

HEALTH COVERAGE IN IOWA

New Census Data Illustrate Concerns for Iowa Families

New data released Aug. 30 by the U.S. Census illustrate critical issues of health-care coverage for Iowans. Key figures from the new information:

NO HEALTH INSURANCE FOR MORE THAN 1 IN 10 IOWANS

- Using two-year averages,* Iowa in 2003-04 had 303,000 uninsured — 10.4 percent of the population — the same as for 2002-03.
- However, from 2000-01 to 2003-04, the percentage of Iowans who were uninsured rose from about 235,000 to 303,000, or from 8.2 percent to 10.4 percent. (The 2000-01 numbers were stable from 1999-2000 as well.)
- Iowa has seen an increase of 29 percent in the number of people who are uninsured from 2000-01 to 2003-04.

FEWER IOWANS HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE THROUGH THEIR EMPLOYER

- Almost 100,000 fewer Iowans have health coverage through their employer than they did four years earlier — 1,993,000 in 1999-2000, to 1,896,000 in 2003-04.
- As a percentage of Iowans, this is a drop from 69.7 percent to 65.1 percent in four years.
- Iowans losing that coverage do not appear to be finding a private-sector alternative. The number of Iowans directly purchasing a private health-insurance plan fell from 468,000 in 1999-2000 (16.3 percent) to 449,000 in 2003-04 (15.4 percent).

MORE IOWANS HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE THROUGH GOVERNMENT

- The number of Iowans with government health-care coverage (Medicaid, *hawk-i*, Medicare and military, for example) has risen from 646,000 in 1999-2000, to 733,000 in 2003-04, or by 87,000.
- As a percentage of Iowans, this is an increase from 22.6 percent to 25.2 percent in four years.

HOW IOWA COMPARES TO OTHER STATES

- Fifteen states had a greater percentage-point increase from 2000-01 to 2003-04 than Iowa in the proportion of residents who were without health insurance. The greatest increases were in Oregon (4.1) and Montana (4). The biggest decline was in New Mexico, a drop of 0.9 percent.
- Iowa's 10.4 percent uninsured is 47th among the 50 states and Washington, D.C.
- Among Iowa's neighbors, only Minnesota, at 8.8 percent (and ranking 51st overall), has a smaller proportion of its population who don't have health insurance using the 2003-04 averages. Only Illinois ranks among the top half of states by highest level of uninsurance — 14.2 percent. Texas had the highest percentage of uninsured residents — 24.8 percent. The U.S. two-year average was 15.7 percent.

* Two-year averages are considered more reliable than one-year figures.

The Iowa Policy Project

318 2nd Ave. N
Mount Vernon, IA 52314
(319) 338-0773 • www.iowapolicyproject.org

Child & Family Policy Center

1021 Fleming Building • 218 Sixth Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309
(515) 280-9027 • www.cfpciowa.org