



SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina spends billions on health care and the bill keeps going up.

- South Carolina spent around \$21.5 billion on health care in 2004.¹ South Carolina's health care bill keeps going up, at an 8% average annual increase between 1991 and 2004.²
- South Carolina spent \$5,114 (in 2004) per capita on health care, more than twice the nation's average per capita spending on food (\$2,207).³
- Between 2001 and 2005, family premiums in South Carolina increased 26.8%, while median earnings of people purchasing family coverage decreased by 8.6%.⁴
- People who buy health insurance through their small business (between two and fifty employees) cannot be excluded due to health condition and the state has issued some cost protections for premium rates.⁵
- The self-employed and people who buy individual policies have few protections. They may pay very high rates or be permanently denied due to health status and other factors.⁶
- South Carolinians who can't afford individual insurance coverage or who are denied coverage may apply to the state's high risk pool program, but they can be charged as much as twice the premium that a healthy person would pay a private insurer.^{7,8}

South Carolina has made progress in reporting hospital-acquired infection rates.

- A law passed in 2006 required hospitals to report central line-associated bloodstream infections and surgical site infections for a number of surgical procedures to the Department of Health and Environmental Control. A preliminary first annual report was issued in January 2008.⁹
- Patients undergoing surgery in South Carolina hospitals receive appropriately timed antibiotic treatment, which reduces the risk of contracting an infection.¹⁰

But South Carolina faces health care challenges.

- Although the true number of patients harmed by medical errors in each state is neither collected nor reported to the public, the Institute of Medicine estimates as many as 98,000 Americans die from these preventable mistakes

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each year. These errors range from doing surgery on the wrong part of the body to serious bed sores to getting the wrong dose of medication.¹¹

- 17% of South Carolinians (about 700,000 people) remain uninsured, higher than average in other states (16%).¹²
- South Carolinians died of cancer at a higher rate than the average in other states (195 per 100,000 South Carolinians compared to 184 nationwide).¹³
- South Carolinians are admitted to the hospital for congestive heart failure at higher rates than average (530 admissions per 100,000 compared to 427 nationally).¹⁴
- Adults with diabetes in South Carolina receive hemoglobin tests and eye examinations at lower rates than average in other states. They are also hospitalized at higher rates than patients elsewhere due to their health condition.¹⁵
- Children, adults, and seniors with asthma in South Carolina are admitted to the hospital at much higher rates than elsewhere on average. 192 children were admitted per 100,000 in South Carolina compared to 132 for the nation.¹⁶
- A higher percentage of South Carolinians living in nursing homes are bedridden or in a chair, have incontinence and pressure sores than average elsewhere.¹⁷ Yet people who receive home health care in South Carolina experience improved mobility, less shortness of breath and incontinence.¹⁸

¹ <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=592&cat=5&rgn=42>

² <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=595&cat=5&rgn=42>

³ <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=596&cat=5&rgn=42> ; <http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/printNewsBis.asp?id=75043>

⁴ <http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/042508ctuwfinalembargoed.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?cat=7&sub=86&rgn=42>

⁶ <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?cat=7&sub=87&rgn=42>;

<http://healthinsuranceinfo.net/getinsured/southcarolina/individual-health-plans/individual-health-insurance-sold-by-private-insurers/>

⁷ <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?cat=7&sub=87&rgn=42>;

<http://healthinsuranceinfo.net/getinsured/southcarolina/individual-health-plans/south-carolina-health-insurance-pool-schip/>

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⁹ <http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/hai/index.htm> ; <http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/hai/reports.htm>

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http://statesnapshots.ahrq.gov/snaps07/meter_metrics.jsp?menuId=4&state=SC&level=5®ion=0&compGroup=N
Reflects 2005 data.

¹¹ Institute of Medicine, *To Err is Human*, Kohn, Linda, Corrigan and Donaldson, 2000, pp.26, 35.

¹² <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?cat=3&sub=39&rgn=42> Reflects 2006 data.

¹³

http://statesnapshots.ahrq.gov/snaps07/meter_metrics.jsp?menuId=4&state=SC&level=14®ion=0&compGroup=N
Reflects 2004 data.

¹⁴ http://statesnapshots.ahrq.gov/snaps07/meter_metrics.jsp?menuId=4&state=SC&level=7®ion=0&compGroup=N
Reflects 2004 data.

¹⁵ Ibid 13. Reflects 2004 and 2005 data.

¹⁶ Ibid 13.

¹⁷

http://statesnapshots.ahrq.gov/snaps07/meter_metrics.jsp?menuId=4&state=SC&level=6®ion=0&compGroup=N
Reflects 2006 data.

http://statesnapshots.ahrq.gov/snaps07/meter_metrics.jsp?menuId=4&state=SC&level=4®ion=0&compGroup=N
Reflects 2006 data.