

MEPS Data in New Report on Hidden Costs of Health Care

Health and Human Services Secretary Sebelius recently released the new report *Hidden Costs of Health Care: Why Americans Are Paying More but Getting Less*. The report documents the rising cost of deductibles, copayments, and out-of-pocket expenses that are making it more difficult for families with insurance to receive the health care they need. Findings indicate employer-sponsored health insurance premiums have nearly doubled since 2000, at a rate three times faster than the increase in wages. In 2008, the average premium for a family plan purchased through an employer was \$12,680, nearly the annual earnings of a full-time minimum-wage job. Americans pay more than ever for health insurance but get less coverage.

Staff from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's Center for Financing, Access, and Cost Trends conducted the data analyses on employer-sponsored coverage from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS) in response to a request from the Office of Health Reform.

The report is available at <http://www.healthreform.gov/reports/hiddencosts/index.html>.

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Response from:	James M. Branscome, M.S., Survey Statistician
Information requested:	June 1, 2009
Information supplied:	June 3, 2009