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The Uninsured in SEPA: Latest Data from CHDB's 2015 SEPA Household Health Survey

Since 1983, the Household Health Survey has tracked key health indicators for Philadelphia and for the region as a whole. PHMC's Community Health Data Base (CHDB) conducted the latest SEPA Household Health Survey in the winter of 2014-2015. Over 10,000 interviews were conducted with adults 18 years of age and older by telephone: 80% of the interviews were conducted by landline and 20% were conducted by cell phone. The data presented below provide a snapshot of the roll out of the ACA and it has had an impact on access to health insurance across the region.

The 2015 Household Health Survey reveals some changes across the region in access to health insurance over the last ten years. The percentage of uninsured adults has decreased since 2012, from approximately 12% of adults ages 18-64 without insurance to 9% in 2015. Montgomery County had the highest percentage of adults between the ages of 18 and 64 with insurance at 96.3%, a 0.5% increase from 2006, followed by Bucks County with 95.4% (+1.1%), Chester County with 94.5% (-1.3%), and Delaware County with 94.3% (+0.3%). In last place was Philadelphia County with 89.9% (and the largest increase - 1.9%).

Overtime, the survey has revealed that the percentage of Hispanics and Blacks without health insurance has decreased. In 2015, the survey shows that while the percentage of uninsured adults has decreased, Latino adults are more likely to be uninsured, followed by African-American adults. Males continue to be more likely to be uninsured than females.

More than 520,000 adults in Southeastern Pennsylvania under the age of 65 looked into buying insurance on the ACA exchange, healthcare.gov, in 2015. Approximately one-third of them found it difficult to find a plan with a monthly premium or annual deductible they could afford.

Among uninsured adults, 38% in Philadelphia County did enroll in an insurance plan through healthcare.gov, followed by 37.4% in Delaware County, 36.9% in Chester County, 35% in Bucks County, and 32.4% in Montgomery County.

The survey examines several measures of access to care, including whether the respondent had seen a doctor in the past year and whether he or she had utilized preventive screenings. The results showed that individuals covered through the ACA are slightly less likely to have seen a doctor in the past year and to have had some routine health screenings compared to adults insured another way.

PHMC's next Household Health Survey of Southeastern Pennsylvania will continue to measure the impact of the ACA by assessing changes in health care and service utilization patterns over time.