



# “Association Between Insurance Types & Sources of Health Information: Potential for Community Outreach”

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## BACKGROUND

- Persons, who are uninsured, may receive less preventive screenings and recommended treatment for chronic diseases. (Ross et al 2006)
- Tools such as the media and printed materials have long been used by public health to communicate preventive practices and health hazards. (Noar, 2006, Vahabi 2007)
- Additionally, access to health information may influence knowledge and the ability to make informed health decisions. (Vahabi 2007)
- Media and printed materials may be insufficient in garnering the attention of the community served by public health practitioners.
- Question remains as what is the association between health insurance and sources of health information (HI), and are individuals with no health insurance receiving health information?

## PURPOSE

- The purpose of this study is to determine if there is an association between insurance status and potential sources of health information.

## STUDY DESIGN & METHODS

- The analysis was conducted using data from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy Survey.
- Respondents provided information on their health care financing and information sources in addition to a battery of socio-demographic queries.

## RESULTS

- Insurance status was initially found to be associated with each source of health information (newspaper, magazine, books, internet, TV/radio, family members/friends/coworkers and health care providers).
- After adjusting for age, race, education, employment and household income, there was no association between insurance status and TV/Radio as a source of health information.
- Insured persons were found to be more likely to receive health information from a variety of these sources.
- Uninsured persons are less likely to receive health information from any of these potential sources.

**TABLE 1: Characteristics of the Uninsured and the Insured National Assessment of Adult Literacy 2003**

Characteristics	Uninsured (%) N=3877	Insured (%) N=14158
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	51.9	58.2
Male	48.1	41.8
<b>Race</b>		
White	39.4	64.2
Black	21.7	18.3
Hispanic	34.5	12.3
Other (including multi-racial)	4.5	5.2
<b>Age</b>		
< 25	9	6.9
25-39	30.2	12.2
40-64	55	56.5
65+	5.8	24.3
<b>Education</b>		
Some High School	37.9	20.1
High School Graduate/GED	29	24.5
Some College/Associate's Degree	25.1	30.7
College +	8	24.7
<b>Employment</b>		
Employed	62.7	62.7
Unemployed	11.6	11.6
Out of Labor Force	25.7	33.8
<b>Household Income</b>		
<\$20000	51.9	25.8
\$20000-\$39999	28.1	24.4
\$40000-\$59999	11.2	19.4
\$60000+	8.7	30.5

**TABLE 2: Association of Insurance Status with Sources of Health Information: National Assessment of Adult Literacy 2003**

Insurance	NEWSPAPER	MAGAZINE	BOOKS
	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)
Employer-provided	1.35 (1.16-1.56)	1.38 (1.18-1.61)	1.28 (1.09-1.51)
Medicare	1.01 (0.83-1.23)	1.23 (1.00-1.51)	0.78 (0.63-0.97)
Private	1.34 (1.15-1.56)	1.40 (1.19-1.66)	1.33 (1.13-1.58)
Military	0.87 (0.71-1.08)	0.97 (0.82-1.15)	1.42 (1.08-1.85)
Medicaid	0.98 (0.84-1.14)	1.19 (0.96-1.47)	1.12 (0.94-1.33)
Uninsured (Reference)	1.0	1.0	1.0
Insurance	INTERNET	FAMILY MEMBERS/ FRIENDS/ COWORKERS	HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS
	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)
Employer-provided	1.36 (1.18-1.57)	1.20 (1.01-1.42)	1.17 (0.91-1.49)
Medicare	1.06 (0.87-1.30)	0.80 (0.64-1.00)	1.12 (0.79-1.59)
Private	1.01 (0.87-1.17)	0.97 (0.82-1.16)	1.27 (0.99-1.64)
Military	1.33 (1.08-1.64)	0.82 (0.64-1.01)	1.20 (0.82-1.75)
Medicaid	0.84 (0.71-0.99)	1.03 (0.85-1.24)	1.58 (1.20-2.08)
Uninsured (Reference)	1.0	1.0	1.0

NOTE: OR=Odds Ratio, CI =Confidence Interval. Adjusted for age, race, education, employment, and household income.

## DISCUSSION

- The lack of a common source of health information for the uninsured population may hinder public health practitioners' efforts to reach this vulnerable group.
- More information is needed to determine the health information seeking behaviors of the uninsured, as well as to find new strategies to inform and educate the uninsured.
- This study did not look at health literacy, which may need to be considered when examining the health information seeking behaviors of the uninsured.

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