

Patient Experience Survey: Covered By Insurance But Still Exposed: Barriers to Care for Insured Americans

Key Findings

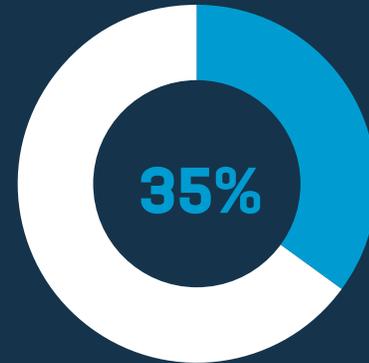
Between insurance practices that pose access hurdles and financial barriers to care that can be insurmountable for some, coverage isn't working like it should for too many Americans.

Health insurance deductibles and other out-of-pocket costs imposed by insurers are creating significant barriers to care and deepening inequities.

- With health plans increasingly requiring patient cost-sharing, more than a third (37%) of insured Americans report at least one financial barrier to care, such as unaffordable out-of-pocket costs or a lack of savings to pay for emergency or unforeseen expenses.
- In fact, more than a third (35%) of insured Americans report spending more in out-of-pocket costs in the last 30 days than they could afford. For those insured Americans, health insurance deductibles are the main reason (41%) they cannot afford their out-of-pocket costs.
- Black (24%) and Hispanic (21%) insured Americans are most likely to report that they wouldn't be able to afford care if they got sick or had an accident, compared to just 17% of white Americans.

Cost-sharing and medical debt can have devastating consequences for families and individuals alike, especially among Hispanic and Black communities.

- Unaffordable out-of-pocket costs are increasingly driving Americans into medical debt, with **more than a quarter of insured Americans (27%) reporting outstanding medical debt averaging \$4,000**. The primary sources of that medical debt are hospital and doctors' bills.
- Insurance is also disproportionately leaving communities of color exposed to mounting medical debt, with Hispanic (36%) and Black (33%) Americans with insurance reporting outstanding medical debt, compared to 26% of white Americans.



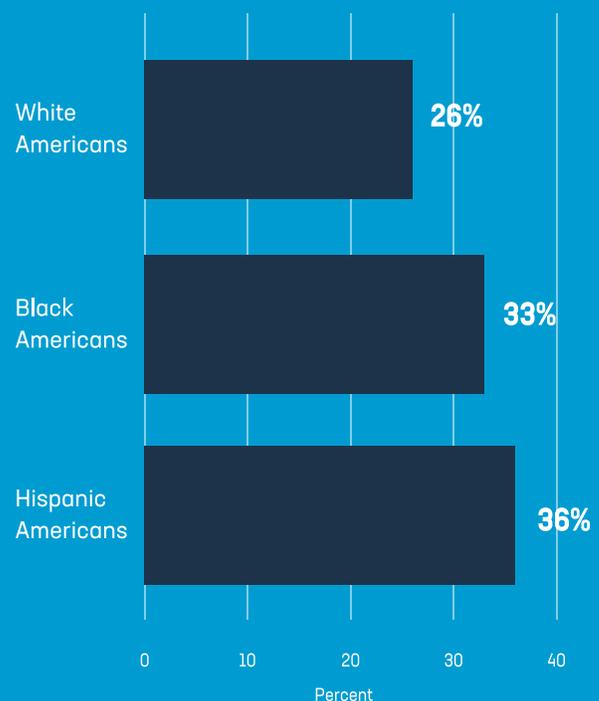
Thirty-five percent of insured Americans report spending more in out-of-pocket costs in the last 30 days than they could afford.

Note: Ratio comparing reported maximum amount respondents could afford next month in out-of-pocket health care expenses to reported best estimate for how much respondents spent on out-of-pocket health care expenses in the past 30 days.

Base: 4,264 Insured Americans

Source: Patient Experience Survey, November 30 - December 18, 2021

Black and Hispanic Communities Disproportionately Burdened by Medical Debt



Q: Do you currently have any outstanding debt for medical expenses (money that you owe for health care services you could not afford at the time?) Y/N

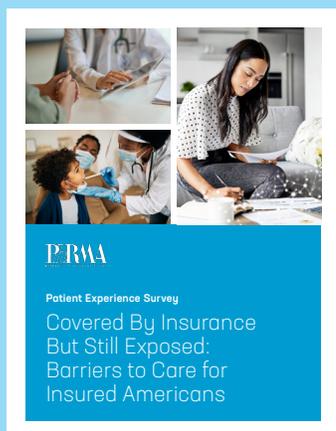
Base: 4,264 Insured Americans

Source: Patient Experience Survey, November 30 - December 18, 2021

Insurer-imposed practices compound these challenges and put yet another barrier between insured patients and their medicines, especially for underserved communities.

