



# Research Review

Summaries of Last Week's Research

August 30, 2010

## CHIS Projects Over 8.3 Million Uninsured in California

The UCLA Center for Health Policy Research released projections that the number of Californians has climbed to over 8.3 million. Those without health insurance grew in all counties and 37 counties had uninsured rates above the statewide average of 24.3 percent.

The measures from the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) indicate whether individuals have been uninsured at any time in the last 12 months. The survey also asks whether individuals currently have insurance, a more accurate measure of the number of uninsured, but those numbers were not released with this set of projections.

Los Angeles County had the largest total number of uninsured residents, with 2.7 million nonelderly adults and children (28.9 percent of the total population) experiencing some period of uninsurance in 2009. Counties with the highest rates of uninsurance at some point in the last 12 months were Shasta (32.7 percent), Madera (32 percent), Merced (31.6 percent), Imperial (30.6 percent) and Northern California Counties (Del Norte, Siskiyou, Trinity, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas and Sierra—collectively at 29.7 percent).

On the other end of the spectrum, counties in the Bay Area and the Central Coast Region (San Mateo, Alameda, Placer, Marin, Napa) had the lowest rates of uninsurance (under 19 percent) and the highest rates of job-based coverage (Placer, San Mateo, Yolo, San Francisco, Contra Costa) (over 60 percent).

*Lavarreda SA, Chia YJ, Cabezas L, Roby D. "California's Uninsured by County." UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. August 2010.*

## Electronic Health Record Adoption in U.S. Hospitals Remains Low

A study in Health Affairs looked at the Health IT adoption of hospitals since the 2009 federal stimulus package allotted an unprecedented amount of money to maximize the use of electronic health records. Using a 2009 American Hospital Association study of acute care hospitals, the authors found that "the share of hospitals that had adopted either basic or comprehensive electronic records has risen modestly, from 8.7 percent in 2008 to 11.9 percent in 2009."

Hospitals that were least likely to adopt EHRs were critical-access, small, public and rural—compared to large, private and urban.

The study also found that only 2 percent of hospitals reported having her systems that would fulfill the "meaningful use" criteria set forth by the federal government. Authors concluded that, "These findings underscore the fact that the transition to a digital health care system is likely to be a long one."

However, they do note that due to the study methods, their estimates are conservative and that hospitals currently able to qualify as meaningful users are even lower. The policy implications note that the gap between hospitals and EHR adopters is likely to grow and steps should be taken to prevent a widening digital divide.

## Resources

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CAHP's *Research Review* is also available on our website.

## Recent Additions



The special section of the CAHP 2009 Annual Report entitled "[The Value of Managed Care](#)" is now available as a separate document online.

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Contact [Maral Farsi](#), Senior Policy Analyst, with any questions about the *Research Review* or to be added to the policy unit's distribution list.

Jha AK, DesRoches CM, Kralovec PD, Joshi MS. "[A Progress Report on Electronic Health Records in U.S. Hospitals](#)." *Health Affairs*, doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.2010.0502. Published online 26 August 2010.

## Other Reports and Studies

[Verizon and the United States Secret Service](#) reviewed data breaches for 2009 and found that healthcare accounted for only 3 percent of the data breaches—near last among 10 categories. The biggest targets were financial service organizations (33 percent), hospitality (23 percent) and retail organizations (15 percent). The report also looked at who was behind the data breaches and found that 70 percent were external agents, 48 percent were caused by insiders, 11 percent implicated business partners, and 27 percent involved multiple parties.

A report from the market research firm [Input](#) found that local and state spending on health IT-related initiatives is expected to increase by 19 percent over the next five years as a result of the economic stimulus package and other trends. Authors report that the HIT market will go from \$8.3 billion spending in 2010 to nearly \$10 billion in 2015. Moreover, electronic health record spending is projected to increase from \$1.1 billion in 2010 to \$2 billion in 2015. The report primarily examines Medicaid systems and notes that most HIT efforts are aimed at adherence to increased eligibility, policy changes and ensure interoperability with other HIT systems. States and localities are expected to be seeking out vendors with technical expertise to provide consultation, integration, and HIT equipment. State and local health IT will also benefit from economic stimulus funding for community-based health care center modernizations and e-record systems, Medicaid management information systems, health information exchanges and record-locator services and for public health systems and telehealth.