NCHS Dataline

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has developed an important new Web-based information resource for those conducting research on smoking and use of tobacco products. The 2006 Early Release of Selected Estimates Based on Data from the National Health Interview Survey, covering 15 key indicators, is now available along with a special report tracking health insurance coverage. NCHS fields a new survey of home and hospice care with a first-ever survey of home health-care workers.

TOBACCO INFORMATION WEBSITE

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), conducted by NCHS, is a large-scale household interview survey of a national sample of the nation's civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey gathers data on the health of the population through personal interviews and produces a wide range of data from health status, to use of health care, to health behaviors and health risks. For more than 50 years, the survey has collected data on smoking and tobacco use that can then be analyzed in relation to many health outcomes and demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. To make that information more accessible, NCHS has developed the Tobacco Information Website.

This website gives users of the NHIS in-depth access to current and historic information on the collection of information on personal tobacco use. The site includes a brief history of tobacco use research; copies of tobacco use questions and questionnaires; links to reports with estimates of the prevalence of tobacco use; datasets, documentation and other technical information for data analysts; a glossary; and a bibliography of selected references on cigarette smoking and other tobacco use. The website also includes a review of the methodological work performed to improve the accuracy of tobacco use data, information on conceptual issues involved in the measurement of tobacco use, and a set of frequently asked questions to speed the user in a search for specific types of information. It is available at: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/nhis/tobacco/nhis_tobhoma.htm.

EARLY RELEASE OF DATA FROM THE NHIS, 2006

On a quarterly basis, the NHIS tracks 15 key health indicators. Data for the full year of 2006[1] are now available on the following measures:

- Lack of insurance coverage and type of coverage
- Usual place to go for medical care
- Obtaining needed medical care
- Receipt of influenza vaccination
- Receipt of pneumococcal vaccination
- Obesity
- Leisure time physical activity
- Current smoking
- Alcohol consumption
- Human immunodeficiency virus testing
- General health status
- Serious psychological distress
- Diagnosed diabetes
- Asthma episodes and current asthma

Estimates from 1997 through 2005 are presented for comparison. The 15 Early Release measures are published prior to final data editing and final weighting to provide access to the most recent information from NHIS. The study examines data collected from interviews in more than 100,000 households nationwide. In addition, there is a special report that focuses on insurance coverage.[2] The report presents both national and state data. The state data section has expanded to include estimates from 20 states for 2006. In addition, for the first time, estimates of lack of coverage among non-Hispanic Asian people are presented, along with data for black and white non-Hispanic and Hispanic people. Highlights from that report show that:

- In 2006, there were 43.6 million Americans of all ages (14.8% of the population) who did not have health insurance (at the time of the interview)—not significantly different from the 2005 estimate of 14.2%.
- Among working-age Americans (those aged 18–64), 19.8% did not have health insurance in 2006—a slight increase from 18.9% in 2005.
- Approximately 9.3% of children younger than 18 did not have health insurance in 2006—a decrease from 13.9% in 1997.

- In 2006, the percentage uninsured at the time of interview among the 20 largest states ranged from 7.7% in Michigan to 23.8% in Texas.
- Hispanic people were far more likely to lack health insurance at the time of the interview than non-Hispanic white people, non-Hispanic black people, and non-Hispanic Asians. More than one-third of Hispanic people were without insurance at the time of the interview, and one-quarter had been without health insurance for more than a year.

Both the Early Release and the health insurance reports are available on the NCHS website at: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/nhis/released200706.htm.

NEW SURVEY TO COLLECT DATA ON HOME HEALTH AIDES

Home health aides provide the majority of direct care to the estimated 1.5 million home and hospice patients. The 2007 National Home and Hospice Care Survey, the latest in a series of surveys, will include for the first time a survey of home health aides. The survey is designed to provide critical information for the recruitment and development of this key component of the long-term care workforce.

The survey will determine the likelihood that workers will continue in their present positions and the factors that affect those decisions, including job satisfaction, environment, training, advancement opportunities, benefits, working conditions, and personal or family demands. This survey of home health aides will be conducted as a separate telephone interview with a sample of workers who provide home health and hospice patients assistance with activities of daily living (eating, transferring, toileting, dressing, and bathing).

As in previous surveys conducted periodically since 1992 and most recently in 2000, the 2007 survey will obtain data on home health and hospice agencies, their patients, and staff. The survey obtains information from a nationally representative sample of home health agencies and hospices based on interviews with the administrators and staff. The survey collects data on the agencies, including ownership, number of patients, certification status, services provided, and basic charges. For patients, data are obtained on demographic characteristics, functional and health status, diagnoses, services received, and source of payment.

The current survey will be fielded in August 2007 and has been expanded both in terms of the topics and the sample size to allow more detailed data to be collected. New topics include:

- Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) accreditation
- Electronic information systems
- Cultural competency
- Immunization polices and practices
- End-of-life practices and care, advance directives
- Special service programs
- Hospitalizations/emergency department admissions
- Medications, pain assessment, and pain relief
- Family and caregiver services
- Community-based waiver program participants
- Pressure ulcers
- Behavior/mood symptoms
- Falls
- Out-of-pocket charges
- Education, specialty credentials, and length of service for key staff

More information on the upcoming survey and data from previous surveys is on the NCHS website at: www.cdc.gov/nchs.

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REFERENCES

1. Early release of selected estimates based on data from the 2006 National Health Interview Survey. National Center for Health Statistics. 2007 Jun 25.
2. Cohen RA, Martinez ME. Health insurance coverage: early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, January–June 2006. National Center for Health Statistics. 2007 Jun 25.