

UNDERSTANDING THE **UNINSURED** ***NOW.***

June 2015

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 

+gmmb

 **PERRYUNDEM**
RESEARCH/COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation commissioned PerryUndem Research/Communication to conduct a national survey of uninsured adults ages 18 to 64 at the conclusion of the second open enrollment period for the health insurance marketplace. Working closely with GMMB, PerryUndem developed a survey intended to offer a full picture of the lives of the uninsured and explore their feelings about enrolling in health insurance.

Methods.

- Survey fielded May 5-17, 2015.
- N=1,270 adults 18-64.
- N=469 Latinos.
- English and Spanish.
- All respondents were uninsured at time of survey.
- We did not screen participants on citizenship status.
- Margin of sampling error: +/- 3.4 percentage points.

The survey was conducted using GfK's KnowledgePanel (KP). KP is the only probability-based web panel designed to be representative of the United States. The panel is constructed with probability-based sampling from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File, which allows for an estimated 97 percent of households to be covered. Respondents without Internet access or a computer are provided with both for participation.

6 TAKEAWAYS.



1. Most uninsured individuals think that having health insurance is important. More than four in ten have looked into getting insurance on their own in the last year and 56% say they are likely to go to the marketplace in the future.
2. Cost remains the main barrier to insurance. Those who have looked made a calculated decision based on more than just the premium. They also consider out-of-pocket expenses, deductibles, co-pays and other factors in their decision.
3. Many are struggling financially but are optimistic about the future. They believe their finances will improve soon and that they may get insurance then.
4. There are other reasons uninsured individuals may be putting off insurance: the ability to still get care and pay for it out-of-pocket even without insurance and a perception of insurance as a “commitment” rather than something temporary to get in between jobs.
5. Almost half (47%) have not gone to the health insurance marketplace and another 10% are unsure if they have. This means there is still a substantial number of uninsured to reach with information encouraging them to look into their options.
6. There are substantial knowledge gaps around the tax credits and special enrollment periods that need to be filled. Education about the increasing fine amount could drive about one-quarter of the uninsured to enroll.



THEY FEEL HEALTH INSURANCE IS IMPORTANT.



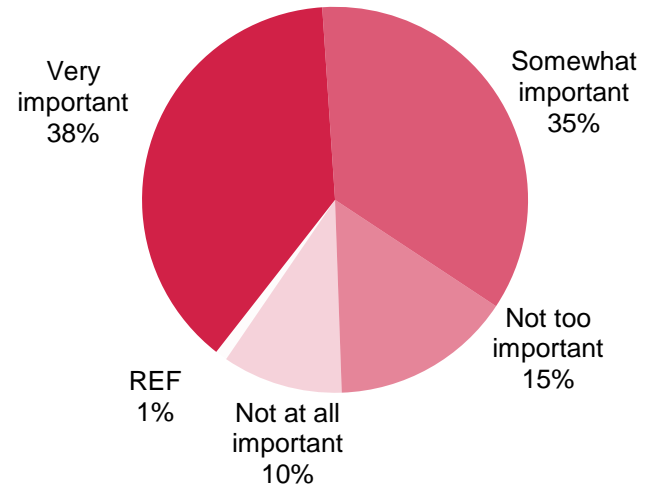
While diverse in many ways, the uninsured share one thing in common: most feel health insurance is important, and many have tried to get it or plan to get it in the future.

43% have looked to get health insurance in the last 12 months and 41% went to the marketplace to look at health plans.

56% of the uninsured say they are likely to look into health plans available through the marketplace in the future.

Almost three-quarters say health insurance is important.

Given everything in your life these days, how important is it to you to have health insurance?
n=1270



THEY ARE MAKING COST CALCULATIONS.

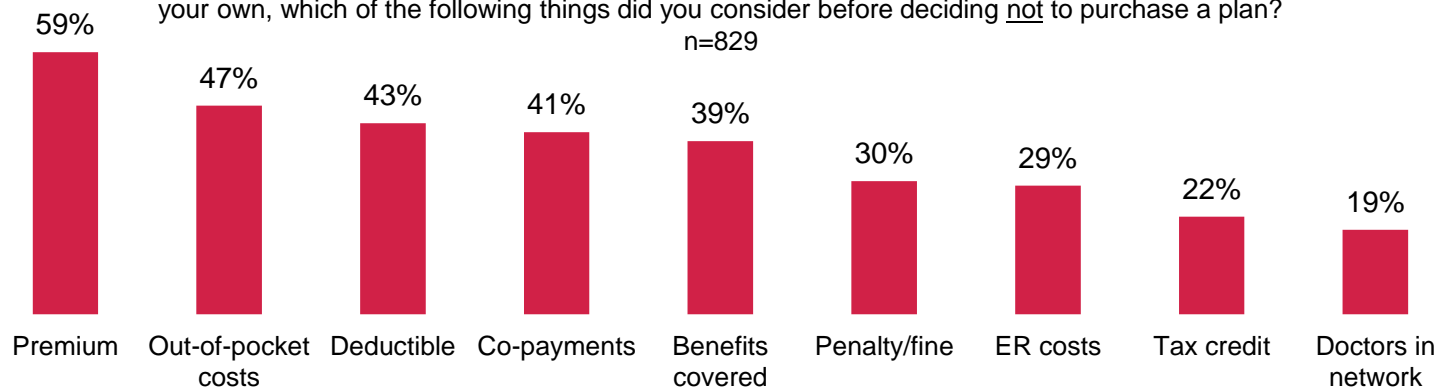
Most of the uninsured point to the costs of health insurance as the main reason they do not have it currently. Many of those who have looked to purchase it on their own considered a range of insurance costs and other factors – not just the premium. They seem to be making calculated decisions about whether they can fit insurance into their budgets or not. One piece of information they may be missing, however, is the tax credit.

79% of those who looked for health insurance say that after considering everything, they could not afford a plan.

It's not just the premium.

[If has looked for insurance before]: Thinking about the last time you looked for health insurance on your own, which of the following things did you consider before deciding not to purchase a plan?

n=829



3.

MONEY IS TIGHT BUT THEY ARE OPTIMISTIC.

UNDERSTANDING THE UNINSURED NOW.

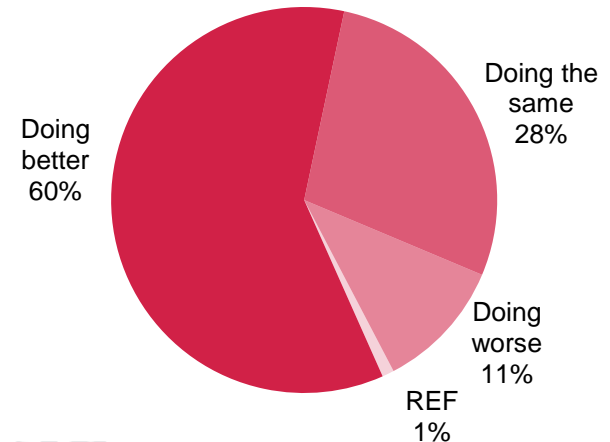
Health insurance is a financial stretch for many uninsured right now. But most expect to be doing better financially a year from now – and many think they will get insurance then.

Most are struggling financially...

- 58% have \$100 or less left over each month after paying bills.
- 56% have less than \$100 in savings.
- 68% have debt—53% of this group has debt over \$10,000.

...But they expect to be doing better in a year.

When you think of your finances a year from now, do you expect to be doing about the same, better, or worse than you are now? Use a scale of +5 (better), 0 (same) , -5 (worse). n=1270



41% are confident they will have health insurance within the next 12 months.

4.

THEY HAVE REASONS TO PUT OFF GETTING INSURANCE.

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NOW.

