

Statement from RWJF: 49.9 Million Americans Without Health Insurance in 2010
[Statement Regarding Census Estimate of Uninsured Americans](#)

"The federal government today announced that the number of Americans living without health insurance increased slightly, with more than 49.9 million people going uninsured last year. In these challenging economic times, the ability to afford health insurance has become even more tenuous. More businesses are also struggling to provide insurance benefits to their employees. The result is that more people are uninsured, leaving them to postpone care they desperately need, or worry about how to pay for the care they receive now.

"We know from the Oregon Health Insurance Experiment that not having insurance has a profound effect on an individual's health and well-being. Oregon residents who were able to enroll in Medicaid increased their use of health care services in appropriate settings, experienced better health and suffered fewer financial strains due to medical expenses.

"Experts estimate that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will expand health insurance coverage to as many as 32 million people nationwide—reducing the number of uninsured people in America by more than half—but these gains are far from assured. Much of the success of health reform will depend on states' abilities to effectively and efficiently implement the law's provisions over the coming years.

"As we all work towards achieving these coverage gains, we can draw on lessons from state efforts to enroll children who are eligible for public programs. The number of eligible but uninsured kids fell by about 340,000 between 2008 and 2009 thanks to concerted efforts to make sure children are covered.

"Earlier this year, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation established the State Health Reform Assistance Network to provide hands-on technical assistance to 10 diverse states as they navigate the processes and policy changes necessary to implement coverage provisions of the ACA. By evaluating and sharing the learnings, we hope to inform the work of states nationwide.

"We believe our goal of expanding coverage to nearly all Americans by 2020 is an attainable one, and truly a moral imperative for us all. Our future, and our children's future health and well-being, depend on it."

Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD, MBA
President and CEO
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, measureable and timely change. For nearly 40 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.