

September 17, 2013

Highlights of New U.S. Census Data

Pennsylvania's Insurance Coverage Rates Still Below Pre-recession Levels Medicaid Expansion Needed Now More than Ever

New data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS) show that Pennsylvanians have not made up for health insurance coverage lost during the Great Recession.

In 2011-12, 13.3% of Pennsylvanians under the age of 65 were uninsured, up from 10.7% in 2006-07. The share of Pennsylvania children without insurance, 7.7%, is statistically unchanged over the six-year period. The total number of uninsured Pennsylvanians grew by 305,000 over this period.

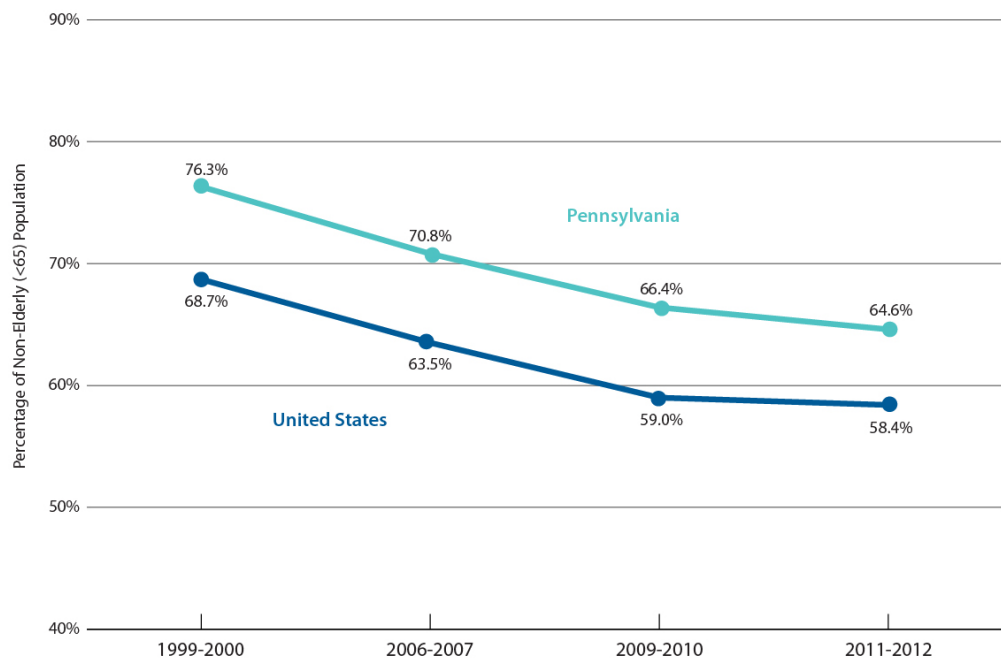
"Too many Pennsylvanians remain without health insurance and at risk of catastrophic illness or injury," said Sharon Ward, Director of the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center (PBPC). "Governor Corbett is taking the right step in pursuing a Medicaid expansion, but the timetable should be accelerated so that coverage can begin in 2014."

Health coverage obtained through an employer remains substantially below pre-recession levels, according to PBPC's analysis of the CPS data, which uses two-year averages to allow for valid comparisons across states and over time. State and sub-state data on median income, poverty, and health insurance will be available on Thursday when the Census Bureau releases the American Community Survey (ACS).

Only 64.6% of non-elderly Pennsylvanians had employment-based insurance in 2011-12, down from 70.8% in 2006-07, while the share of children covered by an employer dropped from 67.5% to 61.9%.

