

## Health Insurance and West Virginia's Older Adults

The *West Virginia Healthcare Survey, 2001* was the largest and most comprehensive survey of health insurance ever completed in this state. The survey was commissioned by the leadership of the state agencies that pay for, provide or regulate the healthcare delivery system. The survey was conducted in order to provide the first account of health insurance in West Virginia at the county level. The survey not only identified the uninsured, but also furnished information about the circumstances of their lives. It characterized coverage of the uninsured and profiled their employers. It examined how people used the healthcare system, and whether or not their access was impacted by their health insurance status. The survey was completed again in 2003, but on a much smaller scale. This fact sheet will provide information on some of the changes that occurred between 2001 and 2003.

- Between 2001 and 2003, West Virginia lost 50,248 residents. Of these, 12,899 were older adults ages 65+ (a loss of 4.7 percent of this population).
- In 2003, 64.2 percent of older adults had prescription drug coverage – a 4.2 percent decrease since 2001. Older adults with UMWA coverage were most likely to have prescription drug coverage (85.9 percent), followed by those with Medicare and a supplement (68.6 percent), then Medicare and Medicaid (66.0 percent), and Medicare only (52.9 percent).
- Although there was a 3.1 percent decrease in the percent of older adults that were able to receive all of the medical care that they needed during the past year, most older adults (91.3 percent) were still able to get all of the care that they needed.
- From 2001 to 2003, there was a 30.9 percent decrease in the percent of older adults that were in very good to excellent health and a 36.0 percent increase in the percent that were in poor to very poor health.
- From 2001 to 2003 there were decreases in the percentages of older adults with UMWA (an 8.4 percent decrease), Medicare and Medicaid (a 14.7 percent decrease), and Medicare only (a 2.4 percent decrease) that were in good, very good, or excellent health. The only group with an increase in good, very good, or excellent health was the group with Medicare and a supplement (a 2.6 percent increase).