

Background

The agriculture industry has high rates of injury and illness

Average age of US farmers is 58 years old. Chronic conditions are more common among older populations and often require management by a health professional

Although farmers have higher incidences of injury and illness, they often face barriers to seeking medical care due to limited free time, shortage of providers in rural areas, limited funds, and quality health insurance¹

Study Purpose

The goal of this study is to identify factors that impact healthcare-seeking behaviors among farmers. The association between health insurance status (e.g., no insurance, public insurance, private insurance, employer provided insurance, etc.) and healthcare-seeking behavior will be examined.

Hypothesis: Farmers with self-reported “poorer” health insurance (or no health insurance) will be less likely to participate in prevention treatment compared to those with “better” insurance coverage

Methods

Farmers visiting the Health and Safety Tent at the 2018 Farm Progress Show in Boone, IA were invited to complete the survey

Male and female attendees above the age of 18 who are currently engaged or have been actively engaged in farming activities were eligible to participate

Survey included questions addressing their health insurance status, how often they utilize specific healthcare services, stress levels concerning health insurance, overall health, and safety on the farm, and demographic information

Results

Participants Under 65 Years Old		
Age	Under 25	1.7
	25-34	3.3
	35-44	13.3
	45-54	35.0
	55-64	46.7
Farming Status	Not retired/ Actively working on the farm	69.5
	Retired/ Don't work on the farm anymore	18.6
	Semi-retired/ Work on the farm in a limited capacity	11.9
Position on Farm	Owner/operator	66.7
	Live on farm/ farm family member	18.3
	Full-time worker	8.3
	Part-time worker	5.0
	Seasonal worker	1.7
Insurance Type	Insured through a job you hold off the farm	47.4
	Self-insured	28.1
	Insured through a job another family member holds off the farm	15.8
	Insured through your farm	5.3
	Other	3.5
Participants 65 Years and Older		
Age	65-70	55.9
	71-75	29.4
	Over 75	14.7
Farmig Status	Semi-retired/ Work on the farm in a limited capacity	52.9
	Not retired/ Actively working on the farm	35.3
	Retired/ Don't work on the farm anymore	11.8
Position on Farm	Owner/operator	70.6
	Live on farm/ farm family member	17.6
	Part-time worker	8.8
	Seasonal worker	2.9
Insurance Type	Medicare	87.1
	Self-insured	6.5
	Insured through a job another family member holds off the farm	3.2
	Insured through a job you hold off the farm	3.2

Figure 1. Table of demographic information separated by people who are under and over the age of 65.

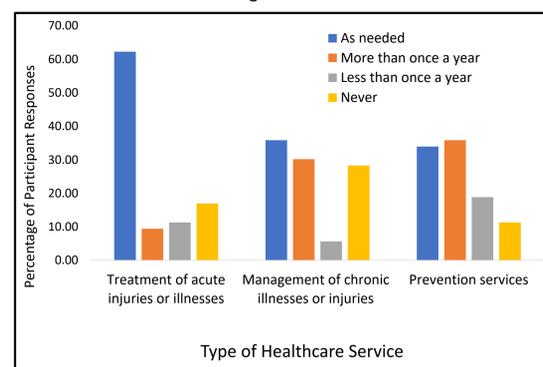


Figure 3. Healthcare services utilization of participants not on Medicare (N=53).

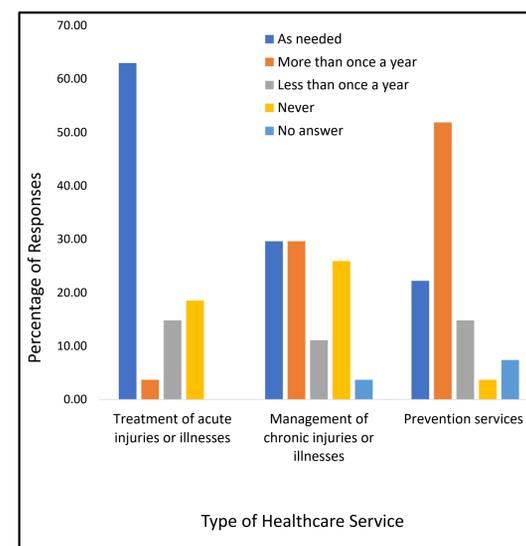


Figure 2. Healthcare services utilization of participants on Medicare (N=27).

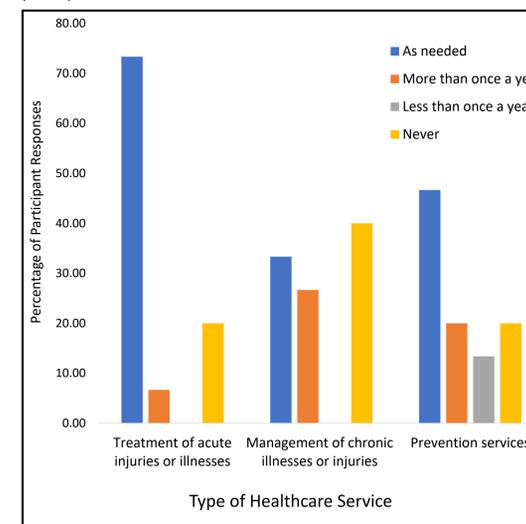


Figure 4. Healthcare services utilization of participants who are self-insured (N=15).



Discussion

Self-insured participants were the most likely to report “never” accessing acute, chronic or preventive healthcare services

Accessing care “as needed” was the most common response for all groups

People who were on Medicare used prevention healthcare services “more than once a year” at higher rates than the other groups

Future studies will ask farmers additional questions regarding the healthcare services they access

References

- Jones, Carol Adaire, Timothy S. Parker, Mary Ahearn, Ashok K. Mishra, and Jayachandran N. Variyam, Health Status and Health Care Access of Farm and Rural Populations, EIB-57, U.S. Dept. of Agri., Econ. Res. Serv. August 2009.

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