Uninsured Rates Plunged in 2014 After California Fully Implemented Federal Health Care Reform

The number of Californians without health insurance plunged last year. The number of adults ages 18 to 64 without coverage dropped from 5.7 million in 2013 to 4.2 million in 2014, a 27% reduction. The number of uninsured children fell by a similar share, from 673,000 in 2013 to 497,000 in 2014. Uninsured rates declined correspondingly.

These gains reflect California’s comprehensive implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act. California opted to expand eligibility for Medi-Cal to more low-income adults. The state also streamlined Medi-Cal’s rules to make it easier for residents to sign up and launched subsidized private coverage through Covered California.

California can further reduce the number of uninsured residents. This includes strengthening outreach efforts as well as boosting coverage options for undocumented immigrants, who are generally ineligible for Medi-Cal and cannot buy health insurance through Covered California.

Note: Estimates are based on survey respondents’ health care coverage status at the time of the interview.
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey