

California Health Interview Survey

CHIS Making an Impact—2015

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 surveys more than 20,000 households each year and conducts separate interviews with adults, teenagers and children to paint a detailed picture of the health and health care needs of California's diverse population.

Highlights of CHIS in 2015 include:

NATIONAL

Supreme Court amicus briefs on same-sex marriage: The [American Psychological Association](#), the [American Public Health Association](#), [Massachusetts, et al](#) and others submitted amicus briefs in 2015 that cited [Same-Sex Legal Marriage and Psychological Well-Being: Findings from the California Health Interview Survey](#), co-authored by Richard G. Wight, a researcher in the Community Health Sciences Department at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, in support of same-sex marriage in **Obergefell v. Hodges**. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the petitioners in June.

National LGBT surveys: CHIS methodologies on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender questions are guiding an Office of Management and Budget workgroup on LGBT data collection as discussed at an August American Sociological Association [panel](#).

"We are indeed building from the work done at CHIS to inform federal measurement, particularly in the area of gender identity."

Jennifer Park, Senior Statistician,
Office of Management and Budget

STATE

Health care for undocumented minors: Gov. Jerry Brown in October signed into law [SB4](#), which extends full-scope Medi-Cal to undocumented immigrants under the age of 19. [Assessing Health Care Services Used By California's Undocumented Immigrant Population In](#)



AskCHIS, the online health data query tool, was again named a "Health Data All-Star" by the [Health Data Consortium](#).



CHIS is a Charter Member of the [AAPOR Transparency Initiative](#), a commitment to transparent survey research practice and effective disclosure of research methods.

[2010](#), a Health Affairs article coauthored by the Center's [Nadereh Pourat](#) that used CHIS estimates on DACA youth, helped educate policymakers on the impact of both SB4 and SB10, a related proposal that would extend Medi-Cal to adult immigrants, both legal and undocumented. CHIS data were also included in joint Center/UC Berkeley studies released in [January](#) and [March](#) that also informed SB4.

Statewide UC research on undocumented: In March, CHIS became part of a [research collaboration](#) between five UC campuses that will help policymakers, community advocates and the public better understand and plan for immigrants' integration into, and impact on, the state's educational system, workforce, public health, political environment, culture and more. CHIS 2015-2016 includes new questions that focus on the integration of diverse groups over multiple immigrant generations.

Continued...



Long-term care: The Senate Select Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care in January submitted [a set of recommendations](#) to the California legislature that would overhaul the state's fragmented and duplicative long-term care system. The report included analysis from a CHIS-based report, [Stressed and Strapped: Caregivers in California](#). Associate Center Director Steven P. Wallace spoke at a hearing on the topic which contributed to the committee's final report.

Covered California: CalSIM data continue to be used to estimate future enrollments by the state insurance marketplace and guide program-planning activities, and CHIS-driven Center publications, such as [The State of Health Insurance in California: Findings from the 2011-2012 California Health Interview Survey](#), are among the [reports](#) used to inform the Covered California Board.

Child mental health services: An [audit request](#) by state Senator Jim Beall to analyze how school districts are using mental health funding for students was informed by CHIS data, researched by the Center's [D. Imelda Padilla-Frausto](#), which showed that about 600,000 children in California have a need for student mental health services. The Joint Legislative Audit Committee approved the request in April.

Transgender data collection: For the first time, CHIS asked questions about gender identity, one of very few, large surveys to identify transgender populations.

AskCHIS TRAININGS:

Training people to find, analyze and disseminate CHIS data to improve health is one of the primary goals of the Center. Since 1997, about 5,050 community representatives from 2,100 organizations have been trained to use CHIS statistics by the Center's [Health DATA Program](#), supported by funding from The California Endowment. CHIS/AskCHIS NE trainings for 525 people this fiscal year included:

- Two online webinars in February on how to use AskCHIS NE, as well as an in-person seminar at The California Endowment campus in Downtown Los Angeles.
- An AskCHIS NE training with [Gerald Kominski](#), Center director, and [Bogdan Rau](#), CHIS project coordinator, for legislative staff at the state capital in March.

- A training session in June at the UC Global Health Institute in Oakland, led by Associate Center Director [Ninez Ponce](#), focused on gathering immigrant health data.

"... identifying the necessary [CHIS] data to demonstrate the problem in our schools was invaluable and I know contributed to the passage of the audit request."

Senator Jim Beall (D-San Jose)

- A webinar by CHIS Director [David Grant](#) for the Northern California Area Agency on Aging in August on collecting geographic data on older adults.
- AskCHIS demonstrations at APHA in November.

