

ACCESS TO CARE

On average, Washtenaw County residents enjoy access to excellent, high quality medical care with major health care systems and ample primary care providers in place. Most residents have good health coverage through the private insurance system. Many in need, however, are not receiving optimal care. The possible expansion of Medicaid in 2014 will enable more residents who cannot access care today to do so in the near future.

What is the Affordable Care Act?

In March 2010, President Obama signed comprehensive health reform, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), into law. The law makes preventive care—including family planning and related services—more accessible and affordable for many in the United States. While some provisions of the law have already taken effect, many more provisions will be implemented in the coming years. Enrollment into the “Health Care Exchanges” begins October 1, 2013 for coverage beginning in 2014. In Michigan, Medicaid will be expanded to cover a greater number of residents starting in 2014.

HIP Year 2020 Health Objectives related to Access to Care:

Healthy Adults

- Increase rates of low-income residents with health insurance from 84% to 100%.
- Increase rates of adults with dental insurance from 76% to 87%.

Health Insurance Coverage

In Washtenaw County, 92% of residents aged 0-64 years have health coverage; 8% are uninsured. Most (69%) have employer-sponsored coverage, 11% are covered by Medicaid, 10% direct purchase private insurance, and 2% are covered in some other way.¹

An estimated 25,249 individuals aged 0-64 years were believed to be uninsured on average per year between 2009-2011. Of those, approximately 2,581 were currently eligible for Medicaid but not enrolled, and 8,297 individuals are expected to be newly eligible for Medicaid in 2014; of the remaining 14,371, approximately 10,801 will be eligible to purchase coverage through the exchange with subsidies. The remaining 3,570 will remain uninsured.²

Those in Washtenaw County at highest risk for being uninsured include³:

- Hispanic or Latino: 10%
- Black or African American: 12%
- Less than high school graduate: 12%
- Unemployed: 18%

Between 2000 and 2010, the percent of adult county residents who report that they could not afford to see a doctor in the past year increased from 5% to 11%.⁴

More than 11% of Washtenaw County residents are foreign-born, nearly twice the Michigan average.⁵ Many Washtenaw County immigrants are low-income adults under 65 years of age that do not qualify for government health coverage because they have not been permanent legal residents for at least five years. Many immigrant families have children eligible for Medicaid.

In 2010, approximately 96% of children ages 0-18 had some type of health insurance. Of those, 25% were covered by Medicaid and 0.8% by MICHild. In Michigan, Medicaid (or Healthy Kids) covers children in families with incomes up to 185% of the poverty level. MICHild is an additional public insurance that covers children in families with incomes from 185-200% of poverty.⁶

The proportion of children covered by Medicaid has increased from 20% in 2007 to 25% in 2010.⁶

Access to Primary Care

Washtenaw has more primary care providers per population (219 providers per 100,000 residents) than the state (92 per 100,000) or the nation (85 per 100,000). There are no health professional shortage areas in Washtenaw County.⁷ 14% of adults report that they do not have at least one person who they think of as their personal doctor or health care provider. This is higher than the state (13%) but lower than the nation (19%).⁸ Among adults 65 years and older in Washtenaw County⁹:

- 2% report that in the past 12 months there was a time when they needed to see a doctor but could not due to the cost (compared to 4% in Michigan).
- 5% report they do not have anyone that they thought of as their personal doctor or health care provider (compared to 4% in Michigan).
- 16% report they have not had a routine checkup in the past year (compared to 14% in Michigan).

Preventable Hospital Events

Conditions like pneumonia, dehydration, asthma, diabetes, and high blood pressure can usually be treated in an outpatient setting. When patients are hospitalized for these, this is seen as a failure of the community health system. The patients likely did not receive adequate primary care services.

Among the Medicare population (over 65 years), the hospital discharge rate for these preventable hospital events is 59 per 1,000 in Washtenaw, lower than the state (70 per 1,000) or nation (67 per 1,000).¹⁰

Access to Dental Care

Risks from poor dental health include increased risk of aspiration pneumonia; increased risk of prematurity or low birth weight in infants; decreased glycemic control in diabetes; and an association with cardiovascular disease.

