

**From:** Jacobs, Chris (JEC)

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**Subject:** California Survey Provides a Vision of the Future Under ObamaCare

The California Health Care Foundation released a [survey](#) of California Medicaid patients earlier today. The press release regarding the survey highlighted the fact that a large percentage of enrollees have a favorable impression of the California Medicaid program—perhaps because Medicaid coverage comes with no premiums and no, or very little, cost-sharing. However, a closer look at the survey data reveals that California Medicaid suffers from significant access problems:

- More than two in five (42%) California adults in Medicaid had difficulty getting an appointment with a specialist, compared to 24% with private coverage.
- Nearly half (47%) of all beneficiaries in poor health said it was difficult to find specialists accepting their insurance—a rate more than twice as high as those adults with other health coverage (23%).
- More than one-third (34%) of all California Medicaid enrollees in excellent, very good, or good health were forced to make a trip to the emergency room in the past 12 months, compared to just 14% of those with other coverage.

- More than half (55%) of all Medicaid enrollees in fair or poor health visited the emergency room at least once in the past year, compared to only one-quarter (25%) of those in poor health with other coverage. The high rate of emergency room visits among Medicaid patients illustrates the problem with access to regular care in the Medicaid program, as patients are forced to utilize the more costly ER instead.

With access issues like this, it's far from clear how the Medicaid program in California—to say nothing of other states—will be able to handle the [nearly 26 million more individuals](#) being added to the program by ObamaCare. The ranks of Medicaid beneficiaries facing severe access problems are only likely to rise in the coming years, as ObamaCare adds yet more people to this broken program.

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