HEALTH POLICY SEMINAR SERIES AND CHIS

The Center presented 11 [Health Policy Seminars](#) in 2015 that drew 1,270 online and in-person attendees. Several seminars centered on research that used CHIS data, including "[CHIS 2013 and 2014: What's New in the Nation's Largest State Health Survey](#)," attended by 60 people in person and 188 online. Other CHIS-related [seminars](#) in the series:

- "Ten-Year Trends in the Health of Young Children in California: 2003 to 2011-2012," based on the [policy brief](#) of the same name.
- "The Importance of CHIS in LGBT Research and Data Collection."
- "Environmental Factors Driving Rising Obesity in California," related to the policy brief [Obesity in California](#).

WHO USES CHIS AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

"CHIS has been incredibly important at advancing the field of data collection around sexual orientation and gender identity."

Gary Gates, Blachford-Cooper Distinguished Scholar and Research Director, Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Many local government agencies, such as public health departments, use CHIS data in their reports, publications and meetings. Some examples:

California Department of Public Health: [California Tobacco Facts and Figures 2015: 25 Years of Tobacco Control in California](#) used CHIS data from multiple years to illustrate a decade of smoking trends in the state.

California Department of Transportation: Lists AskCHIS as a tool to find health data to [apply](#) for [Active Transportation Program](#) funding, designed to increase projects that enhance public health through biking, walking and other alternatives; benefit communities in need; reduce greenhouse gas production, and more.

Sutter County: Child neglect, high school dropout, and juvenile arrest rates have improved in Sutter County, according to their recent child health [report](#). But CHIS data

AskCHIS

As of October 31, 2015, users have posed more than 1.03 million queries to [AskCHIS](#) — the Center's Web query tool that allows you to quickly search for California health statistics by county, region or statewide.

Other statistics:

- **Total registered users (lifetime since 2003):** 51,203
- **Total queries (12-month period):** 111,043
- **Top indicators:** Ever diagnosed with asthma, currently insured, ever diagnosed with diabetes

showed their rates for high-risk behaviors are higher than statewide rates.

County/city/community dashboards: The City of [Long Beach](#) and [Riverside](#), [Sacramento](#), and [El Dorado](#) counties joined more than a dozen other city or county governments that include various AskCHIS NE ZIP code and city-level indicators in their online community health dashboards. By the end of the year, Placer County is expected to join the group, which ranges from [Los Angeles County](#) with 10.1 million residents to [San Benito County](#), population 58,000. Other counties/government partnerships that include data from AskCHIS NE in their online health sites: [San Francisco](#), [Alameda](#), [Ventura](#), [San Bernardino](#), and [Kern](#) counties, and the city of [Pasadena](#).

ADVOCACY GROUPS, HOSPITALS

Community advocacy groups use a variety of CHIS data for publications, for meeting presentations, to disseminate at conferences, in their online portals, and more. Examples:

The California HealthCare Foundation: CHCF updated its [ACA 411](#) interactive Web tool with new CHIS data from 2013 and 2014 to track the impact of the Affordable Care Act on insurance coverage, access to health care services, and affordability in California after health care reform. The numbers suggest improvements in access to care, including that the uninsured rate is at a new low and fewer Californians are delaying or skipping necessary medical care.

The Web tool, developed by CHCF and The State Health Access Data Assistance Center at the University of Minnesota, features more than 50 indicators of access, cost and affordability. CHCF support allowed CHIS to add additional ACA-related questions to the survey.

California Safe Routes to School: The [organization](#) lists

CHIS as a tool to help people search for data on physical activity, walking/biking/skating to school and other statistics to help put programs in place.

2015 Women's Policy Summit: CHIS data were used in a presentation, "[Women's Health in California: A Statistical Overview](#)," by the California Department of Public Health's Office of Health Equity.

Children Now: The group's online [California Scorecard: 2014-15](#) looks at key health, education and well-being indicators for the state's children over time by county, race and ethnicity and includes multiple years of CHIS data.

Health Access Foundation: [5 Years into the Affordable Care Act, California Leads the Way](#) used CHIS and CalSIM data and discussed progress and remaining goals in making health care accessible to all.

California Healthcare Foundation: The new healthcare [almanac](#) co-authored by [Ying-Ying Meng](#), a senior research scientist at the Center, reported about 4 in 10 California adults have 1 of 5 top chronic conditions.

Dignity Health/Mercy Hospital Group: CHIS obesity data was cited in the Kern County hospital group's [2015/2016 Community Benefit Report](#),

which assessed screenings, preventive education, and other needed services.

RESEARCH ON VULNERABLE AND UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

Besides fueling many UCLA Center for Health Policy studies, CHIS's wide range of health data are frequently used by researchers at other universities to publish journal articles and studies, particularly on health disparities. At least 55 reports and journal articles used CHIS data in 2015.

