Most Ohio adults have favorable view of Medicaid; uninsured rate steady

The Ohio Health Issues Poll (OHIP) is conducted every year to learn more about the health opinions, behaviors and status of Ohio adults. In 2018, OHIP asked Ohio adults several questions about their health insurance coverage, including whether they had insurance, the source of this insurance and their opinion about Medicaid.

WHAT DID OHIP FIND?

OHIP asked, “I’d like to ask you some questions about Medicaid, the government health insurance and long-term care program for low-income adults and children. In general, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of Medicaid?”

Seven in 10 Ohio adults (68%) reported that they have a very or somewhat favorable view of Medicaid. That compares with 2 in 10 adults (19%) with a somewhat or very unfavorable view.

Majorities of all political parties have favorable view of Medicaid

Responses to this question varied by political party, though a majority of each political party held a favorable view. Six in 10 Republicans (57%) and Independents (62%) held a somewhat or very favorable view, compared with 8 in 10 Democrats (84%).

These results are similar to the nation. The Kaiser Family Foundation’s Health Tracking Poll asked this question in February 2018. It found that 74% of adults across the nation had a somewhat or very favorable view of Medicaid. Majorities of all political parties had a favorable view of Medicaid.1

In general, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Medicaid? (Totals may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNFAVORABLE</th>
<th>FAVORABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohio adults</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By political party affiliation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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SOURCE: 2018 Ohio Health Issues Poll (released October 2018)

Percentage of uninsured adults remains steady

OHIP also asked adults whether they had health insurance coverage, and if they did, what kind. Because nearly all adults older than 65 have health insurance coverage through Medicare, the data reported in this section reflects results for Ohioans ages 18 to 64.

In 2018, 1 in 10 Ohio adults ages 18 to 64 (9%) reported that they did not have health insurance coverage. The percentage of adults without health insurance dropped significantly in both Ohio and in the country when the major

Continued on next page


These findings unless otherwise noted are from Interact for Health’s Ohio Health Issues Poll (OHIP) conducted May 22-June 19, 2018, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 816 adults throughout Ohio was interviewed by telephone. This included 363 landline telephone interviews and 452 cell phone interviews. In 95 of 100 cases, statewide estimates will be accurate to ±3.4%. There are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects that can introduce error or bias. For more information about OHIP, please visit www.interactforhealth.org/ohio-health-issues-poll. If you have questions about the data in this document, please contact Susan Sprigg, Research Officer, at 513-458-6609 or ssprigg@interactforhealth.org.
parts of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) were implemented in 2014. In Ohio, about 1 in 10 adults have been uninsured since then.

This is similar to the nation. The National Center for Health Statistics estimates that 13% of all adults ages 18 to 64 were uninsured during January through March 2018.2

**Half get insurance through an employer**

Half of Ohio adults ages 18 to 64 reported that they received insurance through their own or a spouse’s employer (50%). This percentage is similar to 2017, but has gradually decreased since 2015.

Nearly 1 in 4 Ohio adults (24%) received public insurance, including Medicaid, Medicare, veteran benefits and combinations of the three. Nearly 2 in 10 adults (17%) reported they had insurance from another source, including people who bought their own plan, and people who responded “other” or “don’t know.” These percentages are similar to 2017.

**Fewer than 1 in 10 have unstable insurance**

Another way to evaluate access to health care is to look at the stability of health insurance. One measure of stability is whether a person has had continuous health insurance coverage for the past 12 months. In 2018, fewer than 1 in 10 currently insured adults (7%) had gone without health insurance at any time in the past 12 months, the same as in 2017.

**WHY DO WE ASK THESE QUESTIONS?**

Health care is expensive, and most people rely on health insurance to help cover the cost. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was designed to reduce the number of people without insurance coverage. These questions help us understand the impact of the ACA, and monitor whether and how that impact is sustained over time. In addition, assessing public opinion about specific programs such as Medicaid is valuable to inform policymakers as they consider changes to those programs in the future.

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