



NEWS RELEASE

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NEW REPORT: How Will The Affordable Care Act Affect 15 Million Uninsured Young Adults?

New York, NY, October 8, 2010—Young adults continue to represent one of the largest groups of Americans without health insurance, with nearly 15 million people aged 19-29 uninsured in 2009—an increase of more than 1 million over 2008, according to a Commonwealth Fund report released today. However, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is poised to make a significant difference for this population, as up to 12.1 million could gain subsidized insurance once all of the law's provisions go into effect in 2014.

The report, *Realizing Health Reform's Potential: Young Adults and the Affordable Care Act of 2010*, by Commonwealth Fund researchers Sara Collins and Jennifer Nicholson, is an update of a May 2010 report, with new numbers reflecting the latest data on the number of uninsured Americans released by the U.S. Census Bureau last month.

According to the report, by 2014, when most of the bill's provisions will have taken effect, up to 7.2 million uninsured young adults will gain coverage through Medicaid expansions and up to 4.9 million will gain subsidized private coverage through new insurance exchanges. About 1 million uninsured young adults up to age 26 are projected to join their parents' policies beginning in 2010. The report estimates that 1.8 million uninsured young adults are not legal residents and will not be eligible for federally subsidized health insurance under the new law.

The authors conclude that, "when fully implemented, the ACA will allow young adults of all income levels to undergo a new rite of passage: establishing necessary ties with the health care system, without fear of accumulating medical debt, as they pursue their educational and career goals."

This report is the fourth in an ongoing series of Commonwealth Fund reports designed to explain how health reform will affect various groups. More on this series, as well as access to the Fund's new Health Reform Resource Center, can be found at www.commonwealthfund.org.

The Commonwealth Fund is a private foundation supporting independent research on health policy reform and a high performance health system.