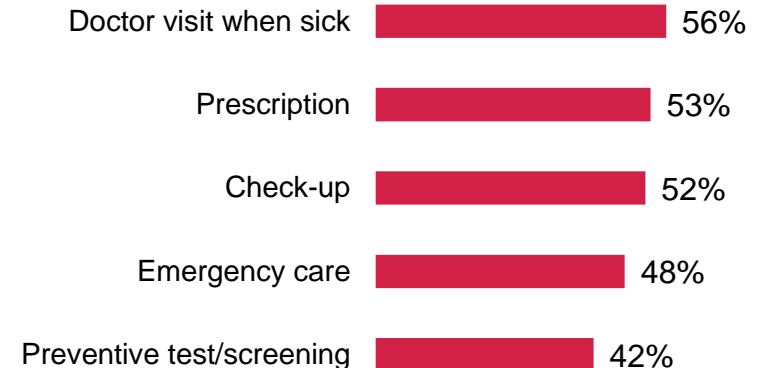
While cost is the top barrier to insurance, there may be other reasons why some uninsured individuals put off getting insurance. These include knowing they can still get care and pay out of pocket if need be, and their perception of health insurance as a “commitment” and not something that can be temporary, between jobs.

only
17% say they would consider signing up for insurance on a short-term basis while 37% said they would not and 44% said “maybe.”

Most are confident they can get care without insurance.

How confident are you that you could get the following care and manage the costs without health insurance? n=1270

Very/somewhat confident



5.

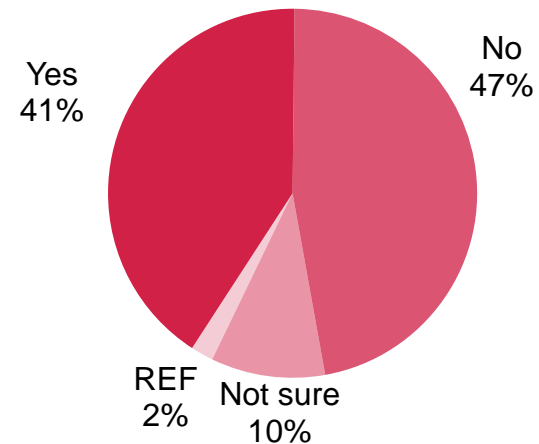
MANY HAVE NOT YET LOOKED INTO THE MARKETPLACE.

UNDERSTANDING THE
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NOW.

About four in ten uninsured report they have looked into the health insurance marketplace at some point. However, an equally important finding is that almost six in ten have NOT yet gone to the marketplace or are unsure if they have gone or not. This group represents an important target group for information, messages and enrollment assistance.

Almost half did not look into the marketplace for insurance.

HealthCare.gov/state marketplace is a place for people to find affordable health insurance. Have you ever looked into the new health plans available through HealthCare.gov/state marketplace? n=1270



6. THEY NEED INFORMATION, HELP.

Even after two enrollment periods, many uninsured individuals lack knowledge about tax credits, special enrollment periods and the fine. Providing ongoing and straightforward information on these issues could move more uninsured towards enrolling in insurance. Also, the survey found that most uninsured would like to talk with someone when signing up for insurance.

They want help:

71% say it would be important for them to talk with someone when buying insurance.

The increasing fine motivates some:

26% say the increasing fine amount would make them more likely to get insurance.

59% either say they do not understand how the tax credits work (34%), or that they have never heard of the tax credits before (25%).

60% have not heard they can enroll outside of the open enrollment period if they have a qualifying life event (43%), or are not sure if they have heard this before (17%).

60% have not heard about the special enrollment period in 2015 for those who had to pay a fine in their taxes (44%), or are not sure if they heard this before (16%).

FINDINGS



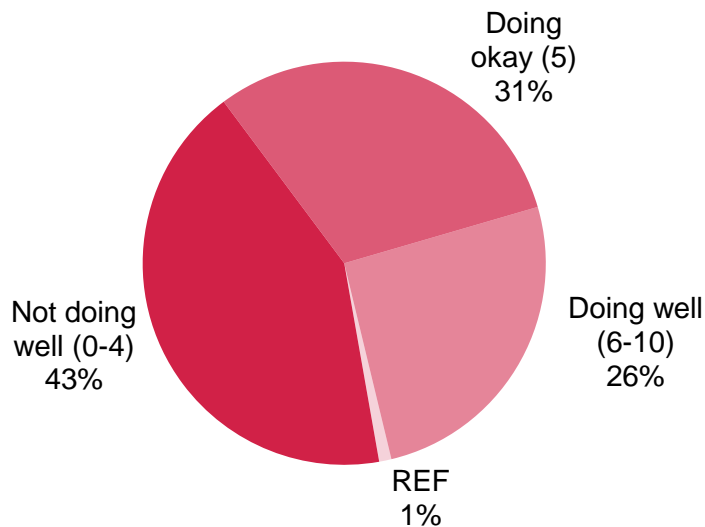
THEIR LIVES.

MANY CHALLENGES AND TRANSITIONS.



Only one-quarter say they are doing well financially.

Thinking about your finances, how would you say things are going for you these days? Use the scale below (0-10). n=1270



Many are experiencing change.

More than half of the uninsured (52%) have experienced a life change in the last 12 months:

- 21% Became unemployed.
- 18% Moved homes.
- 17% Changed jobs.
- 16% Experienced the death of a loved one.
- 4% Started school.
- 3% Started a business.
- 3% Had a child.

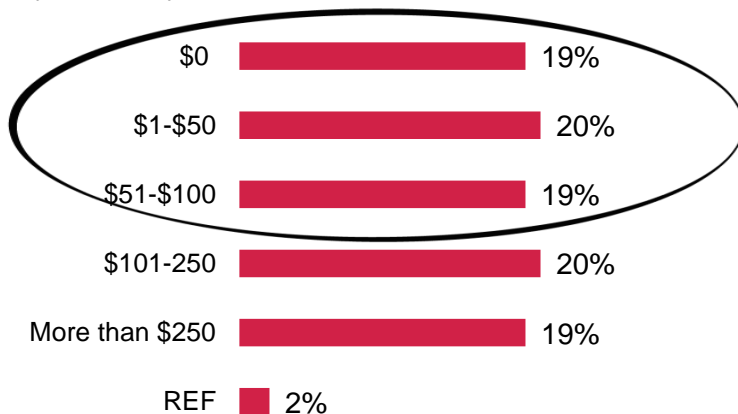
31% have an ongoing medical condition.

MONEY IS TIGHT.



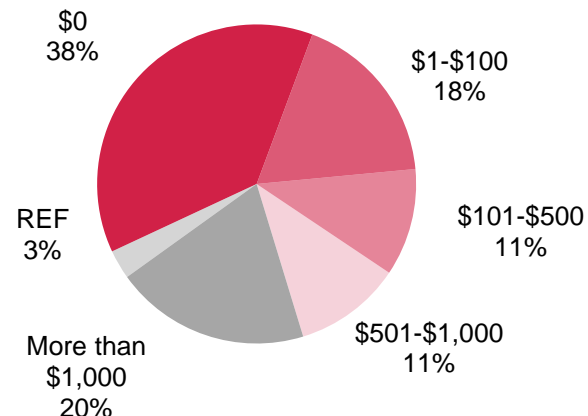
58% have \$100 or less left over every month after paying bills.

After bills and necessary expenses, how much money do you usually have left over for extras each month? n=1270



More than half have less than \$100 in savings.

How much do you have in savings right now? n=1270



68% are in debt.*

Nearly half of this group has medical debt.

Amount overall debt:

- 10% \$1-\$1,000
- 20% \$1,001-\$5,000
- 16% \$5,001-\$10,000
- 18% \$10,001-\$20,000
- 18% \$20,001-\$50,000
- 17% More than \$50,000

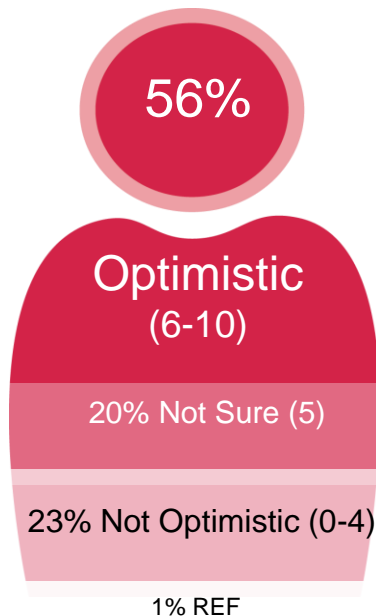
* Financial debt is higher among individuals who own their homes. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of uninsured home-owners report having financial debt. Additionally, home-owners report higher debt figures: 65% have more than \$10,000 in debt — with 27% owing more than \$50,000.

