

# Affordable Care Act Insures 2.5 Million Additional Young Adults

Today, the National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released data illustrating that the Affordable Care Act continues to significantly increase the number of young adults who have health insurance.

Because of the health care law, young adults can stay on their parents' insurance plans through age 26. This policy took effect in September 2010. Data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) shows that since September 2010, the percentage of adults aged 19-25 covered by a private health insurance plan increased significantly, with approximately 2.5 million more young adults with insurance coverage compared to the number of young adults who would have been insured without the law.

"Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, 2.5 million more young adults don't have to live with the fear and uncertainty of going without health insurance," said Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. "Moms and dads around the country can breathe a little easier knowing their children are covered."

Families around the country are benefitting from this part of the law, including families like the Houghs, whose daughter Natalie was diagnosed with a rare heart condition after suffering a cardiac arrest at school. Her condition requires a lifetime of medication and care. There was a day when this diagnosis would mean insurance companies would either not cover Natalie or would offer her unaffordable plans. It would mean that Natalie and her family would have to keep paying, or face the unimaginable alternative.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Natalie can stay on her family's plan and has started college, and thanks to the law, by the time she turns 26, it will be illegal for a plan to deny coverage to anyone, regardless of their health and Natalie will have access to quality, affordable care.

Data from the first three months of 2011 showed that one million more young adults had insurance coverage compared to a year ago. The numbers announced today show a continuation of the coverage gains due to the health care law as students graduate from high school and college in May and June and otherwise would have lost coverage.

The data released today are consistent with estimates from surveys released earlier in the year. Those surveys have shown an increase in the number and percentage of young adults 19 to 25 with health insurance coverage. Specifically, the Census Bureau and the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index Survey, as well as the NHIS

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release of data through March 2011, reported similar trends through early 2011.

Today's results, highlighted in an HHS issue brief, show that the initial gains from the health care law have continued to grow.

"The data announced today show that, because of the health care law, there is a continued and consistent pattern of improved health coverage among young adults," said Sherry Glied, Ph.D., HHS assistant secretary for planning and evaluation. "The Affordable Care Act has helped literally millions of young adults get the health insurance they need so they can begin their careers with the peace of mind that they're covered."

For more information about this announcement, please see the HHS Issue Brief at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/2011/YoungAdultsACA/ib.shtml> [1]

For more information about the CDC NHIS data released today, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/insur201109.pdf> [2]

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