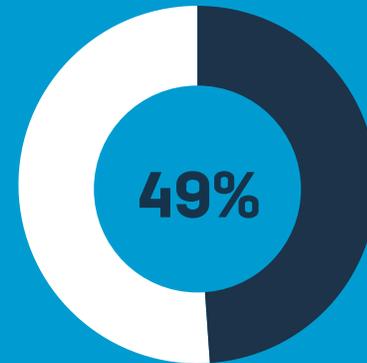
- Roughly half (49%) of insured patients who take prescription medicines report facing at least one insurance barrier (i.e., prior authorization, fail first, exclusion from a formulary, among others) in the past three months.
- Nearly two thirds (64%) of Hispanic Americans and more than half (55%) of Black Americans who use prescription medicines report experiencing insurance barriers, compared to 44% of white Americans.
- Patients with serious conditions such as infectious diseases (79%), autoimmune diseases (73%) and mental health conditions (65%) also report being disproportionately burdened by utilization management barriers in access to medicines.

PhRMA's Patient Experience Survey (PES) is a research initiative designed to explore the barriers patients face in accessing health care and prescription medicines. Launched in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, which exposed many of the vulnerabilities of our health care system, the survey reports the lived experiences of 5,000 Americans. (The sample for this report includes 3,624 Americans who rely on prescription medicines, and 4,264 insured Americans, of which 1,777 face a financial barrier to care.) The research aims to understand how patients engage with the health care system, uncover the real, practical challenges Americans face around access and affordability and identify solutions that could make a meaningful difference.



Covered By Insurance But Still Exposed: Barriers to Care for Insured Americans is the second PES report, examining how tens of millions of insured and vulnerable Americans can face often insurmountable obstacles to care.

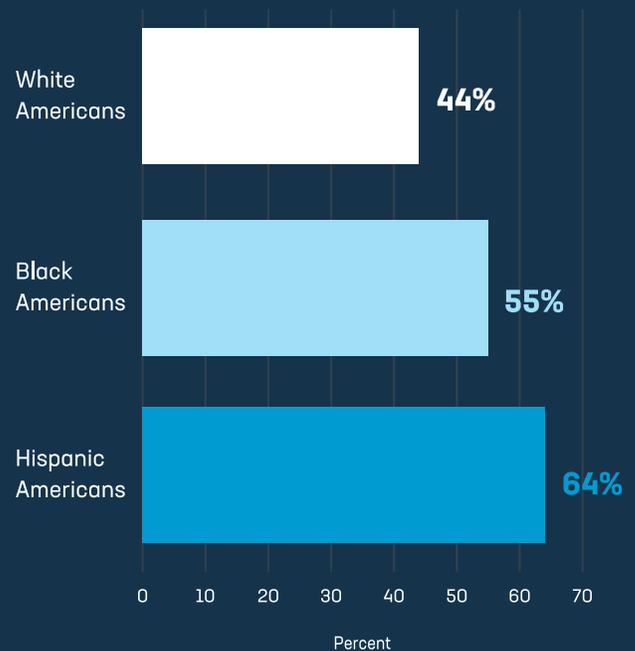
The full methodology and detailed findings can be found at phrma.org.



Forty-nine percent of insured patients who take prescription medicines report facing at least one insurance barrier in the first three months

*Base: 1,777 Insured Americans who face a financial barrier to care
Note: See Appendix for financial barrier methodology
Source: Patient Experience Survey, November 30 - December 18, 2021*

Insurance Practices (Such As Prior Authorization and Fail First) Disproportionately Impact Black and Hispanic Americans



Q: Have any of the following happened to you or your family over the past three months? Please answer regarding any kind of prescription medicine for any condition or illness.

*Base: 3,624 Patients who take prescription medicines
Source: Patient Experience Survey, November 30 - December 18, 2021*