanic whites.

Source: US Census, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010*, 23-27; <http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/p60-239.pdf>

Fact: There are 7.3 million children (under the age of 18) who are uninsured.

Source: World Health Organization: The World Health Report 2000 Press Release; http://www.who.int/whr/2000/media_centre/press_release/en/

Fact: People with private health insurance may actually be **Underinsured**.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation: Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured; <http://www.kff.org/uninsured/loader.cfm?url=/commonspot/security/getfile.cfm&PageID=14136>

Facts: Dr. Steffie Woolhandler, a professor at the City University of New York School of Public Health and visiting professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, noted that “not having health insurance, or having poor quality insurance ... is a source of mounting stress, personal bankruptcy and poor medical outcomes” and that the Census Bureau has continued to be silent on this problem.

Referring to the Affordable Care Act, Dr. Steffie Woolhandler noted that “the new law’s subsidies for health insurance will not be sufficient to provide quality and affordable coverage to the vast majority of Americans. Tens of millions will remain uninsured, underinsured and without access to care. We need more fundamental reform. We need a single-payer national health insurance program”

Source: "Number of Uninsured Climbs to Highest Figure since Passage of Medicare, Medicaid." *Physicians for a National Health Program*. <http://www.pnhp.org/news/2011/september/number-of-uninsured-climbs-to-highest-figure-since-passage-of-medicare-medicaid>.

Fact: A 1997 study by Dr. Steffie Woolhandler and Dr. David Himmelstein found that nearly 100,000 people died each year from a lack of access to health care.

Source: Navarro, Vicente. "The Inhuman State of U.S. Health Care." *Monthly Review*. <http://monthlyreview.org/2003/09/01/the-inhuman-state-of-u-s-health-care>.

Fact: America is currently the only industrial nation that links health care to jobs and yet only 59% of Americans are covered by their jobs.

Source: From the Kaiser Family Foundation – *Employer Health Benefits 2009 Annual Survey* (The Kaiser Family Foundation & Health Research & Educational Trust; 2009) <http://ehbs.kff.org/pdf/2009/7936.pdf>

Fact: Today, 85% of uninsured people are either not offered or are ineligible for insurance through their employer.

Source: Friedberg, Leora, Wei Sun, and Anthony Webb. "How Much Do Older Workers Value Employee Health Insurance?." *Trustees of Boston College, Center for Retirement Research*. (2008).

Fact: Medicare and Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California) are health insurance programs funded by a federal to state match program that assist in covering medical and prescription expenses for elderly, disabled, and low-income Americans. In 2010, Medicare allowed almost 48 million people to have access to healthcare and life-saving treatments, and Medicaid did the same for about 60 million people. This type of care is mediated through insurance and privatized, profit-based pharmaceutical and health technology producing companies. In other words, the money allocated for people in vulnerable populations does not go to them directly, but rather, gets mediated through these companies first. As a result, not all the money allocated to care for someone's health is actually used for that purpose. Furthermore, the cost of administering these programs has increased over the years partially because of the rapid escalation in insurance and health care costs.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation: *Reflections on This Year's Four Percent Premium Increase*; http://www.kff.org/pullingittogether/altman_premium_increase.cfm

Fact: This rise in costs has forced the states, and consequently the federal government, to cut funds to the public health care system. As a result, people have been forced to ration their visits to the doctor and forgo getting necessary prescriptions

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation: *Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured*; <http://www.kff.org/uninsured/loader.cfm?url=/commonspot/security/getfile.cfm&PageID=14136>

Fact: There will still be about 23 million people who remain uninsured by 2019.

Source: Mertens, Maggie. "Health Care For All Leaves 23 Million Uninsured." *NPR*. NPR.

http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2010/03/health_care_for_all_minus_23_m.html

Fact: California has over 1500 health coverage plans to choose from and 60% of the care delivered is sub-standard.

Source: "Health Care is an Economic Human Right" Fact Sheet. *The Women's Economic Agenda Project*.

Fact: A single-payer health care system would streamline bureaucracy, saving \$400 billion a year on administrative overhead; this is enough to pay for all the uninsured and to upgrade every one else coverage.

Source: "Single-Payer National Health Insurance." *Physicians for a National Health Program*. <http://www.pnhp.org/facts/single-payer-resources>.

Fact: The elimination of a profit-based system could save California \$343.6 billion dollars in the next decade.

Source: "Single Payer System Cost?" *Physicians for a National Health Program*. <http://www.pnhp.org/facts/single-payer-system-cost>.