BUT THEY ARE OPTIMISTIC.



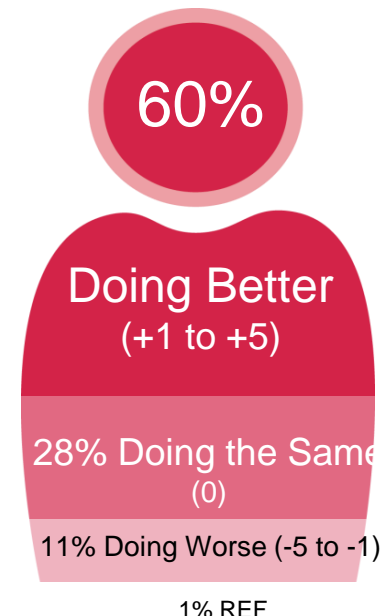
Most believe life will get better soon.

Thinking about the next year, how optimistic are you that life is going to get better and easier? Use the 0-10 scale.
n=1270



Most also expect to be in better financial shape in a year.

When you think of your finances a year from now, do you expect to be doing about the same, better, or worse than you are now? Use a scale of +5 (better), 0 (same), -5 (worse). n=1270

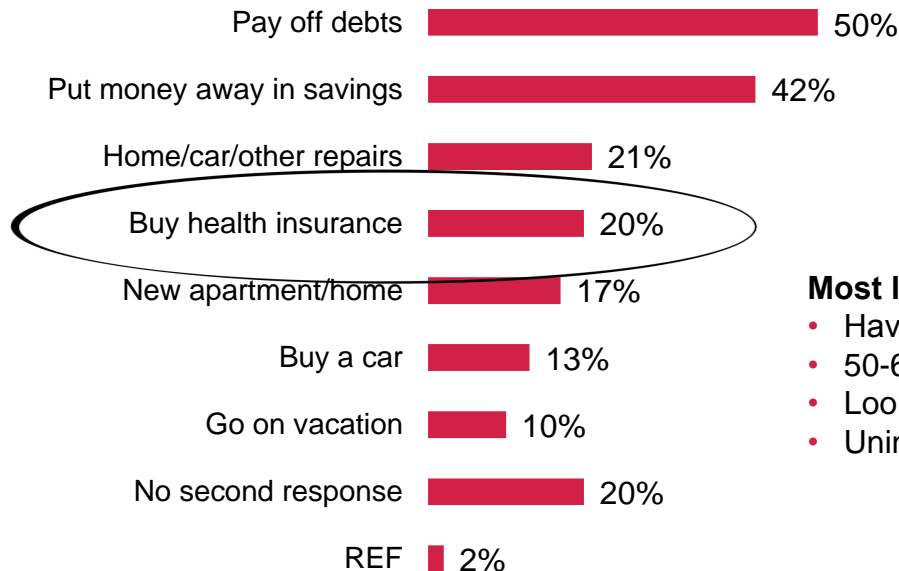


WHEN LIFE GETS BETTER, THEY HAVE OTHER PRIORITIES.



When they are doing better, they will pay down their debt and put money into savings before anything else.

Here are some things people might do when they feel like they're doing better financially. Which would be your top two priorities? (Answers below are combined). n=1270



Most likely to answer “buy health insurance”:

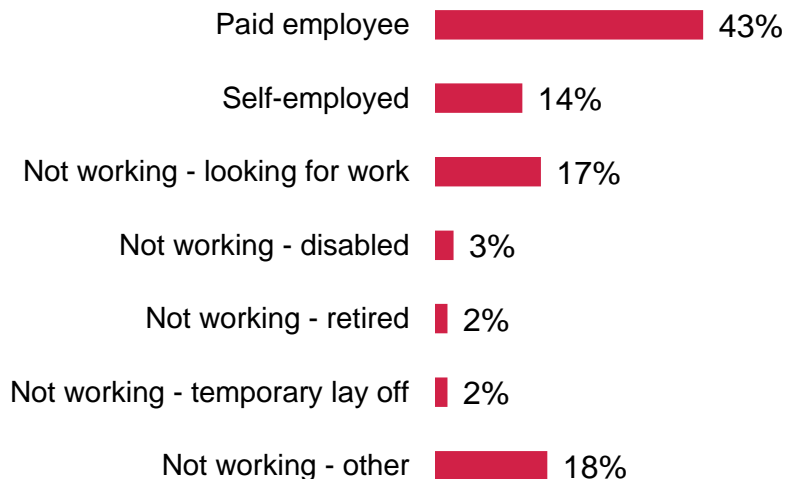
- Having insurance “very” important (31%)
- 50-64 year olds (30%)
- Looked into marketplace (27%)
- Uninsured 2-10 years (25%)

MOST WORK BUT THEIR EMPLOYERS CHANGE.



57% of the uninsured are working...

Which statement best describes your current employment status? n=1270



...But their job situation may change in the near future.

Looking ahead two years...

51%

of the employed uninsured say they will either start a new job (38%) or change jobs (13%). In addition, 14% will take on a second or third job, 5% think they will quit or lose a job, and 2% plan to retire.

41% of the employed uninsured say they have had three or more employers in the last five years.

MOST OF THE EMPLOYED ARE HOURLY WORKERS IN SMALL COMPANIES.



Important details about the employed uninsured include:

88% are hourly workers – not salaried.

76% work more than 30 paid hours a week.

65% report working for employers with less than 50 employees (57% say they work for companies with 25 or fewer employees).

14%
of the employed
uninsured have more
than one job.

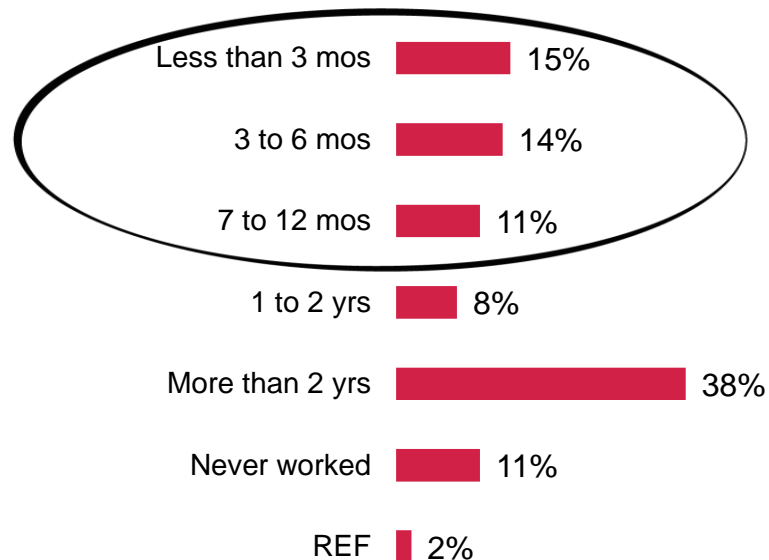
More than half of the employed uninsured (55%) work in just five industries:

- construction (14%)
- retail (13%)
- food/accommodation services (12%)
- manufacturing (8%)
- health care/social services (8%)

MANY OF THE UNEMPLOYED ONLY RECENTLY LOST EMPLOYMENT.

Many are only recently unemployed.

