

California Health Interview Survey

CHIS Making an Impact—2012

Making
California's
Voices
Heard on
Health



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The **California Health Interview Survey (CHIS)** is the nation's largest state health survey and one of the largest health surveys in the United States. Conducted by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, CHIS regularly surveys up to 50,000 or more adults, teenagers and children, providing a detailed picture of the health and health care needs of California's diverse population.

Highlights of CHIS in 2012 include:

Supporting the Affordable Care Act (ACA)

The full implementation of federal health care reform starts in 2014 and CHIS data are frequently used to plan and track the implementation of how this far-reaching law will impact California:

- **ACA estimates:** CHIS is one of the data sources for the California Simulation of Insurance Markets (CalSIM), a micro-simulation model created by the UC Berkeley Labor Center and the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. To date, CalSIM has helped California's state and local health officials, Covered California, the state's Health Benefit Exchange, medical providers, community representatives, insurance companies and others to understand the likely enrollment of Californians in an expanded Medi-Cal program and in Covered California.
- It has also helped project how the "individual mandate" might impact coverage as well as who will be left out of new health care reform efforts.
- **Amicus brief:** Two Center publications that used CHIS data were cited in an amicus brief filed before the U.S. Supreme Court by The California Endowment to support the "individual mandate," which the court upheld. One publication found that without the mandate, the number of newly insured Californians would be 1.04 million lower in 2019 than with the mandate. Another publication estimated that up to two-thirds of California's uninsured might get health insurance coverage under health care reform with the mandate requirement intact.

• **Spotlighting obstacles to reform:** A study by the Center, California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN), and the UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education that used CalSIM revealed that language barriers could deter more than 100,000 Californians from enrolling in Covered California.

• **Making the case for reform:** The Center's omnibus report on insurance trends, *The State of Health Insurance in California*, provided compelling data in support of expanded coverage, including trend data showing the decline in job-based coverage as well as the rise in medical debt for many of California's more than 37 million residents.

Unique data on vulnerable groups

CHIS data was used in a number of groundbreaking studies and reports on the health of lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals (LGB) and other minority groups including:

• **Marriage equality:** A study using CHIS data and published in the American Journal of Public Health found that psychological distress is lower among LGB individuals who are legally married to a person of the same sex, compared with those not in legally recognized unions. The study, which was widely covered by media, suggests such unions may positively affect mental health.

• **Food insecurity:** Using CHIS data, Center researchers found that an estimated 3.8 million California adults could not afford to put an

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Data for Academic Research

CHIS includes a wide range of health data that's used frequently by researchers at universities throughout the nation to publish journal articles and studies. At least **55** journal articles in 2012 used CHIS data. Topics included mammography screenings, Latino baby boomers, racial and ethnic disparities in diabetes, dietary behaviors, smoking among American Indians and many others. The articles were published in **Health Affairs, The American Journal of Public Health, Medical Care, Health Services Research, The American Journal of Epidemiology**, and many more.

adequate amount of food on the table during the recent recession. The study received media coverage in the Los Angeles Times, San Diego Union-Tribune, National Public Radio and numerous other media outlets.

- **Federal impact:** The *National Healthcare Disparities Report*, a congressionally-mandated report compiled by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), included CHIS data on Asian American health. The report provides in-depth information on the health of the nation's racial and ethnic groups.
- **Pollution-affected communities:** The Center's ALERT (Assessment of Local Environmental Risk Training) project used CHIS data to educate residents in Boyle Heights and West Long Beach, both areas with high amounts of air pollution, about the emissions generated by trucks, trains and other traffic in and around their neighborhoods and what residents can do to combat the pollution. The project was funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Providing local health data for counties, legislative districts, nonprofits

- **Health profiles:** CHIS launched *Health Profiles*, easy-to-read and printable county-based fact sheets with statistics on topics ranging from health insurance, obesity, exercise and more. There are adult and child/teen profiles, as well estimates provided for each of California's assembly, senate and Congressional districts.
- **BHC: Building Healthy Communities (BHC) Health Profiles** include key health indicators for 14 communities en-

gaged in a place-based health initiative with The California Endowment.

- CHIS data was used in numerous reports throughout the state that highlight local health data. These include the *Orange County 2012 Community Indicators* report, a report by Sacramento Region Health Care Partnership on the region's health care system, as well as the *2012 Santa Cruz County Health Report*.

CHIS data used in legislation

- **Coverage for veterans:** Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law AB 1869, which cited a California Senate analysis based on CHIS data that found 130,000 veterans remained uninsured despite possibly being eligible for federal Veterans Affairs health benefits. The new law requires the California Office of the Patient Advocate to help eligible and uninsured veterans get health coverage.
- **Minimum wage:** In efforts leading up to passage of a law that increased the minimum wage by 65 cents per hour for Los Angeles County in-home care workers, the Service Employees Union International cited a CHIS study about home care workers living at or near poverty levels.

Groundbreaking research on mental health

- **Preventing suicide:** CHIS researchers used their own data to write the first study on suicide ideation for California. More than half a million adults in California have seriously thought about committing suicide, according to the study.
- **Reform and mental health:** CHIS also published a study showing that half a million uninsured adults in California who need mental health treatment could gain access to those services through health reform.

CHIS by the Numbers:

AskCHIS total queries since 2002: 829,238

AskCHIS total users since 2002: 38,400

12-month CHIS page views: 246,718

Articles & reports: CHIS data have been used in hundreds of peer-reviewed journal articles, organizational reports, fact sheets and issue briefs each year.

Media coverage: CHIS data, reports and experts are quoted in hundreds of local, regional and national media—television, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, blogs and websites—reports each year.

Learn more: www.chis.ucla.edu

** For the 12-month period ended December 31, 2012.*