

Researcher Health Care Coverage and Access

The Organization

The Commonwealth Fund — among the first private foundations started by a woman philanthropist, Anna M. Harkness — was established in 1918 with the broad charge to enhance the common good. Today, the mission of The Commonwealth Fund is to promote a high-performing health care system that achieves better access, improved quality, and greater efficiency, particularly for society's most vulnerable, including low-income people, the uninsured, and people of color. The Fund carries out this mandate by supporting independent research on health care issues and making grants to improve health care practice and policy.

Our Values and Commitment to Equity

The Commonwealth Fund envisions a health care system that values and benefits all people equally — one that combats racism and pursues equity, in treatment and outcomes as well as in leadership and decision-making. We believe this requires an alliance of people and institutions across society working together to recognize and value the lived experience of all individuals; ensure the delivery of compassionate, affordable, quality health care; and strive for equitable outcomes for all.

We aspire to racial equity, diversity, and inclusion in how we work. We place great value on the varied backgrounds and experiences our staff bring to our organization and encourage employees to bring their full selves to the workplace. We look for talented, nimble, empathetic, and supportive team players who are ready to roll up their sleeves, create impactful change, and celebrate accomplishments.

Program Summary

The Affordable Care Act brought sweeping change to the U.S health system, expanding comprehensive health insurance to millions of Americans and making it possible for anyone with health problems to get coverage by banning insurers from denying coverage or charging more because of pre-existing conditions. As a result, the number of uninsured people has fallen by half since the ACA became law. The ACA also narrowed historical race and income inequities in coverage and reduced state differences in people's access to care and consumer financial problems stemming from uncovered health care encounters. In addition, there is consistent evidence that the coverage expansions led to improved reported health status in some states, a key indicator of mortality. However, more than 25 million people remain uninsured, nearly a quarter of working age adults have insurance plans that are leaving them underinsured, the country has a growing consumer medical debt crisis, and health care costs are growing faster than median income in most states. In addition, substantial racial and ethnic health disparities remain in coverage, affordability and health outcomes.

In order to help meet these challenges, the Health Care Coverage and Access Program and the Tracking Health System Performance research initiative conduct research on the extent and quality of insurance, health care access and financial problems stemming from inadequate coverage, and health system performance at the national, state, and local levels, including examining and developing policy options aimed at improving performance and equity.

Program Goals

The Fund's **Health Care Coverage and Access** program delivers timely information on the state of health coverage in the U.S. to federal and state policymakers, consumer groups, the media, and other key stakeholders. Its efforts include:

- Providing current information about federal and state legislation and rule-making that affect the ACA's reforms, health insurance coverage, access to care, and affordability of coverage and care.
- Tracking enrollment in the ACA coverage expansions, both Medicaid and the marketplaces, and employer insurance, and the degree to which people can access needed care without falling into debt.
- Evaluating court cases as well as federal and state legislation for their potential effects on: the extent and quality of health coverage; access to health care; affordability of premiums and out-of-pocket costs, especially for families with low or moderate income and people of color; health plan competition and choice; and the sustainability of insurance markets.
- Analyzing and developing federal and state policy options to cover the remaining uninsured, address underinsurance, make insurance and care more affordable, improve access, and reduce medical debt.
- Identifying gaps in the ACA as well as emerging legislation and regulations that may leave people of color and those with lower incomes without coverage, inadequately shielded from high costs, or lacking timely access to care.

General Position Description

Reporting to the Senior Scholar and Vice President, Health Care Coverage and Access, the Researcher is an important part of a five-member team responsible for the Fund's Program on Health Care Coverage and Access and the Tracking Health System Performance research initiative. The primary responsibility of the Researcher is to provide research and analytic support for the Health Care Coverage and Access program, with specific responsibility in the area of the program's extensive survey research agenda. With guidance from the Senior Scholar and Vice President, the Researcher is responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of the program's surveys including organizing and providing input to questionnaire development, insuring data integrity, communicating with the survey research firms, using statistical software to analyze data, and displaying data in tables and charts. The Researcher will participate as part of cross-program Fund staff research teams in writing reports, issue briefs, blogs, and journal articles based on survey findings as well as maintaining data integrity. As experience deepens, responsibilities will include making presentations at public and professional meetings. The Researcher conducts research, surveys and analyses; compiles and organizes data; and uses new and existing data sources to prepare, enter, arrange and display data in a meaningful and useful format for those who must use the data.