How long has it been since you last worked? n=380*

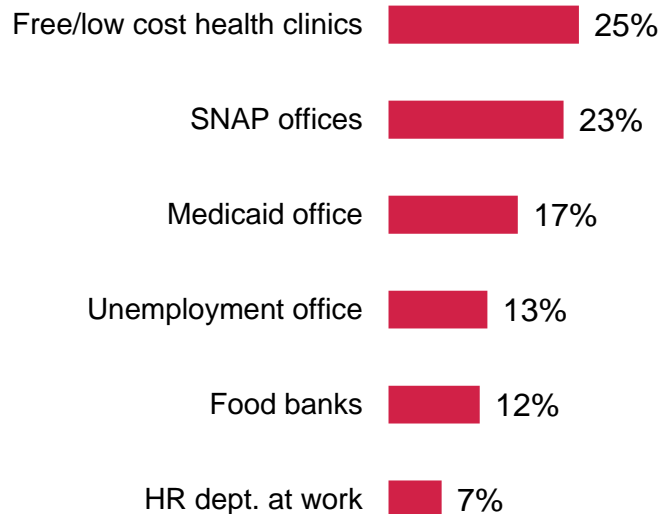


*68% of unemployed individuals received questions about their employment – those who answered “looking for work,” “temporary lay off,” and some who answered “unemployed - other.”

MOST HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH GOV'T PROGRAMS, SAFETY NET.



Have you had contact with any of the following in the last five years? Select all that apply. n=1270



54%
of the uninsured
have been to at
least one of these
places in the last
five years.

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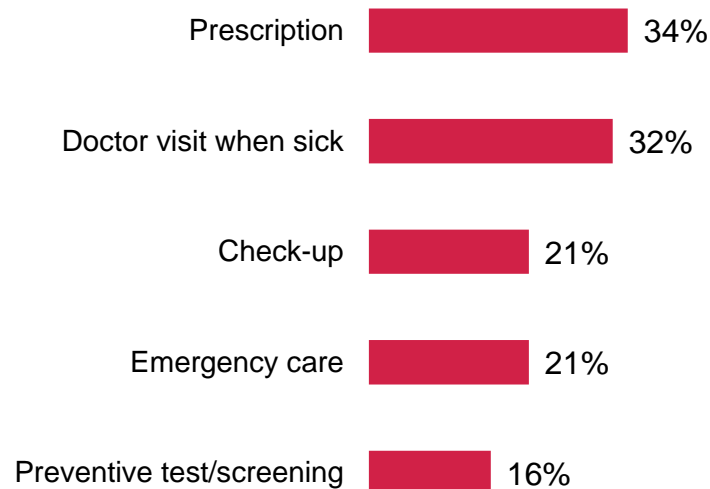
GETTING CARE.

MOST ARE GETTING CARE WITHOUT INSURANCE.



54% of the uninsured have had at least one of these medical services since being uninsured.

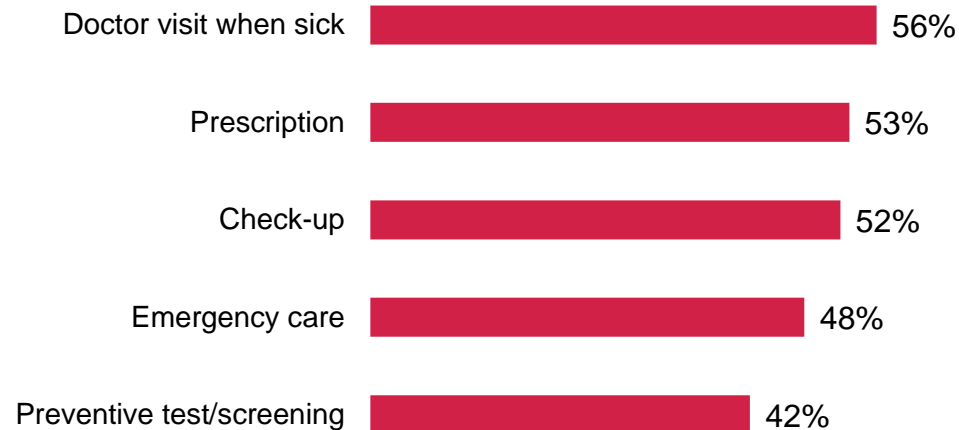
Have you had any of the following since you have been uninsured? n=1270



MOST FEEL THEY CAN MANAGE THE COSTS.



How confident are you that you could get the following care and manage the costs without health insurance? n=1270
Very/somewhat confident

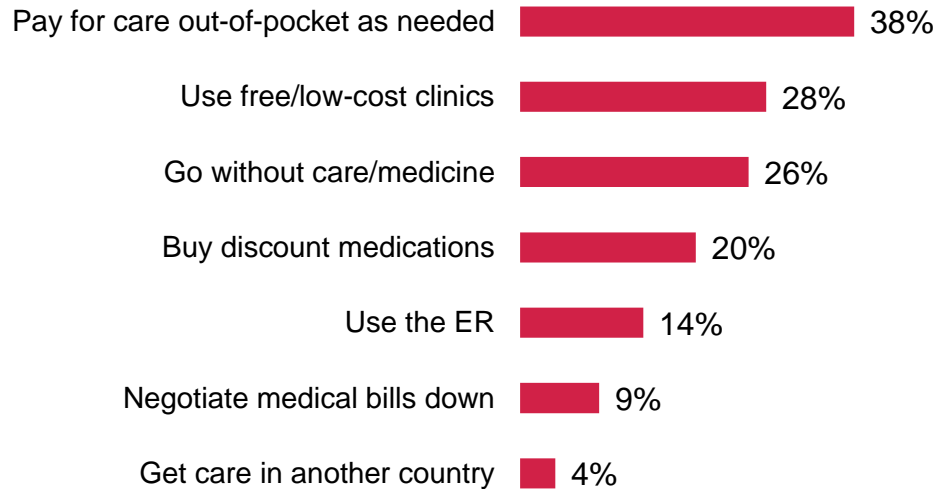


46% think it is “easy” to get prescriptions without insurance.

THEY COPE BY PAYING OUT OF POCKET OR SKIPPING CARE.



Have you done any of the following to deal with the costs of your health care since you became uninsured? n=1270

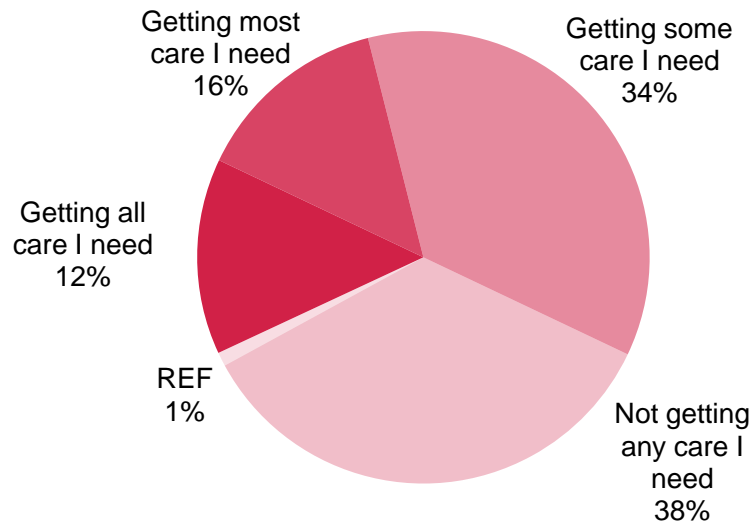


74% have done at least one of these things since becoming uninsured.

THOSE WITH ONGOING MEDICAL NEEDS ARE NOT COPING AS WELL.

31% of the uninsured say they have an ongoing medical condition.

(If ongoing medical condition) Do you feel you are getting the care you need? n=441



only
28%
of those with ongoing
needs feel they are
getting all or most of the
care they need.

