
California Health Interview Survey

General Description

The UCLA Center for Health Policy Research in collaboration with the California Department of Public Health and the Department of Health Care Services conducts the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS). Information concerning various health topics is collected. Examples of topics include obesity, immigrant health, and health insurance coverage. A full list of questions/topics by year can be found at <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/about/Pages/topics.aspx>

Background

CHIS is the nation's largest state health survey, giving a detailed picture of the health and health care needs of California's large and diverse population. The first survey was collected in 2001. In 2012 CHIS changed from a biennial survey model to a continuous survey model enabling annual release of data (data were previously released biennially). Additional information can be found at: <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/about/Pages/what-is-chis.aspx>

Data Collection

CHIS is a random-dial telephone survey inquiring about a wide variety of health topics. "Computers randomly draw a sample of telephone numbers in each of 44 geographic areas (sampling strata) that represent 41 individual counties and 3 groupings of counties with smaller populations together. These areas represent the entire state.

When CHIS contacts a household, one adult is randomly selected to participate in the survey. In addition, a teenager (ages 12 to 17) and/or a child (ages 11 and under) may be randomly selected, depending on the household's composition. These teen and child interviews allow CHIS to track important health conditions and health behaviors of teens and children in California.

In 2007, CHIS began including a sample of cell-phone-only households. Residents of cell-phone only households tend to be younger, less likely to have health insurance coverage, engage in riskier health behaviors and are more mobile than those living in households with land-line telephones. Such innovations help CHIS accurately represent California's dynamic population."¹

Data are collected continuously and a full data collection cycle takes 2 years. Data are released annually in Health Profiles, the Data Access Center, and other publications (i.e. policy briefs, fact sheets, etc.). Data are released biennially in the *AskCHIS* online tool and Public Use Files (contains a full, 2-year cycle of CHIS data).

The survey itself uses a scientific sampling methodology and extensive questionnaires to collect consistent information that accurately represents California's diverse populations

¹ <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/about/Pages/who.aspx>

and geographic areas. Questionnaires that have been used can be found at <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/design/Pages/questionnairesEnglish.aspx>

Data Coverage

CHIS interviews adults, teenagers, and children across California. The sample size is statistically representative of California's population. Data are collected from all 58 California counties and a total of 50,000 Californians have been surveyed. The large CHIS sample includes people from many ethnic groups to provide health-related information for most large and small racial and ethnic populations that all are a part of California. To represent California's diverse population and ensure that all ethnic groups can have a voice in representing the health of California, CHIS is conducted in English, Spanish, Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin dialects), Korean, Tagalog and Vietnamese. Further information concerning participants of the survey can be found at the following link <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/design/Pages/sample.aspx>

Accessibility

Information may be used by local, state, and national policymakers, health advocates, media, health care providers, foundations, and researchers to make informed decisions. CHIS data have recently been used to inform the California health care reform, a Los Angeles fast food moratorium, increasing access to food stamps for poor families, and over a dozen First 5 County Commissions. More information about who may use the data as well as how the data have previously been used can be found at <http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/about/Pages/uses.aspx>

Public Use Data Files can be found at

<http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/data/Pages/overview.aspx>. This contains statewide CHIS data files on a variety of topics; it is available in SAS, SPSS, and STATA formats. All information is not available through the free Public Use Data Files and may require research application, review and approval.

Researchers can apply to analyze confidential CHIS data remotely, such as detailed geographic identifiers, complete demographic information for survey respondents, sensitive variables (sexual orientation, mental health, etc.) and/or geo-coded data through the CHIS Data Access Center (DAC). Further information and instructions about applying to access data can be found at

http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/data/Documents/DAC_FS.pdf

Data Link

AskCHIS (<http://ask.chis.ucla.edu/main/default.asp>) is an easy, online tool that can be used to access health statistics by county, region, and state. Users must register for a free account.

Funding

CHIS is funded by the state and federal agencies and from several private foundations. Examples of such groups from 2011-2012 include the California Department of Public Health, California Endowment, First 5 California, Kaiser Permanente, and the CDC. A

complete list of funders delineated by the CHIS year can be found at
<http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/about/Pages/funds.aspx>

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