

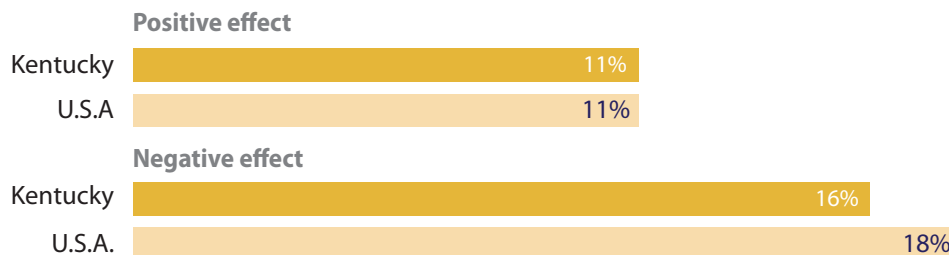
# Has the Affordable Care Act affected Kentuckians?

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), which became law in March 2010, is being gradually phased in through 2014. Some parts of the law designed to protect consumers have already taken effect:

- Children can stay on their parents' insurance until age 26;
- The full cost of preventive services is covered, with no co-payments;
- The Medicare doughnut hole – a coverage gap in which Medicare recipients pay the full cost of prescription drugs – is slowly being closed;
- Some prescription drug costs have been reduced;
- Children with pre-existing conditions cannot be denied insurance, and;
- Some states, including Kentucky, have created high-risk pools to provide more affordable health insurance to people with pre-existing conditions.

Have Kentuckians experienced any changes because of the ACA? To find out, the 2011 **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)** asked Kentucky adults whether they or their families have been affected by the law.

## Adults reporting the Affordable Care Act had an effect on them or their family<sup>1</sup>



## Nearly 3 in 10 Kentuckians already reporting changes because of ACA

When asked about the ACA's impact on them and their families, nearly 2 in 10 Kentucky adults (16%) said the law had negatively affected them, while 1 in 10 said they had been positively affected (11%). More than 6 in 10 said the law had not affected them or their family (64%). An additional 1 in 10 said they didn't know if the law had affected them (8%) or the law affected them both positively and negatively (1%).

National results are similar, with nearly 2 in 10 (18%) reporting that they or their family have been

negatively affected by the health reform law (18%) and 1 in 10 (11%) reporting that they or their families had personally benefited from the health reform law (11%).<sup>1</sup>

## Positive, negative perception varies by political party

More Democrats (14%) than Republicans (7%) in Kentucky reported positive benefits from the law, while more Republicans (20%) than Democrats (10%) reported negative effects.

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<sup>1</sup> National results are from the November 2011 Kaiser Health Tracking Poll, available at: <http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/8259.cfm>. Question wording differed slightly between KHIP and the Kaiser Health Tracking Poll.

These findings unless otherwise noted are from the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, funded by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati. The Kentucky Health Issues Poll was conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 27, 2011, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 1,621 adults from throughout Kentucky was interviewed by telephone. This included 1,313 landline interviews and 308 cell phone interviews. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to  $\pm 2.5\%$ . 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 the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, please visit [www.healthy-ky.org](http://www.healthy-ky.org) or [www.healthfoundation.org/khip.html](http://www.healthfoundation.org/khip.html).

## Perceived effects center on cost and coverage

Whether Kentuckians reported being positively or negatively affected by the ACA, the reasons they believe they were affected were related to cost and health insurance issues.

The top reasons Kentuckians reported being negatively affected by the law:

- Increased out-of-pocket, insurance or medication costs (41%)
- Reduced quality of care, including reduced insurance coverage and increased wait times (19%)

The top reasons Kentuckians reported being positively affected by the law:

- Lowered out-of-pocket, insurance or medication costs (38%)
- Expanded coverage for children, pre-existing conditions and services that were not previously covered (27%)
- Health reform has generally helped me or others (17%)