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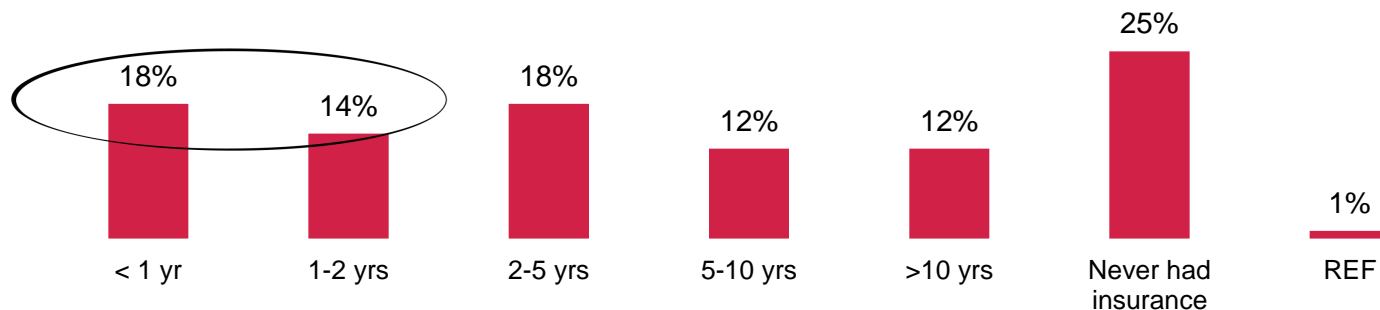
GETTING **INSURANCE.**



ABOUT ONE-THIRD HAD INSURANCE WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS.



When was the last time you had health insurance? n=1270



(Asked of those who have had health insurance at some point in their life) What was the main source of your insurance last time you had it? n=987

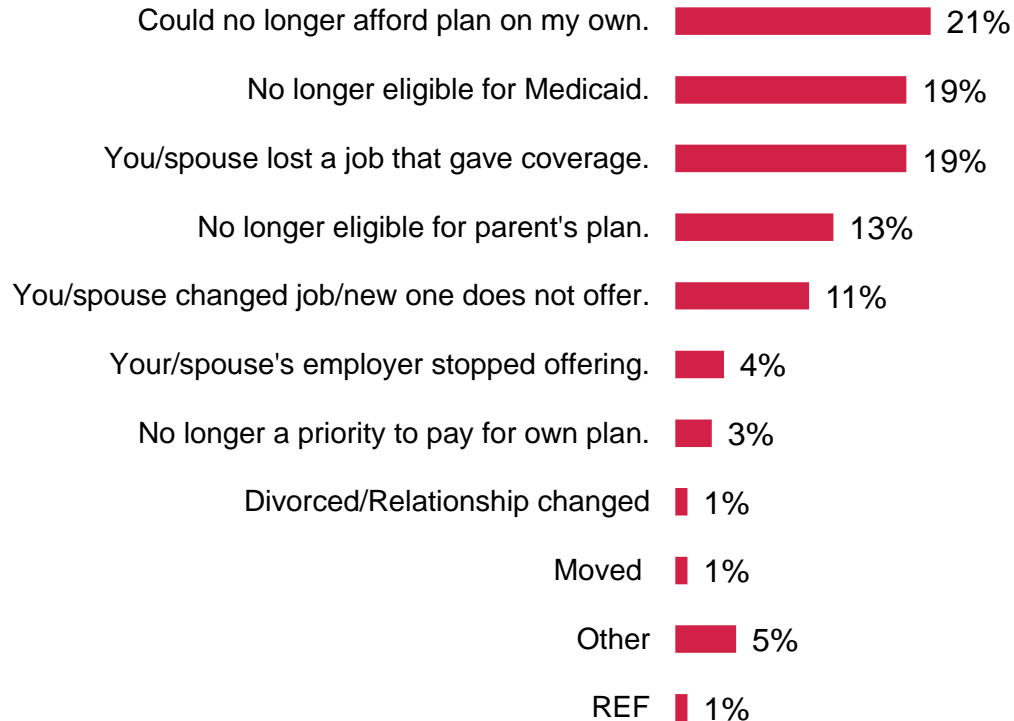
- 41% my work
- 20% Medicaid
- 15% my parent's plan
- 10% my spouse's/partner's work
- 9% I bought my own insurance
- 0% COBRA

28%
of individuals with incomes <139% FPL say Medicaid was their last source of insurance

COST, LOST MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT ARE REASONS THEY LOST INSURANCE.



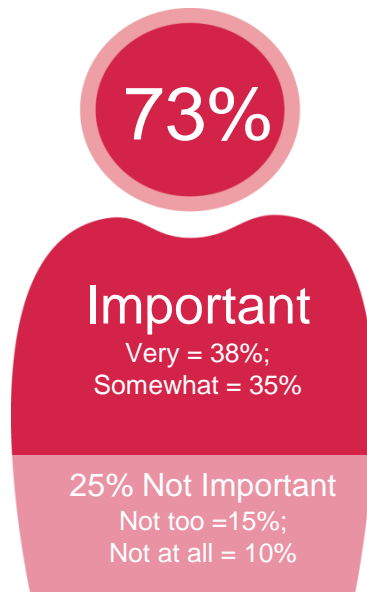
(If previously had insurance) What led to your being uninsured? n=987



ALMOST THREE-QUARTERS SAY INSURANCE IS IMPORTANT.



Given everything in your life these days, how important is it to you to have health insurance? n=1270



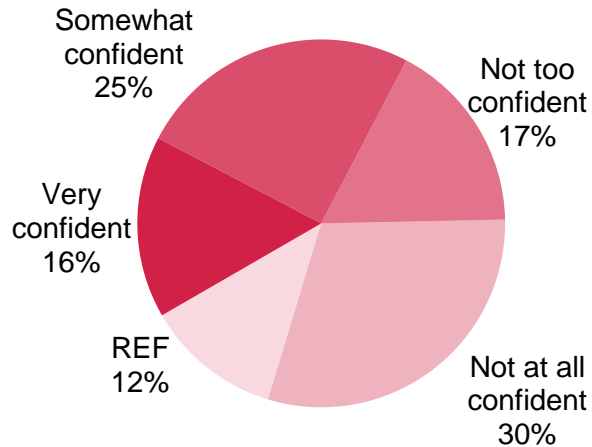
1% REF

- Those most likely to say health insurance is “very” important: (total 38%)**
- Spanish-speaking Latinos (54%)
 - Uninsured less than a year (48%)
 - African Americans (47%)
 - 50-64 years old (46%)
 - Women (44%)

FOUR IN TEN BELIEVE THEY WILL GET INSURANCE WITHIN 12 MONTHS.

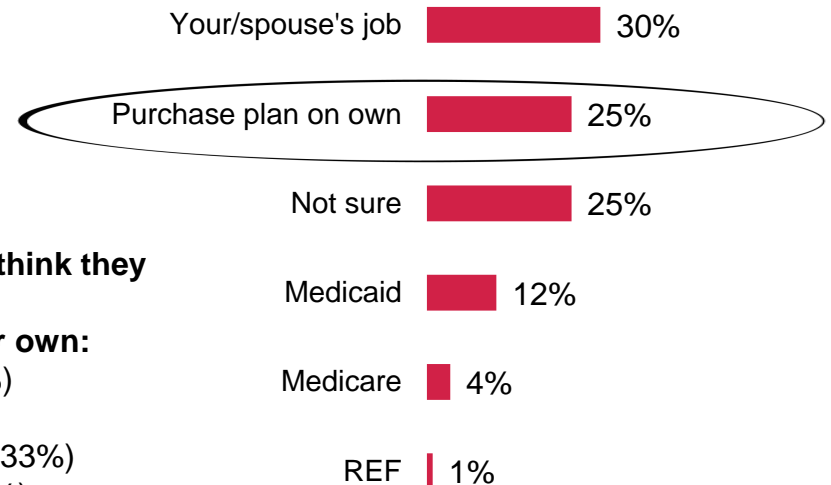


How confident are you that you will have health insurance in the next 12 months?
n=1270



More than one-quarter see themselves purchasing their own plan.

