

Perceived Quality of Care, Receipt of Preventive Care, and Usual Source of Health Care Among Undocumented and Other Latinos

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BACKGROUND: Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States and experience persistent disparities in access to and quality of health care.

OBJECTIVES: (1) To determine the relationship between nativity/immigration status and self-reported quality of care and preventive care. (2) To assess the impact of a usual source of health care on receipt of preventive care among Latinos.

DESIGN: Using cross-sectional data from the 2007 Pew Hispanic Center/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Hispanic Healthcare Survey, a nationally representative telephone survey of 4,013 Latino adults, we compared US-born Latinos with foreign-born Latino citizens, foreign-born Latino permanent residents and undocumented Latinos. We estimated odds ratios using separate multivariate ordered logistic models for five outcomes: blood pressure checked in the past 2 years, cholesterol checked in the past 5 years, perceived quality of medical care in the past year, perceived receipt of no health/health-care information from a doctor in the past year, and language concordance.

RESULTS: Undocumented Latinos had the lowest percentages of insurance coverage (37% vs 77% US-born, $P<0.001$), usual source of care (58% vs 79% US-born, $P<0.001$), blood pressure checked (67% vs 87% US-born, $P<0.001$), cholesterol checked (56% vs 83% US-born, $P<0.001$), and reported excellent/good care in the past year (76% vs 80% US-born, $P<0.05$). Undocumented Latinos also reported the highest percentage receiving no health/health-care information from their doctor (40% vs 20% US-born, $P<0.001$) in the past year. Adjusted results showed that undocumented status was associated with lower likelihood of blood pressure checked in the previous 2 years (OR=0.60; 95% CI, 0.43–0.84), cholesterol checked in the past 5 years (OR=0.62; 95% CI, 0.39–0.99), and perceived receipt of excellent/ good care in the past year (OR=0.56; 95% CI, 0.39–0.77). Having a usual source of care increased the likelihood of a blood pressure check in the past 2 years and a cholesterol check in the past 5 years.

CONCLUSION: In this national sample, undocumented Latinos were less likely to report receiving blood pressure and cholesterol level checks, less likely to report having received excellent/good quality of care, and more likely to receive no health/health-care information from doctors, even after adjusting for potential confounders. Our study shows that differences in nativity/immigration status should be taken into consideration when we discuss perceived quality of care among Latinos.

KEY WORDS: Latinos; quality of care; immigrants; preventive care.
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