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This is certainly timely, but more to the point, it illustrates a fundamental difference between our HMO model of care, where all patients have a confirmed primary care medical home, versus PPO care and some community clinic approaches. We should build on our existing strengths, and cinch it up tight. Wells

August 13, 2008

Many Hispanics Going Without Regular Medical Provider, Study Finds

About 27% of Hispanic adults in the U.S. do not have regular health care providers, although many of those adults have health insurance and speak English, according to a [study released on Wednesday](#) by the Pew Hispanic Center and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the *San Jose Mercury News* reports.

For the study, researchers last summer conducted telephone surveys of 4,013 Hispanic adults in both English and Spanish (Davila, *San Jose Mercury News*, 8/13).

The study found that Hispanic men, younger adults, and those with less education or without health insurance were most likely to not have regular providers (Stewart, *Newark Star-Ledger*, 8/13).

According to the study, about half of the Hispanic adults without regular providers had completed high school, and about 45% had health insurance. In addition, Hispanic adults born in the U.S. were more likely to have regular providers and health insurance than those born abroad and those who lived in the U.S. for only a short time, the study found.

The study found that 41% of Hispanic adults who did have regular providers "say the principle reason is that they are seldom sick" (Abram, *Contra Costa Times*, 8/13).

However, according to the study, Hispanic adults have a disproportionate rate of diabetes and obesity, which can place them at increased risk for heart disease and other serious health problems (*Newark Star-Ledger*, 8/13).

The study also found that 83% of Hispanic adults obtain health care information from media outlets, such as television, radio and the Internet.

Implications

The study authors wrote, "When it comes to Latinos, what may appear to be the well-known effects of socioeconomic inequality on health care may also be conditioned by unique social, cultural and economic circumstances" (*Contra Costa Times*, 8/13).

In addition, the authors said that the results of the study indicate the need for providers to encourage Hispanic adults to seek routine health care.

William Vega, a professor of family medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA who helped with the study, said, "That's the real gap I think we're facing: the ability to provide a medical home for a spectrum of this population" (*San Jose Mercury News*, 8/13).

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