

Hennepin County
Public Health
Assessment Team

FACT SHEET



The unmet medical care needs among Hennepin County adults

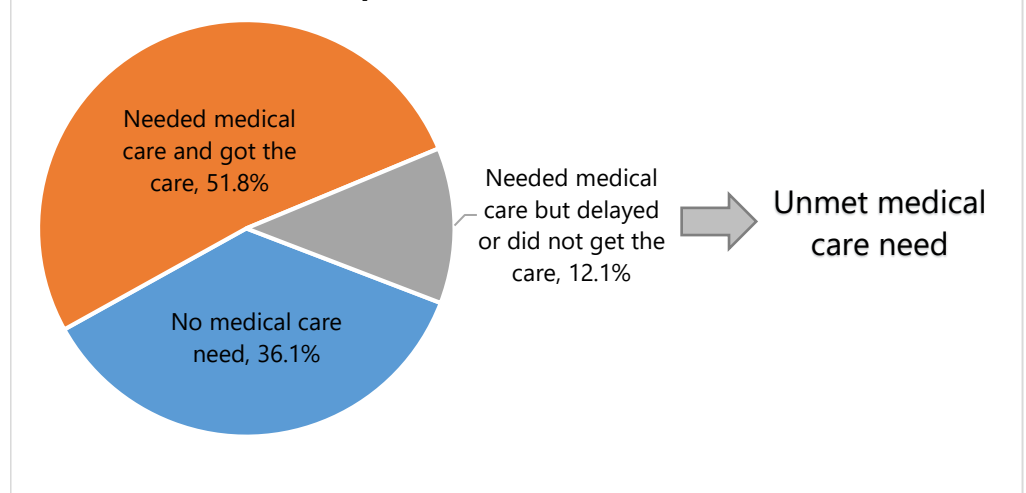
Why is this indicator important?

Unmet medical care needs, defined as either being unable to obtain or delaying needed medical care, represent a measure of access to health care. Unmet health care needs depend on the characteristics of the health care system and on the particular circumstances of the individuals seeking care, and are associated with negative health outcomes. Any inequalities in unmet care needs may result in poorer health status and increase health inequalities¹.

What is the current status?

In 2014, 12 percent of Hennepin County adults aged 25 and older reported they had unmet medical health care needs, meaning they either did not receive or delayed getting needed care. (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percentage of unmet medical needs during the past 12 months, 2014



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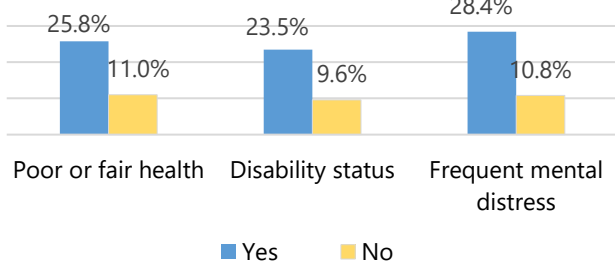
For more information on the health of Hennepin County residents, visit: www.Hennepin.us/PublicHealthData or email: PublicHealthData@hennepin.us

What are the disparities?

Overall, females (13%) reported a higher rate of unmet medical care needs than males (13% vs. 11%) and young adults (13% to 15% for those under 55) reported higher rate than older adults (10% or under). The populations affected the most are US-born blacks (25%), low income (21%), and LGBT (21%), especially those identifying as bisexual (28%).

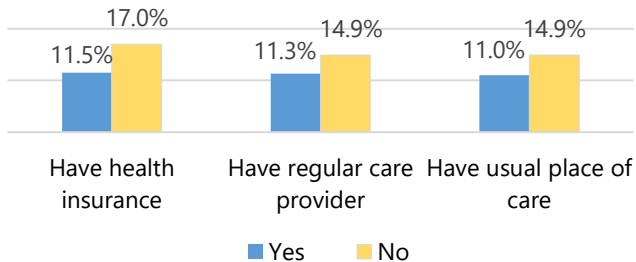
The rates of unmet medical care needs among those who have overall poor health, have a disability or experienced frequent mental distress is at least double the rate among those who do not (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percentage of unmet medical care need by selected health conditions, 2014



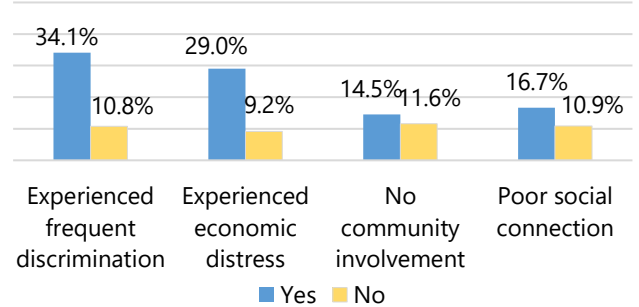
Health access matters. Hennepin County residents who have health insurance, have a personal care provider or have a usual place of care are much less likely to report unmet medical care needs than their counterparts who do not (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percentage of unmet medical care need by selected health access factors, 2014



Residents who experienced frequent discrimination or economic distress reported a rate three times that of those who did not. The rate is also higher among those who lack community involvement or have poor social connections. (Figure 4).

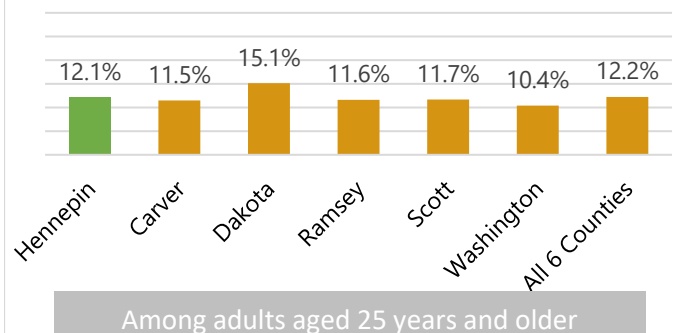
Figure 4. Percentage of unmet medical care need by social and community factors, 2014



How do we compare?

The rate of unmet medical care needs (12%) in Hennepin County is comparable to the rates among other Minnesota metro counties. However, this rate is much higher than the Healthy People 2020 Objective 1 of 4.2%. Note the Healthy People 2020 measure has a more specific definition of unmet medical care need.

Figure 5. Percentage of unmet medical care need - how do we compare?



Data source: The data shown in this fact sheet for Hennepin and other metro counties come from the Metro SHAPE 2014 survey. Details can be found at www.hennepin.us/shape

Definition of indicator: Unmet medical care need is derived from response of two survey questions: "During the past 12 months, was there a time when you needed medical care? And if Yes, "Did you delay or not get the care you thought you needed?"

Definition of many other indicators or measurements used in this factsheet can be found in the technical notes section of Metro SHAPE 2014 Hennepin County Geographic Data Book, accessible at www.hennepin.us/shape

Reference:

1. Healthy People 2020 [Internet]. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion [cited [Accessed on December 15, 2015]. Available from: <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/Access-to-Health-Services>