

Issue 5



Study Notes

October 2007

*Kansas Demonstration to
Maintain Independence and Employment*

What's New

Happy Autumn! *Study Notes* is a newsletter for DMIE participants. Its purpose is to help you stay informed and to thank you for being part of the study. This issue of the newsletter provides an update on surveys, news from the national health care debate, and some findings about participants' health compared to that of other Kansans.

By the end of October, everyone should have completed the current round of surveys. A big THANK YOU to everyone for keeping your survey appointments and providing us with your candid responses. We want to assure you that we are listening to your suggestions for questions to add to the surveys. We very much appreciate your insights and apologize that we can't include everything.

The next round of surveys will not happen until Spring. We'll send out reminder magnets in January highlighting survey months for you.



Health Care on Our Minds

A recent poll by the Kaiser Family Foundation shows that health care is the number one domestic issue and the second most mentioned issue that the American public wants the government to address, after Iraq. Not surprisingly, all of the major presidential hopefuls are proposing solutions to the health care problems facing our country.

The Kaiser poll also asked Americans the most important issues to be addressed with regard to health care. The top two responses were reducing the cost of health care and health insurance (39%) and expanding health insurance for the uninsured (34%). When asked which one thing they would like health care reform proposals to address, the number one response was a new health plan that would make a major effort to provide insurance for nearly all of the uninsured, even if it involves an increase in spending on health (54%).

These findings demonstrate a recognition of the enormous impact of our health care system on the American people. Your participation in the DMIE study provides researchers and policy makers with important information about the health care and health insurance experiences of Americans with chronic illnesses. We appreciate your involvement and will continue to provide updates on health care policy.



Don't forget to get your flu shot!!! Many local health departments offer these at free or reduced rates, especially to people with chronic illnesses.

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Study Stats

Throughout the study, we want to share with you some of what we are learning about DMIE participants and their experiences. In this issue, we compare health conditions among DMIE study participants to those of the general adult population in Kansas. If there are topics you would like to see covered here, please give us a call at (785) 864-3788.

In our last issue, we reported that study participants have a four times greater disease burden and expected level of health care utilization than the national average for working age adults. Compared to their fellow Kansans, study participants clearly experience higher rates of serious health conditions and limitations (see table).

| Health Indicator | Study Participants | Kansas Average* |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|
| % with any type of diabetes | 26.6% | 7.3% |
| % with angina/coronary heart disease | 12.4% | 4.3% |
| % who report fair or poor health | 24% | 14.3% |
| % who are overweight or obese | 76.6% | 62.3% |
| % with any activity limitations due to physical or mental health | 55% | 18.9% |

*From Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2006