Number of Uninsured Growing

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As the percent of the population with health insurance coverage has fallen—from 86.5 percent in 2001 to 83.7 percent in 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau—the focus on coverage has become more acute.

While 49.9 million people nationwide had no health insurance coverage in 2010, the percentage varies significantly across states, regions, age groups, racial and ethnic groups, and income levels. While the percentage of Americans with private health insurance has dropped, more people are now covered by government health insurance, primarily due to growth in Medicaid enrollment, which is a trend that will likely continue.

In 2010, Massachusetts had the highest percentage of insured residents with 94 percent covered, followed by Hawaii at 92 percent and Minnesota at 90 percent. Texas had the fewest residents insured at 75 percent, with Nevada and Florida—both with 79 percent—close behind.

From 2001 to 2010, the percentage of those insured by government health insurance grew from 25 to 31 percent, primarily due to growth in Medicaid enrollment.

The youngest and oldest members of society were most likely to be insured: 91 percent of those under age 6 and 98 percent of those over age 65 were insured in 2010. The age group of those 25 to 34 had the smallest percentage of insured individuals—72 percent in 2010.

Children in poverty were much more likely to be uninsured than their more financially secure counterparts. In 2010, 9.8 percent of all children—those under 18—were without health insurance, while the uninsured rate for children in poverty was 15.4 percent.

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