

# Health insurance coverage increases for individuals on probation after ACA implementation

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Over 6 million adults are supervised by the United States correctional system on any given day. Approximately 3.7 million of those adults are

on probation and serve their sentences while living in the community. People involved in the correctional system are more likely to have a chronic condition, substance use disorders, or mental illness and are at higher risk of being uninsured when compared with the general population.

In the first year after implementation of the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) key provisions, [health insurance coverage](#) increased for individuals with involvement in the criminal justice system. Whether the ACA continued to improve coverage beyond its first year of implementation among this population was unknown.

Researchers from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health recently assessed the impact of the ACA among U.S. adults on probation by estimating [insurance coverage](#) for individuals on and not on probation. The findings were recently published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*.

Researchers analyzed data from the 2008–2016 National Survey of Drug Use and Health, a nationally representative cross-sectional survey that measures the prevalence of mental health and substance use in the U.S. The study sample included non-elderly adults aged 18 to 64 who were on probation in the past year specifically focusing on details about their health insurance status.

The study found:

- following implementation of the ACA's key provisions in 2014, insurance coverage increased significantly—by 17.5 percent—for individuals on probation;
- although insurance coverage remained lower for individuals on probation compared with that for individuals not on probation, coverage disparities decreased by 17.4 percent between 2013 and

2016;

- health insurance gains among individuals on probation in the past year were primarily due to an increase in Medicaid coverage.

**More information:** Christopher D. Knapp et al. Health Insurance Gains After Implementation of the Affordable Care Act Among Individuals Recently on Probation: USA, 2008–2016, *Journal of General Internal Medicine* (2019). [DOI: 10.1007/s11606-019-04900-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-019-04900-3)

Provided by University of Minnesota

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