

**Longitudinal Analysis of Access to Health Care
for Appalachian and Non-Appalachian Adults in Kentucky**

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Purpose: The purpose of this longitudinal trend analysis was to document the extent of disparities in access to health care between Appalachian and Non-Appalachian adults in Kentucky over a 6-year period. The specific aims were to examine trends in: (a) health insurance coverage, (b) ability to afford health services; and, (c) travel to a health facility using the Kentucky Health Interview Survey (KHIS) data.

Method: Logistic regression estimated the probabilities of having health insurance coverage, ability to afford health services, and travel to a health facility, given respondents' status as an Appalachian versus Non-Appalachian, time (1992-1997), the interaction of Region and Time and covariates of age, sex, race, marital status, education, household income, and employment status.

Findings: Area of residence predicted the probability of difficulty in travel to a health facility, $\chi^2(1, N = 3,881) = 151.86, p \leq .0001$. Non-Appalachians had less difficulty traveling to a health facility compared with Appalachians (Odds Ratio = .47). Difficulty with travel to a health facility was less likely for those who had at least a high school education compared with those who had not completed high school (Odds Ratio = .56), and for those with an income $> \$25,000$ compared with those who had lower incomes ($< \$25,000$) (Odds Ratio = .52).

Discussion: Some disparities exist between Appalachians and Non-Appalachians in Kentucky and have not changed over time. Compared with Non-Appalachians, Appalachians have lower education and income, and greater unemployment creating barriers to access to health care.