

Healthcare Georgia Foundation's  
*2003 Access to Care and Prevention Survey*

**Methods and Procedures**

Between 6 March and 16 May, 2003, a survey of adult residents of Georgia was conducted by the Survey Research Center (SRC) by telephone, under a grant award from the Healthcare Georgia Foundation. The survey was intended to assess the health care situations of residents of Georgia and determine the attitudes and opinions of Georgians towards their own health care coverage and coverage for the poor in the state. Prior to the study, telephone interviewers attended two three-hour training sessions that covered survey methods, standard procedures of telephone interviewing, the purpose of the survey, an in-depth explanation of the survey instrument, and a practice session. In addition, at least one supervisor was present at all times during interviewing to provide quality control.

The first step in the process of conducting the Healthcare Georgia Foundation Survey involved the development of the survey instrument. Survey Research Center staff, in consultation with the Healthcare Georgia Foundation, developed a 61-item interview schedule designed to determine the level of health insurance coverage and opinions toward health insurance of adult Georgians.

The design of the study called for conducting 1200 interviews from randomly selected households in Georgia. The procedures utilized were designed to ensure that all Georgia households had a near equal chance of being selected for inclusion in the sample. This provision of equal opportunity of selection is a necessary requirement if a probability sample is to be obtained. Bias in response is also minimized, and inferences about the adult population in Georgia can safely be made from the results obtained in the survey.

Assuming the sampling procedures outlined above produce a random sample of adult Georgians, the estimated theoretical standard error associated with the sample estimates obtained (n=1200), when the population proportion (P) is 50 percent (i.e., a "worse case scenario"), is .0145. In addition, the theoretical standard error decreases as the proportion (P) approaches 0 or 100. Thus, if 85% of the sample provides a given response, the standard error is .0104. The standard errors are derived from the mathematical formula:

$$\text{Square root of: } \frac{P * Q}{n}$$

where: P = the proportion of the population exhibiting a characteristic (i.e., have health insurance);  
Q = (1-P), the proportion not exhibiting the characteristic;  
n = size of the sample

Once obtained, the standard errors can be used to estimate the sampling margin of error of the estimates (i.e., the probable difference in results between interviewing the entire adult population of Georgia versus taking a scientific sample of that population), that extend 1.96 standard error units (i.e., the 95% confidence interval) around that value according to the following formula:

$$P \pm 1.96 * (\text{standard error})$$

Thus, with a random sample size of 1189 and a population proportion of 50 percent, the 95% confidence interval for the estimate would be:

$$\begin{aligned} &.50 \pm 1.96 * .0145 = .50 \pm .028 \\ &= 50\% \pm 2.8\% \quad = 47.2\% \text{ to } 52.8\% \end{aligned}$$

The formula sets a 95 percent confidence interval with a sampling error of +/- 5 percent, and is designed to insure estimates produced are within known parameters of precision (sampling error) and accuracy (confidence interval). Based on this formula, the 1189 cases collected are more than sufficient to achieve desired levels of precision and accuracy.

These methods produce a sample that is representative of the population under study. Sampling error is no greater than +/- 2.8 percent, with a 95 percent level of confidence. That is, if 50 percent of the sample gave a certain response to a question, we can be 95 percent certain that between 47.2 and 52.8 percent of the population as a whole would give that same response. This expected error decreases as the sample proportion approaches 0 or 100.

In addition to sample size, the quality of a sample is determined by cooperation rate; that is, the proportion of contacted members of the original sample who provide an interview. The Response Rate Table details the results of the telephone procedures. Here we see that the total cooperation rate for the study is 42.4 percent. That is, of the 2,805 eligible respondents contacted, 1,189 yielded complete interviews. Table 1 also shows the final disposition of each of the 8,500 numbers called in the study.

Once a respondent is located and cooperation obtained, standardized SRC quality-control procedures are set in place to ensure that high quality data are produced. For example, SRC Supervisors are assigned to monitor interviewers in progress; thus approximately one-fifth to one-quarter of all interviews are monitored, and any interviewer errors are eliminated.

Users of these data should understand the limitations associated with this particular data set. Only English speaking households were interviewed, thus the proportion of Hispanic respondents is not proportional to the Hispanic population in Georgia. Further, caution should be exercised when attempting to analyze the data by region, or by specific sub-groups due to the possibility of small sample sizes. The cooperation rate for the study was 42.4 percent.

All manuscripts utilizing data made available through the University of Georgia Survey Research Center should acknowledge that fact as well as identify the original collector of the data. The Survey Research Center urges all users of this data to use some adaptation of the following notice, with the parentheses indicating items to be filled in approximately or deleted by the individual user:

The data (and tabulations) utilized in this document were made available (in part) by the Survey Research Center of the University of Georgia. Neither the Survey Research Center nor the University bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

**TABLE 1**  
Response Rate Table

	<b>N</b>	<b>% Category</b>
<b>Interview</b>		
Complete	1189	94.8
Partial	65	5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1254</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Eligible, Non-Interview</b>		
First Refusal	70	2.9
Final Refusal	1481	61.4
Non-Contact		
Resp. Never Available	167	6.9
Ans. Machine, No Msg	414	17.2
Ans. Machine, Message	0	0.0
Other		
Dead	0	0.0
Phys/Mentally Unable	70	2.9
Language Unable	107	4.4
Misc. Unable	1	0.1
Callbacks		
Callback, Resp Not Selected	93	3.9
Callback, Resp Selected	8	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2411</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Unknown Eligibility: Non-Interview</b>		
Unknown if Household		
Busy	61	8.6
No Answer	574	81.2
Ans. Machine	0	0.0
Technical Phone Problems	71	10.1
Known Household		
Unknown: No Screener	0	0.0
Unknown: Other	1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Not Eligible</b>		
Out of sample	0	0.0
Fax/Data Line	552	13.4
Non-working/disconnected		
Non-working number	216	5.2
Disconnected number	2391	57.9
Technological circumstances		
Number changed	126	3.0
Cell phone	11	0.3
Call forwarding	40	1.0
Not a household		
Bus/gov't/other Organization	704	17.1
Institution	1	0.0
Group quarters	1	0.0
No eligible respondent	86	2.1
Quota filled	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4128</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Cooperation Rate</b>		<b>42.4</b>

\*American Association for Public Opinion Research COOP3 = Interviews/(Interviews +Partials + Refusals)

