

Type of Health Insurance in Raleigh & McDowell Counties CHILDREN		
Insurance Type	Percent of Black Americans	Percent of non-Black Americans
Private Employer	32.2	39.1
UMWA/RR	0.6	1.5
Medicaid	57.5	39.8
Medicare <65	1.0	0.9
VA/CHAMPUS	0.0	1.1
Self-Purchase	1.0	2.3
CHIP	2.5	4.9
COBRA	0.8	0.0
Uninsured	4.5	10.4

Type of Health Insurance in Raleigh & McDowell Counties NON-ELDERLY ADULTS		
Insurance Type	Percent of Black Americans	Percent of non-Black Americans
FEHB	11.0	4.2
PEIA	12.0	10.3
Private Employer	25.6	40.1
UMWA/RR	0.2	3.2
Medicaid	18.4	13.9
Medicare <65	3.7	3.6
VA/CHAMPUS	0.8	2.1
Self-Purchase	4.1	3.2
Uninsured	23.6	18.5

Type of Health Insurance in Raleigh & McDowell Counties OLDER ADULTS		
Insurance Type	Percent of Black Americans	Percent of non-Black Americans
UMWA/RR	45.3	34.8
Medicare Only	27.0	25.1
Medicare & Supplement	16.1	31.9
Medicare & Medicaid	11.7	8.3



# An Analysis of West Virginia's Minority Health Issues: *Black Americans*

*This study was completed by Gail Bellamy, Ph.D. and Melissa Kolb McCormick, M.A. of the West Virginia University Institute for Health Policy Research.*

The West Virginia Healthcare Survey, 2001 was undertaken to learn about West Virginians who do not have health insurance – who they are, the circumstances of their lives, and what relationship the lack of insurance has to their health status and their access to healthcare services.

West Virginia's population is 94.6 percent Caucasian, 3.2 percent Black American<sup>1</sup>, 0.5 percent Asian, 0.2 percent American Indian or Alaska native, and 0.2 percent another race. About 0.7 percent of the population is of Hispanic/Latino origin. This report focuses on Raleigh and McDowell counties, where 21.6% of the state's 57,323 Black Americans reside.<sup>2</sup>

Black Americans in West Virginia are not a homogeneous population. Where and for how long they have lived in the state can produce some interesting variations in socio-economic status between different parts of the state and between generations within a given geographic area. For Black Americans in the southern part of the state, income, education and health statistics are sometimes the same and sometimes better than other area residents and than other Black Americans in West Virginia. For example:

- Black American non-elderly adults in Raleigh and McDowell counties were more often married, employed, and had more education than Black American non-elderly adults around the state. However, a greater proportion of those in Raleigh and McDowell counties was not working due to a disability, and a greater proportion was uninsured.
- Older Black American adults in Raleigh and McDowell counties had slightly higher household incomes than other older Black American adults, and a greater proportion had health insurance coverage through Railroad Retirement and United Mine Workers of America.
- Black American children in Raleigh and McDowell counties were more likely to be covered by Medicaid than either other Black American children (57.5% versus 34.6%) or other children living in Raleigh and McDowell counties (57.5% versus 39.8%). Black American children in Raleigh and McDowell counties were more likely to be enrolled in CHIP than other Black American children were, but less likely than other children in Raleigh and McDowell counties.

The results presented in this report begin to paint a picture of the Black American health issues in Raleigh and McDowell counties, where 21.6 percent of the state's Black American population resides, and how health issues among a single minority population may vary in response to the economic circumstances of their counties of residence. They also begin to suggest the critical importance of including large enough numbers of West Virginia's minority populations in any state or federally sponsored studies relating to health, employment, and education.

<sup>1</sup> Black Americans is used in this report to indicate that not all Black Americans have their cultural roots in Africa.

<sup>2</sup> The West Virginia Healthcare Survey, 2001 over-sampled Black Americans in Raleigh and McDowell counties, thus providing a sufficiently large sample from which to generalize to all Black Americans in those two counties.



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## Minority versus Non-Minority Comparisons in Raleigh and McDowell Counties

### Children (Ages 0-18):

- Black American children were much more likely than other children to have Medicaid (57.5% versus 39.8%), but less likely to have CHIP (2.5% versus 4.9%). Medicaid and CHIP both cover dental and prescription drugs.
- 4.5% of Black American children were uninsured, compared to 10.4% of other children.
- Black American children lived in households with lower incomes. 24.9% lived in households with incomes less than \$10,000, compared to 15.5% of other children.
- 1.3% of Black American children and 9.6% of other children did not get needed medical care at some time in the past year.
- Black American children were more likely to have been diagnosed with a chronic health condition or disability (19.8% versus 14.1%)
- Fewer Black American children had visited a hospital emergency room (25% versus 26.4%) and an urgent care center (17.5% versus 26.1%) in the last six months.