Dental Healthcare Coverage

Among county adults surveyed, 76% report having insurance coverage that pays for some or all of routine dental care.¹¹ There are differences in this coverage by income, age, and race:

- Those with higher incomes are more likely to report having dental coverage: 53% of adults earning less than \$35,000 compared to 89% of adults earning at least \$75,000.
- Adults 18-24 years were the most likely to report any dental coverage at 84%. Fewer adults 25-34 or 75 and over reported coverage, 61% and 62% respectively.
- By race, only 70% of black or African American adults reported having any dental coverage, compared to 91% of Asians and 82% of whites.

Have Insurance That Covers Some or All Routine Dental Care

Age	Have Dental Insurance
18-24	84%
25-34	61%
35-49	69%
50-64	76%
65-74	87%
75+	62%

Source: HIP Survey 2010

Even for those with some dental coverage, many dental insurance plans do not cover root canals, oral surgery, crowns, dentures, or cover them incompletely. There are approximately 43,000 residents in Washtenaw without dental insurance. There are nearly 18,500 Medicaid enrolled county residents with dental benefits.¹²

Persons over 65 years of age have health care coverage through Medicare, but it does not cover the routine dental care needed to maintain the health of teeth and gums. Medicare will cover some dental services (tooth extraction) if required to protect general health or in order for another covered health service to be successful. Extremely low-income older adults are also eligible for Medicaid, which does cover dental services.

Medicare will not cover routine dental checkups, cleanings, fillings, or dentures.

Dental disease is the most common chronic unmet need among children nationwide.¹³ Healthy Kids Dental is expanding to Washtenaw County as of October 1, 2013 and will cover Medicaid-eligible residents under the age of 21. Children with this coverage are more likely to receive dental treatment compared to those on traditional Medicaid. Reasons for the program's success include "more dentists accepting Healthy Kids Dental than regular Medicaid and a larger dental network that makes scheduling dental appointments more feasible."¹⁴

Visited Dentist in Past Year

Overall, 22% of adults in Washtenaw report not having visited a dentist, dental clinic, or dental hygienist for any reason within the past year. A greater proportion of residents in Ypsilanti (27%) did not visit a dentist in the past year than residents in Western Washtenaw (14%). For those with incomes less than \$35,000 per year, only half (50%) visited a dentist in the past year compared to 89% for those with incomes greater than \$75,000 per year.¹⁵

In Michigan, an estimated 83% of children under age 18 have seen a dentist at least once in the past year for preventive dental care, such as check-ups and dental cleanings. Among children ages 1 to 17, 73% have teeth in excellent or very good condition, as reported by their parents. These data are not available at the county level.¹⁶

Dental Providers

There are 337 general, 75 specialist, and eight pediatric dentists in Washtenaw County.¹⁷ Washtenaw has a higher rate of dentists (122 providers per 100,000 population) than the state (62 per 100,000) or the nation (63 per 100,000).¹⁸

Four clinics provide low or no cost dental care on a routine basis to children and adults in the county (Hope Dental Clinic, University of Michigan School of Dentistry Clinics, Community Dental Center, and Washtenaw Children's Dental Clinic). A 2012 unpublished survey of private practice dentists in Washtenaw County by the Oral Health Task Force found that eight private practice dentists accept Medicaid. Of those, 4 are accepting new Medicaid patients.

Access to Mental Health Care

Nearly half of all adults in the US will be diagnosed with a mental illness in their lifetime and 26% of adults have had mental illness in the previous year.¹⁹ 14% of HIP 2010 Survey respondents reported 10 or more days of poor mental health in the past month.

Residents with Medicaid coverage have mental health care benefits, but they often have difficulty finding providers in the county that accept Medicaid payments. Depending on their specific plan, Medicaid patients may face additional restrictions on the number of mental health visits allowed or the type of provider they can see. Finally, Medicaid patients with more severe health or substance abuse treatment needs are treated through the county's community mental health program and face challenges accessing services in an overburdened program and maintaining continuity of care.

