

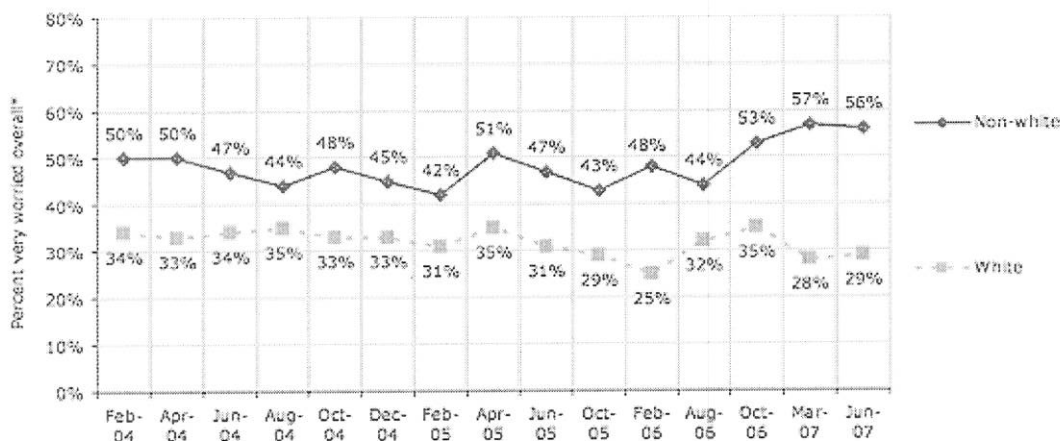
Thursday, June 28, 2007

Kaiser Health Security Watch Finds Disparities in Worries About Health Care Access and Costs, With Minorities and Low-Income People Much More Likely To Be Worried than Whites and Higher-Income People

The Kaiser Family Foundation's latest Health Security Watch tracking poll shows that minorities are significantly more worried about health care access and costs than whites (56% vs. 29%), and people with low incomes are more worried than those with high incomes (59% vs. 25%) – disparities that are at or near record highs.

Since Kaiser began tracking in February 2004, non-whites have expressed higher levels of concern about their health care than whites in a scale that combines six individual questions about people's ability to access and pay for care. However, the March and June 2007 surveys showed record high levels of worry among non-whites, with nearly six in 10 saying they are very worried about their health care, compared with fewer than three in 10 whites. The gaps between whites and non-whites were 29 percentage points and 27 percentage points in March and June 2007, which are the largest gaps ever recorded in the survey, and nearly double the 15 percentage point average gap recorded in the 13 tracking polls prior to 2007.

Kaiser Health Security Watch: Differences in Health Worries by Race/Ethnicity



*Percent very worried overall calculated based on 6 questions measuring worry about ability to access and pay for health care. Note: Whites includes non-Hispanic whites only. Non-whites includes Hispanics, African Americans, and people of other races.

Worries among those with incomes under \$20,000 have been increasing since 2006, and in June 2007, 59% of this group reports being very worried, compared with 25% of those with incomes of \$50,000 or more. This increase resulted in the largest gap between the lowest and highest income groups since we began tracking these questions – a 34 percentage point difference, substantially larger than the average gap for all polls prior to 2007 (24 percentage points). Among all adults, after a three-year low of 56% in February 2006, the percent expressing worry has remained consistent at around six in 10, with nearly four in 10 saying they are very worried.

The June poll involved a nationally representative random sample of 1,203 adults, who were interviewed by telephone between May 31 and June 5. The margin of sampling error for the survey is plus or minus 3 percentage points; for results based on subgroups, the sampling error is higher. Full results are available at www.kff.org/healthsecuritywatch.cfm