Specific Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities for the Researcher include:

- Managing the day-to-day activities of the Health Care Coverage and Access program's surveys including organizing and providing input to questionnaire development, ensuring data integrity, communicating with the survey research firms, and responding to external requests for data.

- Conducting statistical analysis of the programs and other surveys, displaying data in tables and charts.
- Developing and implementing procedures for insuring data integrity in survey data sets and program publications.
- Collaborating with other members of the research team, and other Fund programs to write reports, issue briefs, journal articles, and blog posts based on survey findings.
- Maintain and build knowledge-base on the literature, policy environment, and industry trends related to the Affordable Care Act and public and private health insurance coverage and access issues to both inform questionnaire development, data analysis and presentation, and focus of publications.
- Conduct background research on current health coverage and access issues, including literature reviews and Internet searches. Monitor journals, working papers, legislative developments, survey reports, and other information related to the program area.
- Prepare charts and tables for public presentations and presenting findings to professional and policy audiences. May also be asked to prepare presentations for the other program leads, and senior management.
- Participate in the development of policy relevant and methodologically sound Board-level and intermediate grant projects for the Health Care Coverage and Access Program and Tracking Health System Performance research initiative. Conduct background research and literature reviews; review proposals for design and methodology; prepare summaries for review and approval by the Board of Directors.
- Assure high quality, policy relevant Fund publications based on grantee and staff work. Critique grantee and staff papers submitted for Fund publication; participate in the final review; prepare executive summaries and issue briefs based on grantee work.
- Participate in cross-program Fund supported health policy work.
- The Researcher may also support the Vice President with additional responsibility for coordinating all activities within this program, developing and maintaining the work plan for the program, convening program team meetings and representing the program internally to the executive management team.
- The Program Assistant and the Researcher will back each other up in the other's absence, so each is expected to cross-train and ultimately know the other's responsibilities at a level that provides for reasonable back-up.

The Fund's philosophy on successful performance in the job includes the willingness on the part of all staff members to handle any assignment necessary to further the goals of the institution. This may include taking on responsibility for other program areas or departments if the need arises.

Core Competencies & Qualifications

The ideal candidate for this position will have a masters degree (MS, MPH, MPA) in a field related to health economics, health services research or health policy. The position requires a strong background in statistical data analysis using STATA, SAS or other statistical software. Candidates must also have a working knowledge of the insurance coverage provisions of the Affordable Care Act and a background in health insurance coverage and insurance markets, and Medicaid. Experience in survey design and methodology is preferable.

Applicants should demonstrate strong research analytical skills, including competence in the use of quantitative data. Excellent oral and written communication skills will include the ability to write about and discuss complex issues. Will have coordination and project management skills, be well organized with concern for details, accuracy and deadlines and have the ability to set priorities and work with a minimum of supervision. Will have digital skills including experience with statistical

software, spreadsheets, graphical and mapping software. Excellent interpersonal skills: capable of being a team member as well as a team leader and a willingness to participate in the general workflow of the office.

The Fund has a relatively small staff, and judgment, integrity, and the ability to listen with sensitivity to others are traits that are particularly important in an organization of the Fund's size, where teamwork is essential to effectiveness. The ability to work collegially with a variety of Fund staff and interest in and strong commitment to the Fund's mission and grants programs are key qualifications.

What We Offer (For external postings)

Commonwealth Fund employees receive competitive salaries and a generous benefit package designed to support their overall well-being. We also strive to create a diverse and inclusive workplace in line with our values and goals. The Fund conducts annual benchmarking studies to ensure we continue to meet these goals. Employee benefits include:

- Best-in-class health care plan with comprehensive medical, hospital, and prescription drug coverage, along with a health reimbursement account, provided at no cost to employees and their dependents; vision coverage provided at nominal cost
- 403(b) retirement plan featuring generous employer contributions that range from 11 percent to 20 percent of annual salary
- Retiree health benefits
- Tuition reimbursement and professional development support
- Generous time off to support employee work–life balance
- Flexible hybrid work policy
- Half-day summer Fridays
- Comprehensive parental leave policies, with up to 12 weeks' salary continuance
- Generous matching gifts program for charitable donations
- Disability and life insurance coverage at no cost

Location

This position is based in our NYC location.

Salary and How to Apply

Minimum Starting Salary: \$92,480

Apply Using this link: [Researcher](#)

Employment at The Commonwealth Fund is based upon personal capabilities and qualifications without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual preference, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, medical condition, disability, or any other protected characteristic as established by law.