

# Access to Health Care

## Definition

Access to care refers to the timely use of personal health services (such as preventive, diagnostic, treatment, and follow-up care) to achieve the best possible health outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

### KEY INDICATORS:

#### Health Insurance

Percent of uninsured adults age 18-64

#### Affordability

Percent of adults who needed to see a doctor in the past year but did not due to cost

#### Utilization

Percent of adults who have had a routine checkup in the past year

## Importance

Access to health services affects a person's health and well-being. Regular and reliable access to health services can:<sup>2</sup>

- Prevent disease and disability
- Detect and treat illnesses or other health conditions
- Increase quality of life
- Reduce the likelihood of premature (early) death
- Increase life expectancy

## Health Insurance



The percentage of uninsured adults **increased** for the first time since 2008.

**11%**

of adults age 18-64 in Kent County **do not have health insurance**

### PEOPLE OF COLOR ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE UNINSURED

Hispanic and Latino adults are **4 times more likely** to be uninsured than non-Hispanic adults

Black adults are **3 times more likely** to be uninsured than White adults

## Affordability & Utilization

**9%** of adults needed to see a doctor in the past 12 months but did not due to cost

**69%** of those who could not afford needed care were insured

**1 in 5**

adults **have not had a routine checkup** in the past year



## WHAT BARRIERS PREVENTED YOU FROM ACCESSING NEEDED HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES?

"Lack of health insurance. I make slightly too much to qualify for Medicaid, but too little to be able to afford a decent health insurance plan. This situation creates constant stress regarding struggling to afford mental health care and fearing that any type of physical health emergency will lead to medical bankruptcy."

"I can't afford to add additional costs to my budget—I **can't pay the resulting bills**. And I don't have days available to take time off of work."

**"Unsure which providers take my insurance."**

### COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED ISSUES:

Difficulty navigating the healthcare system & health insurance

Shortage of home health care workers for aging population

Access to and use of technology as a barrier to telehealth

<sup>1</sup> Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2018. *Elements of access to health care*.

<sup>2</sup> Healthy People 2020. *Access to health services: Overview & impact*.