### Adults (Ages 19-64):

- Black American adults were less likely to have a usual healthcare provider (82.1% versus 88.3%).
- Black American adults were more likely to list a hospital emergency room (5.5% versus 1.8%) and a community health center or free clinic (25.4% versus 20.5%) as their usual site of care.
- Black American adults lived in households with lower incomes: 25.3% had incomes below \$10,000 (compared to 13.2%) and 65.9% had incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level (compared to 48.7%).
- Although Medicaid covers more Black American adults (18.4% versus 13.9%), more Black American adults were also uninsured (23.6% versus 18.5%).
- Just over 1/5<sup>th</sup> of both groups did not receive needed medical care in the last year. Black American adults were more likely than other adults to mention, “could not get an appointment” (14.4% versus 0.7%), “transportation” (3.6% versus 0%), and “provider not open when available” (2.6% versus 1.4%), as reasons for not receiving care.

### Older Adults (Ages 65+):

- Black American older adults were more likely to have prescription drug coverage (73.7% versus 66.6%) and dental insurance (20.5% versus 7.6%).
- Black American older adults were less likely to have seen a physician, physician’s assistant, or nurse practitioner during the last six months (83.2% versus 90.2%).
- Black American older adults were less likely to have a usual healthcare provider (89.2% versus 94.6%).
- Black American older adults were more likely to have health insurance covered by United Mine Workers of America/Railroad Retirement (45.3% versus 34.8%) and Medicaid/Medicare coverage (11.7% versus 8.3%).
- Black American older adults were less likely to have Medicare plus supplemental insurance (16.1% versus 31.9%).

## CONCLUSIONS

- Black Americans living in Raleigh and McDowell counties differ from those living in the rest of the state.
- Black American children in Raleigh and McDowell counties appear to be diagnosed with a chronic illness or disability more than other children in those counties and than Black American children in the rest of the state.
- Having insurance coverage appears to contribute to Black American children in Raleigh and McDowell counties having a medical home and receiving needed medical care.
- For older adults (both Black Americans and others) in Raleigh and McDowell counties, having insurance coverage does not guarantee that they will receive needed medical care.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Over-sample minority populations and weight data by race in all studies of West Virginia populations.
2. Strive to enroll all eligible Black American children in public health insurance programs.
3. Conduct a study that looks first at verifying increased prevalence of chronic disease and disability among children in Raleigh and McDowell counties, and then at identifying factors contributing to this disparity.
4. Look at the sufficiency of healthcare services in southern West Virginia.

<sup>1</sup> Black Americans is used in this report to indicate that not all Black Americans have their cultural roots in Africa.

<sup>2</sup> The *West Virginia Healthcare Survey, 2001* over-sampled Black Americans in Raleigh and McDowell counties, thus providing a sufficiently large sample from which to generalize to all Black Americans in those two counties.

Type of Health Insurance CHILDREN		
Insurance Type	Percent of Black American Children in Raleigh & McDowell Counties	Percent of Black American Children in Rest of WV
Private Employer	32.2	47.9
UMWA/RR	.6	0.0
Medicaid	57.5	34.6
Medicare <65	1.0	0.0
VA/CHAMPUS	0.0	2.6
Self-Purchase	1.0	2.0
CHIP	2.5	1.7
COBRA	0.8	3.0
Uninsured	4.5	8.0

Type of Health Insurance NON-ELDERLY ADULTS		
Insurance Type	Percent of Black American Adults in Raleigh & McDowell Counties	Percent of Black American Adults in Rest of WV
FEHB	11.0	8.2
PEIA	12.0	4.5
Private Employer	25.6	41.0
UMWA/RR	0.2	3.1
Medicaid	18.4	20.4
Medicare <65	3.7	2.6
VA/CHAMPUS	0.8	1.4
Self-Purchase	4.1	0.1
Uninsured	23.6	17.9

Type of Health Insurance OLDER ADULTS		
Insurance Type	Percent of Black American Older Adults in Raleigh & McDowell Counties	Percent of Black American Older Adults in Rest of WV
UMWA/RR	45.3	21.1
Medicare Only	27.0	27.7
Medicare & Supplement	16.1	6.1
Medicare & Medicaid	11.7	45.0