



AETNA FOUNDATION
CHILDREN'S FUND OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HEALTH FOUNDATION
DONAGHUE MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION
FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH
UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

News Release

GROUNDBREAKING SURVEY YIELDS ROAD MAP FOR HEALTH IMPROVEMENT IN CONNECTICUT AND BEYOND

-- Study Funded by Six Health Foundations in Unique Collaborative Effort --

HARTFORD, Conn., May 14, 2014 —The Connecticut Health Care Survey, a groundbreaking study of Connecticut residents' views on their health and health care, shows that many here have access to and receive consistent, high quality health care. However, much work remains to be done, particularly as it relates to chronic disease prevalence among adults and children.

As noted in the Executive Summary of The Connecticut Health Care Survey, which was released by the survey's funders today, the survey "provides a rich source of self-reported data on the health and health care of Connecticut residents, including health insurance coverage, access and sources of care, continuity of care, health status and patient-provider experience."

Driven by Collaboration

Six health foundations in Connecticut sponsored the survey, marking an unprecedented level of cooperation and collaboration in pursuit of the shared goal of a healthier population. The funders include: The Aetna Foundation; Connecticut Health Foundation; the Patrick and Catherine Weldon Donaghue Medical Research Foundation; the Foundation for Community Health; Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut; and the Children's Fund of Connecticut. The study was conducted by the Office of Survey Research at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

To review the executive summary and other survey-related materials, please visit The Foundation for Community Health at http://www.fchealth.org/index.php/publications_media/ct_healthcare_survey .

Speaking as a collaborative group, the funders noted: “The Connecticut Health Survey is a first of its kind in terms of the information it sought and its collaborative genesis and funding. The results will set a baseline of data from which improvements or declines in population health can be measured. This data provides a meaningful and valuable foundation for further efforts to improve the health status of everyone in Connecticut. We are proud to present this work of four years to the State and to all parties to the health care system here. We hope it will be used as intended: to inform future health policy and programs; and to measure their impact. We look forward to working with policy-makers, regulators, and other health foundations here and elsewhere to explore the opportunities highlighted by this survey and to measure changes driven by new policy and new law, including the Affordable Care Act.”

Survey Findings Point to Needed Improvement

Among the many findings in the survey, as highlighted in the Executive Summary, was information indicating that Connecticut residents, and particularly children, are generally healthier and have better access to a routine source of care and insurance coverage than national averages. However, a number of measures are concerning including the following which represent the full population surveyed. The full survey and the Executive Summary also show that in the following areas and others, disparities in care by race and ethnicity persist.

- Some 13 percent of adults report their health to be fair or poor, which is similar to national estimates, and 45 percent report having been told by a health professional that they have diabetes, hypertension, asthma, heart disease and/or cancer – all of which can lead to substantial health care costs if not managed carefully.
- Among adults, 11 percent experienced a time in the prior year when they could not get the care they needed, and 28 percent reported postponing needed medical care in the prior year. Among these two groups, 59 percent said worrying about the cost was the predominant reason for their unmet medical needs.
- Having a usual source of care to promote patient-doctor continuity and improved trust and communication is generally aligned with better patient satisfaction and improved health outcomes. In Connecticut, 86 percent of adults reported having a usual place to go for medical care, which is comparable to the national average of 84 percent. Within this group, 18 percent identified a clinic or health center as their usual place to go for medical care, which is just shy of the national rate of 21 percent. Also within this group, 86 percent reported always seeing the same provider.

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- In terms of children, 34 percent of parents reported that their children were overweight or obese, which is similar to 2012 national rates, and 13 percent of children were reported to have asthma compared to the national reported average of 9.3 percent.
- Also among children, 98.5 percent were reported to have health insurance and 98 percent had a usual place to go for medical care.
- Regarding dental care, 71 percent of adults and 93 percent of children were reported to have had a preventive dental visit in the prior year.

Conducted between June 2012 and February 2013, the telephonic survey sought information from Connecticut residents about themselves and about the children within their household. A total of 5,447 surveys were completed – 4,608 regarding adults and 839 regarding children – with households from across Connecticut in urban, suburban and rural areas.

Greater Detail in Key Areas to Be Presented

Four of the funding health foundations are developing detailed “Policy Briefs” that will focus on specific areas of interest and concern in health care. Together with the Executive Summary, these briefs will help inform Connecticut agencies and policymakers on specific steps that can be made to improve the health of Connecticut residents.

The Aetna Foundation’s Policy Brief will be focused on the patient experience of health care:

- *Patient Engagement and Provider Support of Chronic Disease Self-management*

The Children’s Fund of Connecticut’s Policy Brief will more closely examine children’s receipt of health services that are consistent with the medical home model of care:

- *Children’s Experiences with Health Services: Results from the Connecticut Health Survey*

The Connecticut Health Foundation’s Policy Brief will examine health equity:

- *Health Inequities in Connecticut and the Vital Role of the Safety Net*

Universal Health Care Foundation’s Policy Brief will delve into issues affecting and resulting from access to care:

- *Access to Coverage and Care: Targeting Implementation of the Affordable Care Act to Improve Health in Connecticut*

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Opportunities to Learn More

A discussion about the survey and its implications for the health of Connecticut residents will be held at WNPR's Health Equity Forum on May 21. The conversation will be recorded for WNPR's *Where We Live*, hosted by John Dankosky. The segment is expected to air on May 27 and on June 24. For more information, please visit WNPR.org.

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