Employment-based coverage rates remain higher in Pennsylvania than in the U.S., with

Fewer Workers Are Receiving Health Care from Their Employers



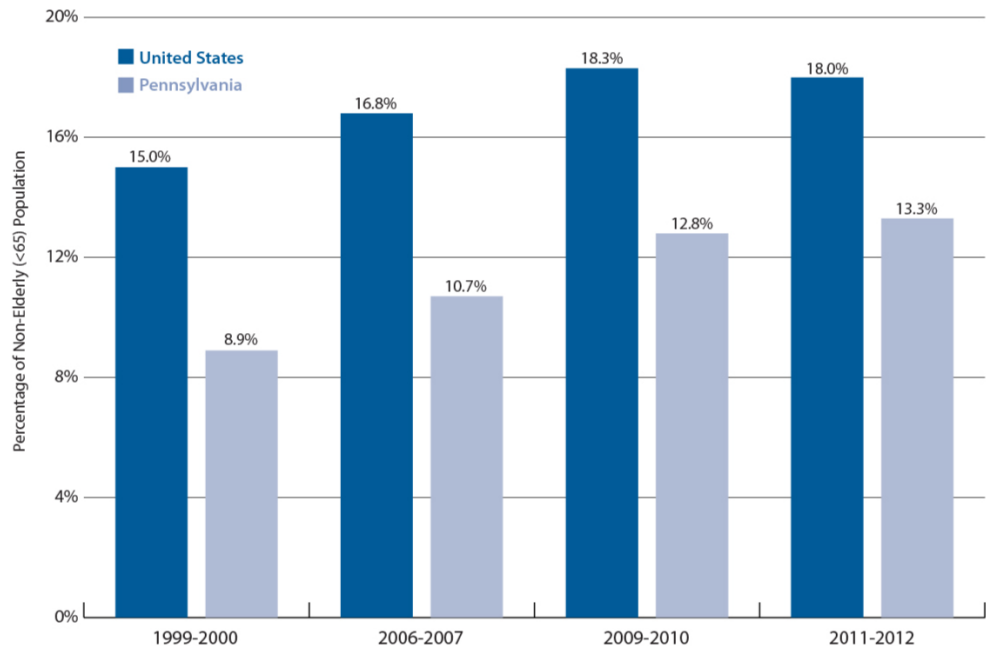
Source: Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center calculations using U.S. Census Current Population Survey data.
Note: All change in rates are statistically significant, with the exception of 2009-2010 to 2011-2012 in Pennsylvania.

58.4% of non-elderly Americans having coverage through an employer.

Enrollment in Medicaid grew both nationally and in Pennsylvania during the recession, although growth was more robust for the nation as a whole. Between 2006-07 and 2011-12, non-elderly Medicaid coverage grew 4% nationally and by 3.4% in the commonwealth.

While the nation made progress on insurance coverage between 2009-10 and 2011-12, Pennsylvania did not. At the federal level, the uninsured rate declined slightly during that period, from 18.3% to 18%, and there were statistically significant changes in children's coverage and in the share of Americans covered by Medicaid. Pennsylvania, meanwhile, saw no statistically significant change in any of those three categories.

While the Uninsured Rate Begins to Decline at the National Level, Pennsylvania's Rate Is Unchanged Since the End of the Recession



Source: Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center calculations using U.S. Census Current Population Survey data.
Note: All change in rates are statistically significant, with the exception of 2009-2010 to 2011-2012 in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania has a strong tradition of health

insurance coverage, through employers and public programs such as CHIP, Medicaid, and adultBasic. The Affordable Care Act offers a new option for Pennsylvanians in January 2014, with subsidized health care for individuals and families earning between 100% and 400% of the federal poverty level (\$19,530 to \$78,120 for a family of three). Individuals between 50% and 100% of poverty with earnings of \$5,745 to \$11,490 will have no affordable option without Medicaid expansion.

“The Governor’s ‘Healthy Pennsylvania’ plan has the potential to continue that great tradition by extending coverage to more than 600,000 Pennsylvanians,” Ward said. “A high quality, affordable plan that begins without delay and offers comprehensive care to individuals who have lacked insurance will restore peace of mind to those still reeling from the recession and help to rebuild Pennsylvania’s economy.”

Pennsylvanians who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but cannot get affordable health insurance through their jobs will also be able to obtain coverage in 2014 through the state’s new health insurance Marketplace. Hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians will be eligible for new federal subsidies to help them pay their premiums and reduce their out-of-pocket health costs.

The Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center is a non-partisan policy research project that provides independent, credible analysis on state tax, budget and related policy matters, with attention to the impact of current or proposed policies on working families.