Uninsured patients with more severe mental health problems may be treated through the county's community mental health program. If they do not meet the severity criteria, they are generally referred to local health and human service organization that offer sliding fee scales. The complexity of multiple delivery systems and often unaffordable sliding fees or limited provider capacity means most uninsured residents will have difficulty accessing appropriate and timely mental health care.

Access to Substance Abuse Treatment

According to the 2010 HIP Survey, approximately 5% of Washtenaw County adults say their drug use has interfered with their home or work life. Overall, 5% of adults surveyed report ever receiving treatment for drugs from a mental health specialist. Among those without health insurance, 15% say their drug use has interfered with home or work life, and only 1% report having ever accessing treatment for drugs from a mental health specialist.

Unfortunately, there is little reliable data regarding access to substance abuse treatment overall, and much of the information that is available covers only publically-funded programs and services. In response, the Washtenaw Health Initiative established a mental health and substance abuse subcommittee, which has started compiling some information:

- In 2008, approximately 1,150 Washtenaw County residents were hospitalized for substance abuse treatment. Because detox often requires medical oversight, patients must be hospitalized when no other medically supported detox services are available in county treatment centers.²⁰
- In 2010, over 2,700 individuals with substance abuse or co-occurring disorders were treated in emergency departments. Over 800 of those could have been served in other venues in the community if they had access to medically supported crisis services. The vast majority of those treated or assessed in emergency departments (roughly 2,000) were sent home instead of to detox or treatment facilities. If capacity had been available in the community, these individuals could have avoided the costly use of the emergency services altogether.²¹

Data Sources:

- ¹ American Community Survey 3-year average 2009-2011, US Census Bureau as published in Washtenaw Health Initiative Informational Packet.
- ² US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2011. Provided by Washtenaw Health Initiative.
- ³ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011, 1-year estimate.
- ⁴ HIP Survey, 2010.
- ⁵ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey: 2007-11. Accessed from www.chna.org.
- ⁶ US Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimate. Accessed from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org>.
- ⁷ US Health Resources and Services Administration Area Resource File, 2011. Accessed from: www.chna.org.
- ⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2006-2010. Accessed from: www.chna.org.
- ⁹ Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, 2008-2010, Via Seniors Count! Washtenaw County Health Profile (2011)
- ¹⁰ Dartmouth Atlas of Healthcare, Selected Measures of Primary Care Access and Quality, 2010. Accessed from www.chna.org.
- ¹¹ HIP Survey, 2010.
- ¹² Michigan Oral Health Coalition 2011.
- ¹³ An Overview of Children's Health Issues in Michigan, 2010.
- ¹⁴ Michigan's Healthy Dental program expands to 10 more counties, 2012, www.greatstartforkids.org.
- ¹⁵ HIP Survey, 2010.
- ¹⁶ National Survey of Children's Health, 2011.
- ¹⁷ 2011 Michigan Check-Up On Oral Health, A Michigan County Profile.
- ¹⁸ American Dental Association, Dental Data, November 2012, Redi-Data, Inc. Accessed from The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation State Health Facts <http://kff.org/statedata/>.
- ¹⁹ National Institutes of Mental Health. Accessed from http://www.nimh.nih.gov/statistics/1ANYDIS_ADULT.shtml.
- ²⁰ Washtenaw Health Initiative Mental health/Substance abuse Subcommittee calculation, based on Washtenaw County Public Health, Center for Population Health, Michigan Inpatient Database, 2008 and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Hospital discharge survey, 2006 Annual Summary, Series 13, No. 168, December, 2010.
- ²¹ Washtenaw Health Initiative Mental health/Substance abuse Subcommittee calculation, based on Washtenaw County Public Health, Center for Population Health, Michigan Inpatient Database, 2008 and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Hospital discharge survey, 2006 Annual Summary, Series 13, No. 168, December, 2010.