If you get health insurance again, how do you think you will get it?
n=1270



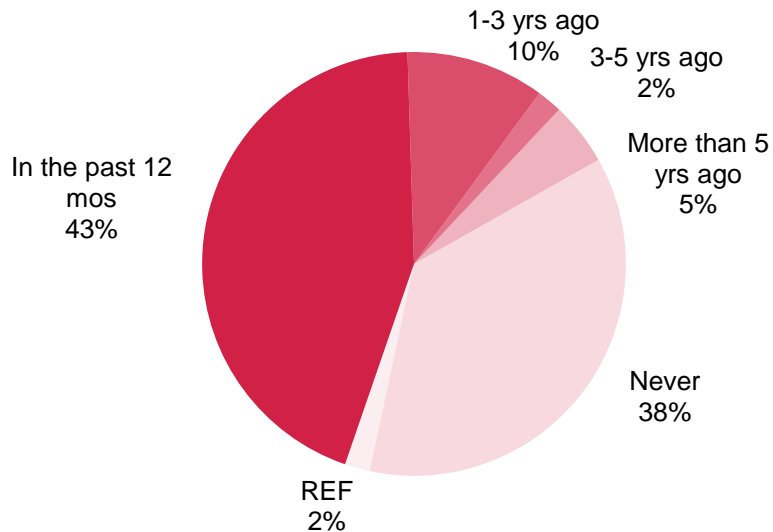
Those most likely to think they will get insurance by purchasing it on their own:

- Self-employed (42%)
- >400% FPL (36%)
- College+ educated (33%)
- 40-49 year olds (32%)
- Looked into marketplace (32%)

FOUR IN TEN LOOKED FOR INSURANCE IN THE LAST YEAR.



Have you ever looked for health insurance on your own (not through a job?) If so, when is the last time you looked? n=1270



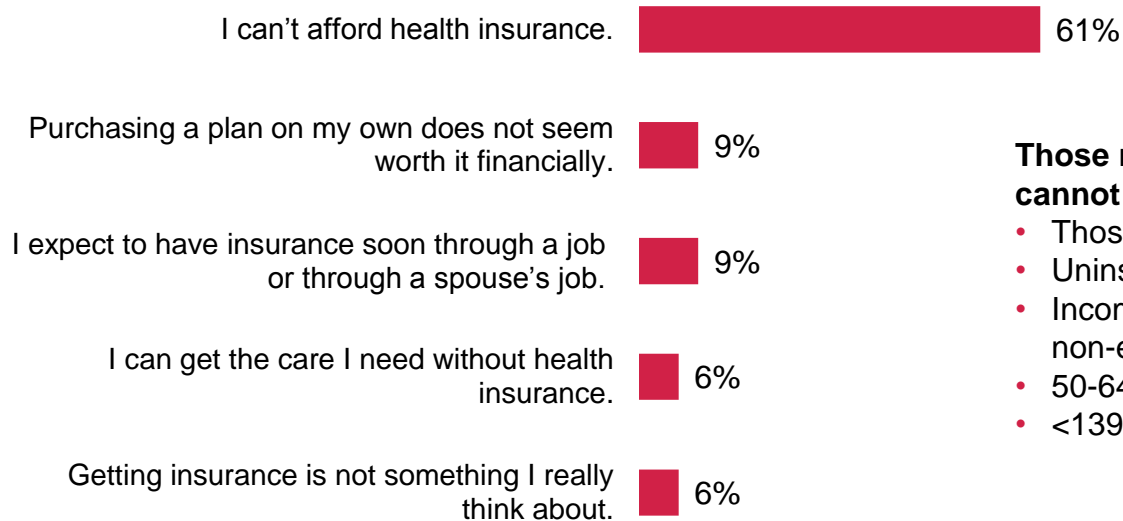
Most likely to have looked into insurance in the last 12 months:

- Uninsured two years or less (55%)
- Whites (54%)
- Income of 250-399% FPL (54%)
- Some college (52%)
- Uninsured 2-10 years (52%)
- Insurance “very” important (52%)

COST IS THE MAIN REASON THEY HAVE NOT SIGNED UP.



Which of the following statements best describes why you have not purchased health insurance on your own since becoming uninsured? n=1270



Those most likely to say they cannot afford insurance:

- Those looking for work (74%)
- Uninsured 2-10 years (71%)
- Income of <139% FPL and living in non-expansion state (71%)
- 50-64 years old (68%)
- <139% FPL (68%)*

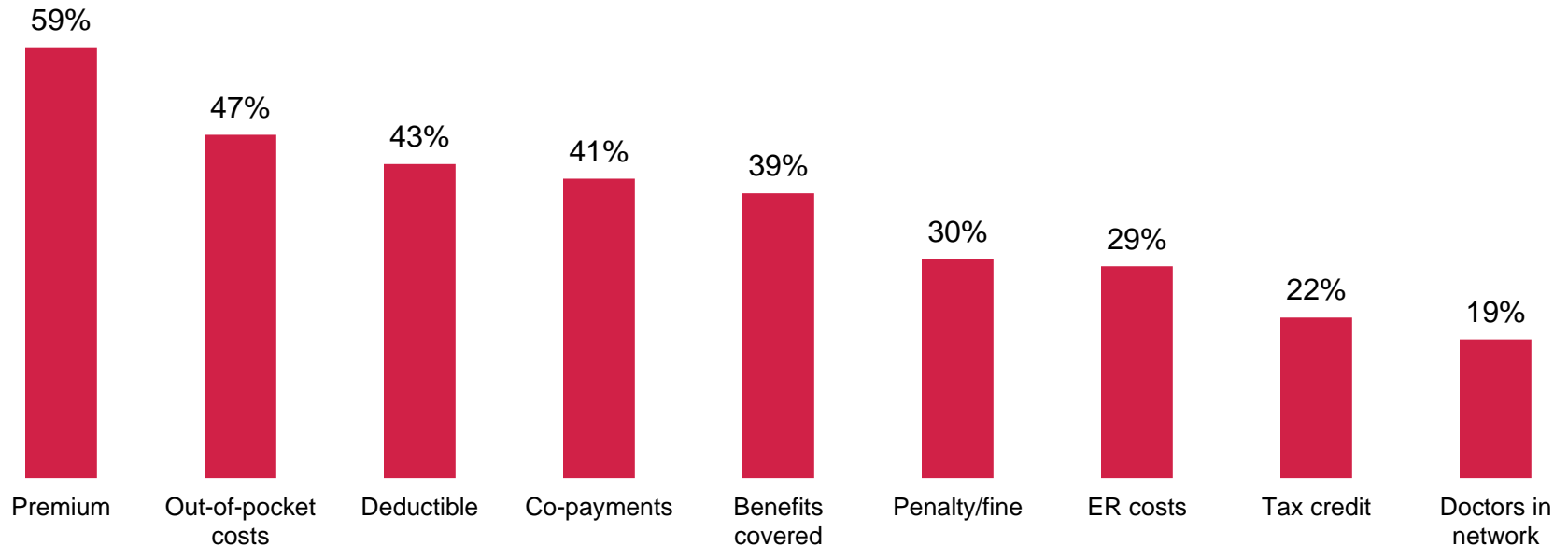
59% of those individuals who “can’t afford” insurance do not understand or have not heard of the tax credit.

*<139% FPL individuals include residents of both Medicaid expansion and non-expansion states.

THEY CONSIDER MORE THAN JUST THE PREMIUM.



[If has looked for insurance before]: Thinking about the last time you looked for health insurance on your own, which of the following things did you consider before deciding not to purchase a plan? n=829

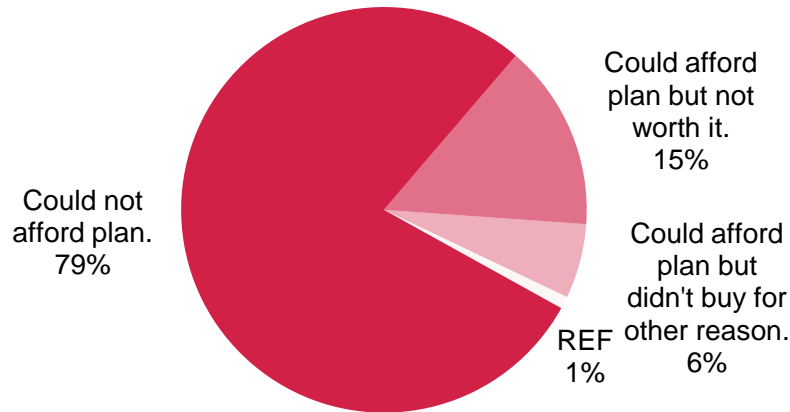


When asked to choose the two most important considerations before deciding NOT to purchase a plan, they respond: premium (57%) and the deductible (24%).

