

More young adults getting mental health care under ACA

5 August 2014



Based on the new findings, Brendan Saloner, Ph.D., one of the researchers on the study, said the rule seems to be a "stepping stone" to improving young Americans' access to mental health care.

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(HealthDay)—The number of young American adults getting mental health treatment has risen since the rule on dependent coverage went into effect with the passage of the Affordable Care Act, according to research published in the August issue of *Health Affairs*.

In the new study, researchers used data from an annual government health survey that included questions used to screen for [mental health](#) or substance abuse problems. Between 2008 and 2012, there were over 20,000 18- to 25-year-olds with potential signs of those conditions. The team found that before the rule took effect, about 31 percent of those young people had received some type of [mental health treatment](#) in the past year. After the rule went into effect, that percentage rose to 33 percent.

The researchers also noted an increase in the number of young people who said [private insurance](#) paid for their [mental health care](#). After the rule, 33 percent said private insurance paid for their last treatment, versus 29 percent in the two years before the rule went into effect. Meanwhile, the reverse was true for 26- to 35-year-olds. In 2008 to 2009, over 38 percent said private insurance covered their last mental health treatment. After 2010, that dropped to 29 percent.

APA citation: More young adults getting mental health care under ACA (2014, August 5) retrieved 1 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-08-young-adults-mental-health-aca.html>

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