



News Release
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For more information:
Lorrie Barr – 501-526-2244
Mobile Phone – 501-831-2239
lbarr@uams.edu

1401 West Capitol Avenue
Suite 300, Victory Building
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

www.achi.net

ACHI Study Reveals an Increase in the Number of Uninsured Arkansans

501-526-ACHI (2244)
501-526-2252 (Fax)

LITTLE ROCK, AR – A new study of the state’s uninsured population conducted under the direction of the Arkansas Center for Health Improvement (ACHI) found that 17 percent, or nearly 456,000 Arkansans, did not have health insurance in 2004. An earlier study released by ACHI revealed that 15 percent of Arkansas residents did not have health insurance in 2001. This two percent increase represents an additional 64,000 Arkansas citizens who lack health insurance.

“Lack of health insurance coverage is a critical problem that affects individuals, families, communities, and society as a whole,” said ACHI Associate Director Kevin Ryan.

The *2005 Arkansas Fact Book: A Profile of the Uninsured*, released today as part of ACHI’s Arkansas Health Insurance Expansion Initiative, describes how many Arkansans lack health insurance coverage, identifies gaps that exist in sources of health insurance, and puts a face on the state’s uninsured. Data indicate that lack of health insurance affects all segments of the state’s population, including men and women of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, financial status, employment status, and geographic region.

*ACHI’s mission
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improving the health
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Findings from the 2005 Arkansas Fact Book disclosed:

- approximately 1 out of every 3 Arkansans between the ages of 19 and 44 years of age did not have health insurance coverage;
- the majority of the uninsured (61%) were working in either full-time or part-time jobs;
- Within most ethnic groups, the uninsured were concentrated in the 19-64-year-old age range, and specifically, 1 out of 2 Hispanics did not have health insurance; and
- insurance coverage varies widely by region – almost 1 in 4 Arkansans of all ages in north central Arkansas did not have health insurance coverage.

The majority of the data presented in the report comes from ACHI's Arkansas Household Survey of Health Insurance Status, conducted in 2001 and 2004. These surveys were funded by a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) State Planning Grant Program. Additional analyses and reporting of the data were supported by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) State Coverage Initiative.

ACHI is a non-partisan, independent health policy center whose mission is to serve as a catalyst for improving the health of Arkansans through evidence-based research, public issue advocacy and collaborative program development.

ACHI's Arkansas Health Insurance Expansion Initiative Roundtable was established in 2000 with the specific goals of stabilizing and expanding health insurance coverage in Arkansas by evaluating health care financing options. The Roundtable, which consists of 21 private-citizen members representing employers, consumers, and providers/health insurers, meets quarterly.

A PDF version of the *2005 Arkansas Fact Book: A Profile of the Uninsured* can be accessed on ACHI's website at www.achi.net.

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