



Uninsured patients still show high satisfaction

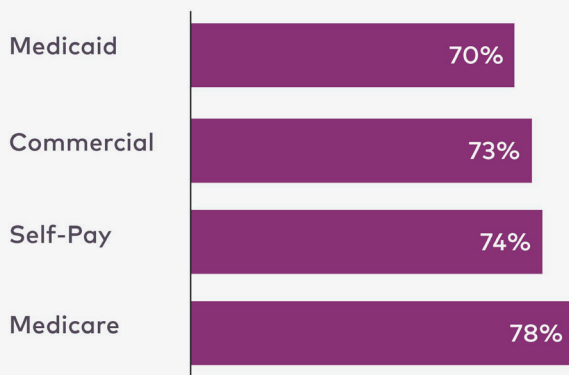
By James Furbush | July 26, 2017

Uninsured patients would seem to be at the bottom of the healthcare totem pole, but new research from athenahealth found that they are just as satisfied with their providers as commercially insured patients.

The finding comes from an analysis of 200,000 patient data surveys issued by MedStatix to physicians on the athenahealth network. When asked about overall satisfaction, nearly the same percentage of uninsured patients and commercially insured patients ranked their providers a 10 out of 10.

Uninsured just as satisfied as commercially insured

Patient satisfaction by payer



Source: athenaResearch & MedStatix
Sample: 67k visits to primary care providers

“We were surprised that uninsured patients were equally happy,” says Josh Gray, vice president of research at athenahealth. “I think a common perception is that these patients won’t get the same level of attention and service, but if that’s the case, it’s not reflected in the data.”

Gray hypothesizes that because it’s often difficult for uninsured patients to get care, they may have lower expectations for the healthcare experience — and simply be grateful to see a provider.

“It might also reflect a difference in the providers who are seeing them,” Gray adds. “Providers can elect not to see uninsured patients, so those who do see uninsured patients might have other qualities that leaves their patients more satisfied.”

However, Medicaid patients were less satisfied with their providers than even uninsured patients. “This might imply that more highly skilled providers are less likely to accept Medicaid patients,” Gray says.

Researchers also found little difference between the satisfaction scores of male and female patients, and found that older patients tend to be slightly more satisfied with their providers than younger patients.

James Furbush is managing editor of athenaInsight. Data analysis by Stewart Richardson. MedStatix is a patient experience analytics company based in Pennsylvania.

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