AskCHIS Neighborhood Edition

In the year since its launch (November 12, 2014), [AskCHIS NE](#), which allows searches by ZIP code, city and legislative district, logged 62,117 geographic queries with two-thirds of the queries at the ZIP code level.

Other statistics:

- **Unique users (lifetime):** 1,583
- **Total indicators queried:** 31,153
- **Total geographies queried:** 62,117
- **Top indicators:** Adult diabetes, adult obesity, child and teen asthma, adult food insecurity, adult asthma, rates of adult uninsurance

"[AskCHIS is] a fantastic free tool for visualizing data."

Amy Neuwelt, Program Manager, Public Health Data Solutions, Public Health Institute

Articles featuring CHIS data were published in the journals Health Affairs, Social Science and Medicine, American Journal of Gastroenterology, California Journal of Politics and Policy, The Journal of the American Medical Association, American Journal of Public Health, Preventive Medicine, Aging Today and more. Examples, by topic, include:

Quality education and discrimination: A [study](#) in Public Health that used 2009 CHIS data found education may not equally benefit health across races for reasons including inequities in the quality of education, the effect of discrimination and poorer job opportunities for minorities.

Chinese-Americans and health literacy: A [study](#) that uses 2007 CHIS data published in the British Medical Journal (Open) found Chinese-Americans with low health literacy and limited English proficiency had breast and colorectal cancer screening rates more than 20 points lower than their counterparts who were health literate and English proficient.

African-American men and colon cancer screening: A [study](#) in American Journal of Gastroenterology, co-authored by Associate Center Director [Ninez Ponce](#), used 2009 CHIS data and found that doctors are less likely to recommend colon cancer screenings to African-Americans than to other racial or ethnic groups.

Mexican and U.S.-born Mexicans and diabetes: A Medical Care [study](#) of four generations of U.S.- and foreign-born Mexican adults with diabetes living in California found that that some later generations were worse at managing their diabetes care than the first (foreign-born) group.

Child asthma: A [study](#) in Population Health Management based on 2011-2012 CHIS data found that nearly half a million children in the state currently have asthma, but only 38 percent have a recent asthma management plan.

Children in California over the decade: The Center policy brief [Ten-Year Trends in the Health of Young Children in California: 2003 to 2011-2012](#) used a decade of CHIS data and reported big increases in health insurance coverage and dental care use for California's children, but a decline in preschool enrollment.

LGBT population and the medical system: A [paper](#) in the Annals of Internal Medicine by the American College of Physicians, which cited LGB data from CHIS, recommended LGBT-aware medical school training, more LGBT health data collection and other changes.

Obesity in California: A Center research report, [Obesity in California](#), used multiple years of CHIS data and found more than seven million Californians are obese, and obesity rates have risen over the past decade to encompass one-quarter of the adult population.

Japanese-American senior health: Using 2003 to 2012 [CHIS](#) data, [research](#) by Center Research Scientist [Ying-Ying Meng](#) reported Japanese elders have lower risks for 9 of 15 health indicators compared with other racial and ethnic groups.

Drought's impact on health in San Joaquin Valley: A [study](#) by California State University, Fresno included [CHIS](#) data that suggested the years-long drought is taking a toll on public health, with rates of asthma, food insecurity and serious psychological distress for many areas in the region significantly higher than the state average.

Access to health care and insurance: A [fact sheet](#) by Center Faculty Associate [Shana Alex Charles](#) that used 2011 to 2014 CHIS data found that adult Medi-Cal Enrollment surged, and the uninsured rate plummeted following the full implementation of the ACA.

Adult Race and Ethnicity Health Profiles: The Center's latest

[Adult Health Profiles](#) found that disparities persist for the state's 9.8 million Latino adults. According to 2012-2013 CHIS data, the Latino rates for obesity, fair or poor health, food insecurity and uninsurance are much higher than the state average.

MEDIA

CHIS was cited in 220 media articles this year on topics as diverse as how many hours a day children watch TV or play computer games to Medi-Cal patients' lack of access to care to health disparities among the state's minority populations. Stories were published in the [Washington Post](#), [Los Angeles Times](#), [Univision](#), [Sacramento Bee](#), [New York Times](#), [California Healthline](#), [San Diego Union-Tribune](#), [Daily Telegraph](#), [China Press](#), [LA18](#), [KPBS](#), [KQED](#) and more.

"As the most detailed source of health data for California's diverse population, CHIS is instrumental to our advocacy efforts."

David Dexter, Communications Coordinator,
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

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December 2015