IN THE END, IT COMES DOWN TO COST.



(If has looked for insurance before) After considering everything, which of the following best describes your thinking about whether to purchase a plan? n=829

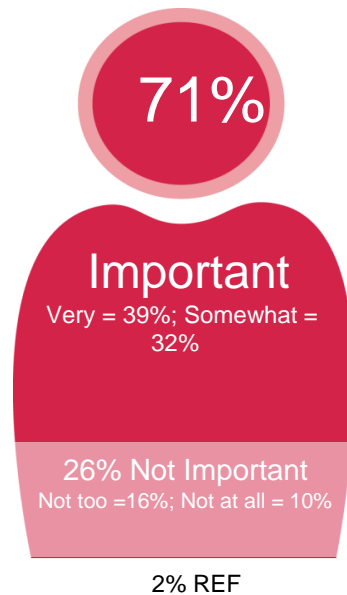


Those most likely to say they could not afford it after looking for a plan:

- Income of <139% FPL and living in non-expansion state (90%)
- <139% FPL (87%)
- Having insurance “very” important (86%)
- Looking for work (86%)
- High school or less (84%)
- 50-64 year olds (84%)

THEY WANT ONE-ON-ONE HELP.

If you were to look into buying health insurance for yourself (outside of a job) in the future, how important would it be for you to be able to talk with someone one-on-one to help you understand your options? n=1270

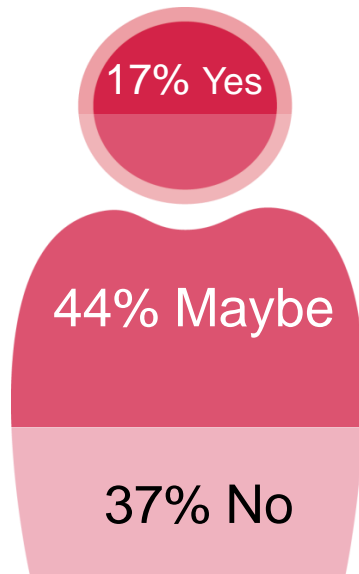


Those most likely to say talking with someone would be “very” important:

- Spanish-speaking Latinos (63%)
- Having insurance is “very” important (60%)
- 40-49 year olds (49%)
- State-based marketplace states (46%)

THEY SEE INSURANCE AS A COMMITMENT, NOT TEMPORARY.

Would you ever consider signing up for a health insurance plan on a short-term basis – say, for a few months until you got it through another source like a new job? n=1270



1% REF

- Those most likely to consider getting insurance on a short-term basis:**
- Having insurance “very” important (27%)
 - Looking for work (26%)
 - African Americans (25%)

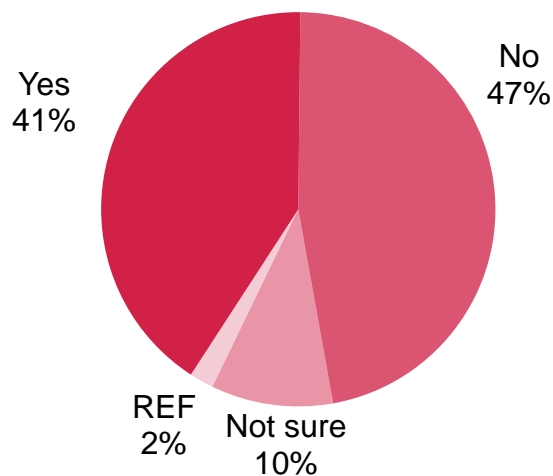
THE MARKETPLACE.



FOUR IN TEN WENT TO THE MARKETPLACE.



HealthCare.gov/state marketplace is a place for people to find affordable health insurance. Have you ever looked into the new health plans available through HealthCare.gov/state marketplace? n=1270



Those who visited the marketplace:

- Income of 250%-399% FPL (54%)
- Whites (53%)
- Some college (52%)
- College+ educated (51%)

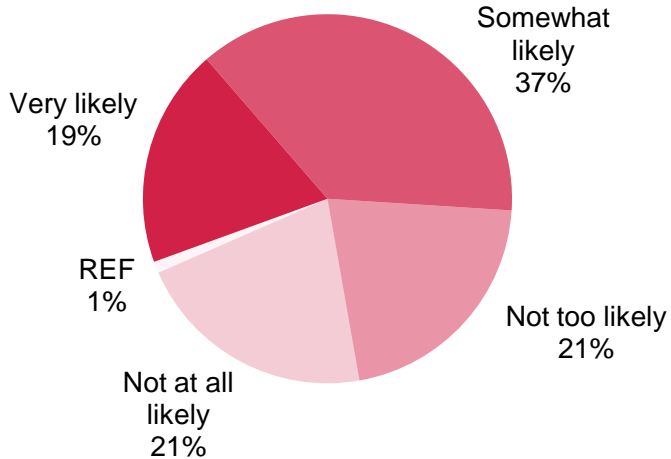
Those who did not visit the marketplace or are unsure:

- Spanish-speaking Latinos (80%)
- People uninsured for 10 years or more/never insured (70%)
- Individuals in expansion states (65% compared to 51% in non-expansion states)
- Insurance "not very/not at all important" (64%)

MORE THAN HALF SAY THEY WILL GO IN THE FUTURE.



How likely would you be to look into the health plans available through HealthCare.gov/state marketplace in the future?
n=1270



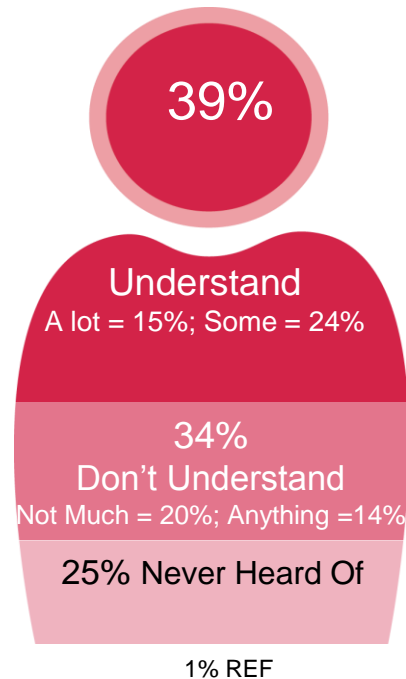
Who is most likely to go in the future:

- Having insurance “very” important (34%)
- Spanish-speaking Latinos (31%)
- Previously looked into marketplace (25%)
- Those who paid a tax penalty (24%)

SIX IN TEN ARE CONFUSED OR HAVE NOT HEARD ABOUT TAX CREDITS.



As you may know, many people are able to get a tax credit to help purchase an insurance plan through HealthCare.gov/state Marketplace. How much do you understand about how these tax credits work? Or have you not heard about these tax credits before? n=1270



Who does not understand/know about the tax credits:

- 77% Spanish-speaking Latinos
- 74% Did not look into insurance on own
- 73% Did not look into marketplace
- 67% Uninsured at least 10 years/never insured

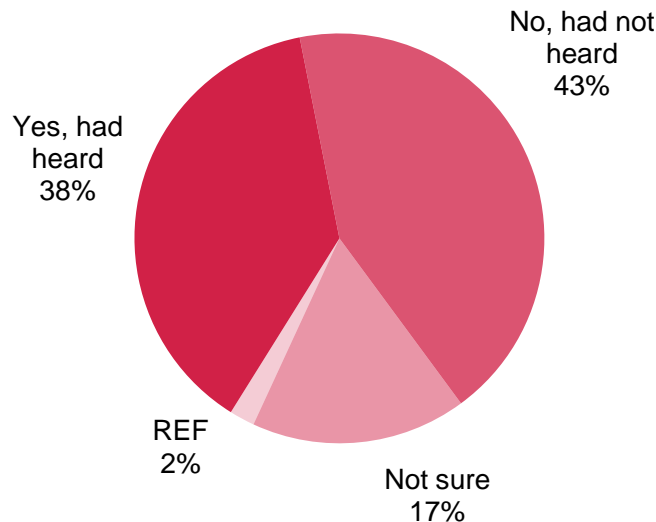
By income, percent who do not understand/have not heard about the tax credits:

- 64% <139% FPL
- 57% 139-250% FPL
- 51% 251-399% FPL
- 48% >400% FPL

SIX IN TEN DO NOT KNOW ABOUT ENROLLING DUE TO QUALIFYING LIFE EVENTS.



