

# More sought mental health specialty care in 2008 to 2015

January 12 2018

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(HealthDay)—Between 2008 and 2015 there was an increase in the

number of U.S. adults who received outpatient mental health care in the specialty sector, according to a study published in the December issue of *Health Affairs*.

Beth Han, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H., from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in Rockville, Md., and colleagues used data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (2008 to 2015) to examine national trends in the receipt of specialty outpatient [mental health care](#).

The researchers found that between 2008 to 2009 and 2014 to 2015 the [number](#) of U.S. adults who received specialty outpatient mental health care rose from 11.3 million to 13.7 million per year, an increase from 5.0 to 5.7 percent of the adult population. The annual weighted mean number of visits to the specialty sector remained unchanged among these recipients of care. Increases in both numbers and percentages of adults who received care within the specialty sector were seen across age and sex groups. Additionally, increases were seen among non-Hispanic whites, people with Medicare, people with [private health insurance](#), and people with family incomes of \$20,000 to \$49,999.

"Increases in receipt of specialty mental [health](#) care during 2012 to 2015 may be related to recent policy initiatives aimed at reducing financial barriers to care," the authors write.

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