



# Ohioans' Experiences with Having a Medical Home



Results From The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati



Having a usual clinic, health center, doctor's office, or other place you go if you are sick or need medical advice is known as having a medical home. People who do not have a medical home are less likely to seek appropriate and timely healthcare when they need it.

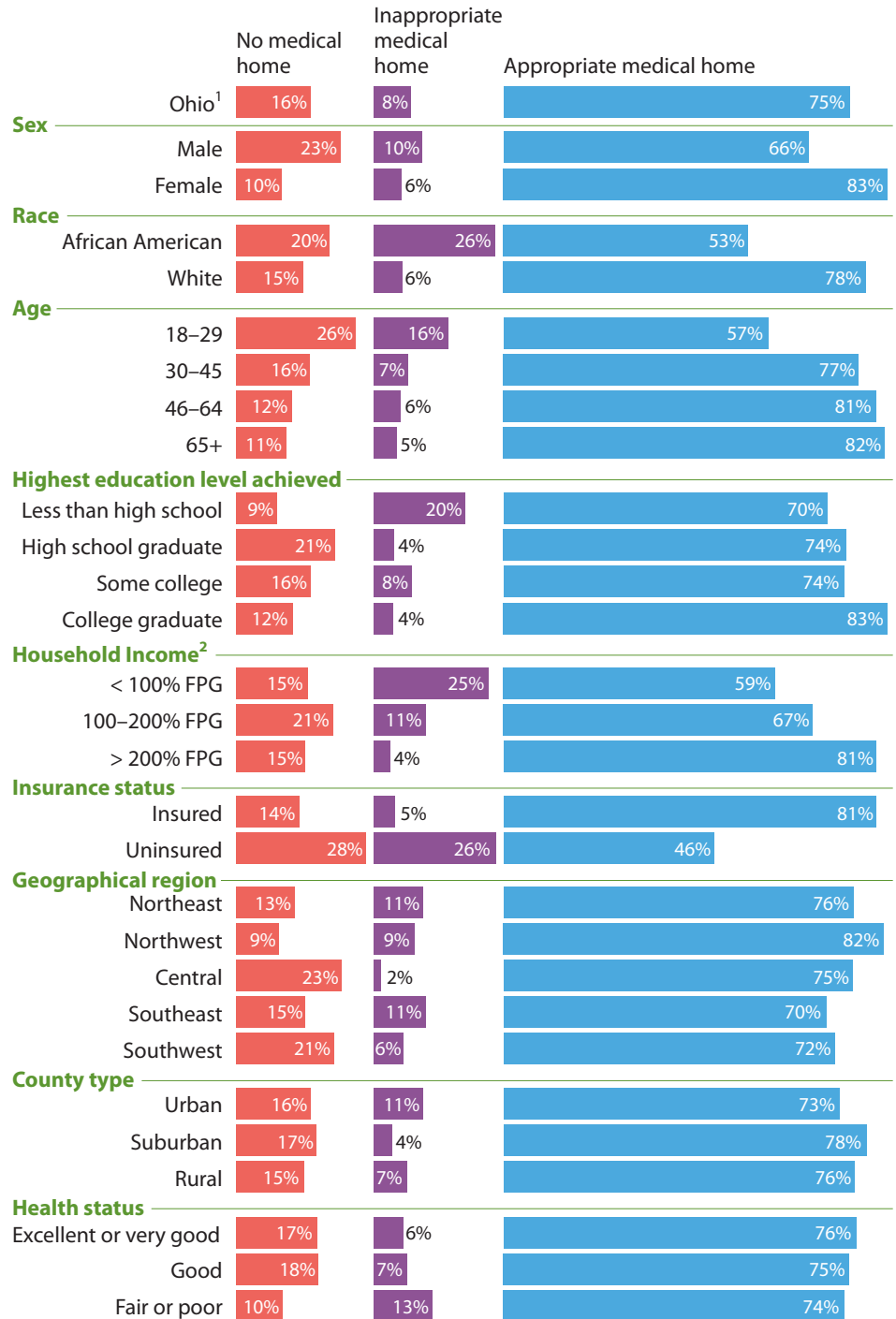
About 84% of Ohio adults indicated that they have a usual place of care, on par with the Healthy People 2010 goal of 85% of people having a usual primary care provider.

## Type of Medical Home

Having a usual primary care provider is only part of the issue. The type of medical home a person has is also important. An appropriate medical home is a place where the staff know you and your health history. The staff provide regular and preventive care and can help catch minor problems before they become serious. Three-fourths of Ohio adults (75%) had an appropriate medical home, such as a private doctor's office, a public health clinic or community health center, or hospital outpatient department.

A hospital emergency room (ER) or urgent care center is not an appropriate medical home. The staff at an ER or urgent care center are less likely to know an

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<sup>1</sup> People reporting they had an "other" place of care are not included, so percentages will not add to 100%.

<sup>2</sup> 100% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG) in 2007 was an annual income of \$20,650 for a family of 4.

individual's health history. Primary care delivered in an ER or urgent care center is much more costly than care through a community health center, clinic, doctor's office, or other primary care setting. It also clogs the system with non-emergency cases, making it more difficult to provide care to those truly in need of emergency services.

## **Ohioans Using the ER or Urgent Care as a Medical Home**

Almost 1 in 10 Ohio adults (8%) reported an inappropriate medical home, such as an ER or urgent care center. For certain demographic groups, however, that rate was three times as high:

- 26% of uninsured Ohioans reported an ER or urgent care center as their usual source of care when they are sick or need advice about their health, compared to 5% of the insured. In addition, 28% of the uninsured reported having no medical home, compared to 14% of the insured.
- 26% of African Americans reported an inappropriate medical home, compared to 6% of whites.
- 25% of Ohioans living below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines<sup>1</sup> (FPG) reported an ER or urgent care center as their usual place for care, compared to 11% of people living between 100–200% FPG and 4% of people living above 200% FPG.

People living in Central Ohio were least likely to report having an inappropriate medical home: only 2% of adults living in Central Ohio reported having an ER or urgent care as their usual source of care. At the same time, however, 23% of adults in Central Ohio reported having no medical home.

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<sup>1</sup> 100% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG) in 2007 was an annual income of \$20,650 for a family of 4.