Usually, you can only enroll in health insurance through HealthCare.gov/state marketplace during a specific time period called “open enrollment.” But there are some exceptions. For example, if you experience a change in your life like getting married or divorced, moving to a different state, or losing job-based health insurance, you can enroll in health insurance through HealthCare.gov/state marketplace even if open enrollment has ended. Had you heard about this before today? n=1270

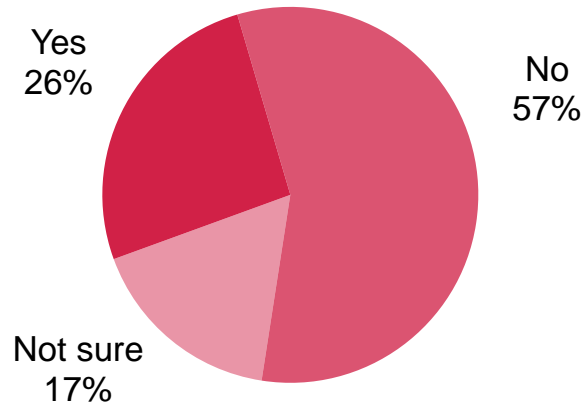


Those who have not heard/are unsure about enrolling due to qualifying life events:

- 80% Spanish-speaking Latinos
- 76% Did not look into marketplace
- 69% Uninsured at least 10 years/never insured

ONLY ONE-QUARTER SAY THEY PAID THE FINE.

If you filed your tax return, did you pay a penalty/fine for not having insurance in your 2014 taxes? This may be something that you paid or was deducted from your refund. n=895



Why didn't you pay the penalty or fine?

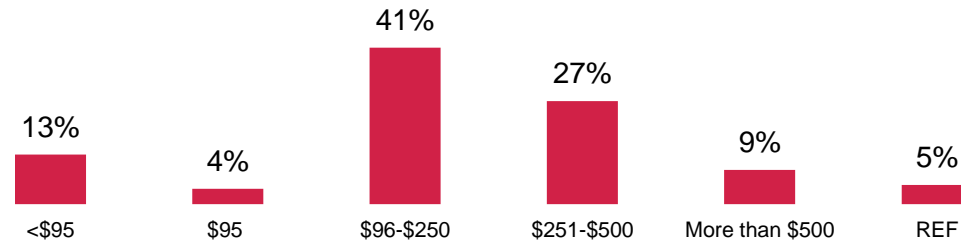
n=518

- 36% I asked for an exemption because my income is too low.
- 18% Had insurance at some point in 2014
- 16% I did not know about it.
- 11% I asked for an exemption for another reason.
- 6% Not sure why I did not pay a fine.
- 2% I refuse to pay it.
- 10% Other
- 1% REF



Amounts paid in penalty.

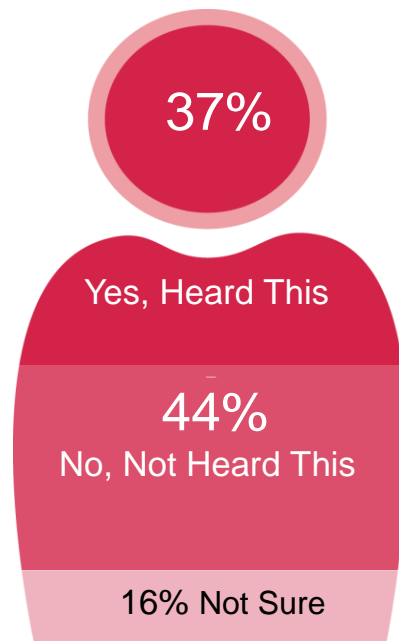
[If paid the fine] How much did you pay? Your best guess is fine. n=233



SIX IN TEN HAD NOT HEARD/ARE UNSURE OF “TAX” SPECIAL ENROLLMENT.

[If in state with tax special enrollment period]: Have you heard that people who had to pay a penalty or fine in their taxes this year for not having health insurance could sign up for health insurance through HealthCare.gov/state Marketplace until (April 30th/dates specific to state) if they were still uninsured?

n=1138

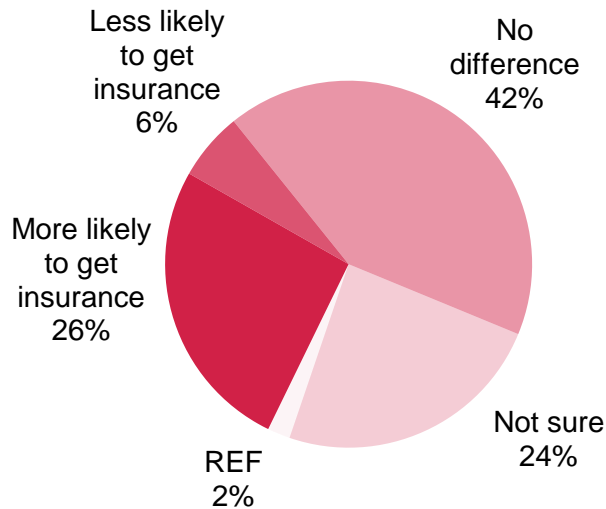


2% REF

ONE-QUARTER SAY THE INCREASING FINE MAY GET THEM TO ENROLL.



The penalty or fine for not having health insurance increases to \$395 or 2 percent of your income (whichever is higher) in 2015. Then in 2016, it increases to \$695 or 2.5% of your income (whichever is higher). Would these increased penalties or fines make you more likely to get insurance in the future, less likely to get insurance, or do they not make a difference for you?
n=1270



Those more likely to get insurance due to the increasing fine:

- 39% Spanish-speaking Latinos
- 33% Having insurance “very” important
- 33% Uninsured less than two years
- 34% >400% FPL
- 32% English-speaking Latinos

IMPLICATIONS



LOOKING FORWARD.



Survey findings offer a number of insights about uninsured individuals and their feelings about insurance that can inform outreach and enrollment efforts. These include:

- 1. Targeting by demographics may not be enough.** Survey findings suggest other characteristics related to behavior and attitudes impact decisions about enrollment. These include how much individuals value insurance, how long they have been uninsured, if they are looking for work, if they have looked into the marketplace or not, and more. Outreach and messaging should take into account the more complex feelings about insurance that emerge from this survey.
- 2. There is a need for more education about tax credits.** Most uninsured individuals do not understand how the tax credit works or they have never heard of them. Education efforts and in-person assisters can provide the uninsured with more details of how the tax credit works, including personalized examples of who is eligible, particularly since affordability is the top barrier to enrolling.

3.

Outreach efforts should continue to drill down to places where large numbers of the uninsured can be reached. For example, many of the uninsured report working for small companies. Engaging small business owners in efforts to inform their workers about the marketplace could be effective. Many of the uninsured also have experience with government programs — SNAP, unemployment benefits, etc. — which offer important points of interaction.

4.

The increasing fine may be a strong motivator. The survey suggests the increasing fine amount could drive as many as 26% of the uninsured towards enrolling. It also shows that little harm is done by talking more about the fine — only 6% says the increasing fine will make them “less likely” to get insurance.

5.

People still want one-on-one help to enroll. More than 70% say it would be important for them to talk with someone when buying insurance. Outreach efforts will need to sustain a certain level of consumer assistance to give people the help they need.

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