

Community Fact Sheet

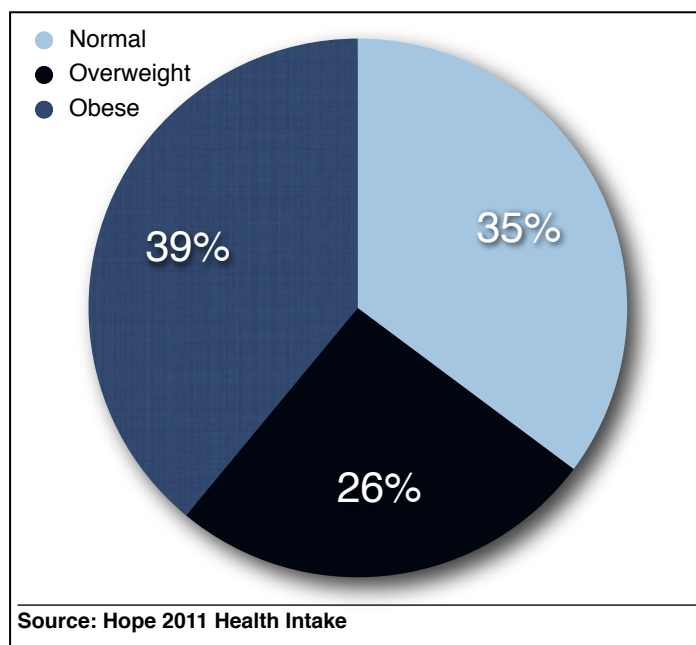
Hope 2011: A Health Status Report

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<http://sociology.uark.edu/1876.htm>

Volume 3, Issue No. 7

Figure 1. BMI (Body Mass Index) Breakdowns for HOPE 2011 Attendees



Health Services for Hope Attendees

HOPE 2011, a service event offering free critical services to those in need in Northwest Arkansas, took place this October 25, 2011 at Central United Methodist Church in Fayetteville, AR. Health, hygiene, legal, financial and other services, as well as groceries and clothing, were available to attendees. Of these services, by far the most utilized were the health services. In particular, 254 blood pressure and heart rate screenings and 128 Body Mass Index (BMI) screenings were given. In addition, 60 dental exams and 71 vision screenings were administered, along with 75 flu vaccines for adults. Health services were also the most popular in the two previous years of the HOPE event, suggesting a continuing lack of affordable and adequate health care available to low-income persons and families.

Body Mass Index (BMI) of HOPE Attendees

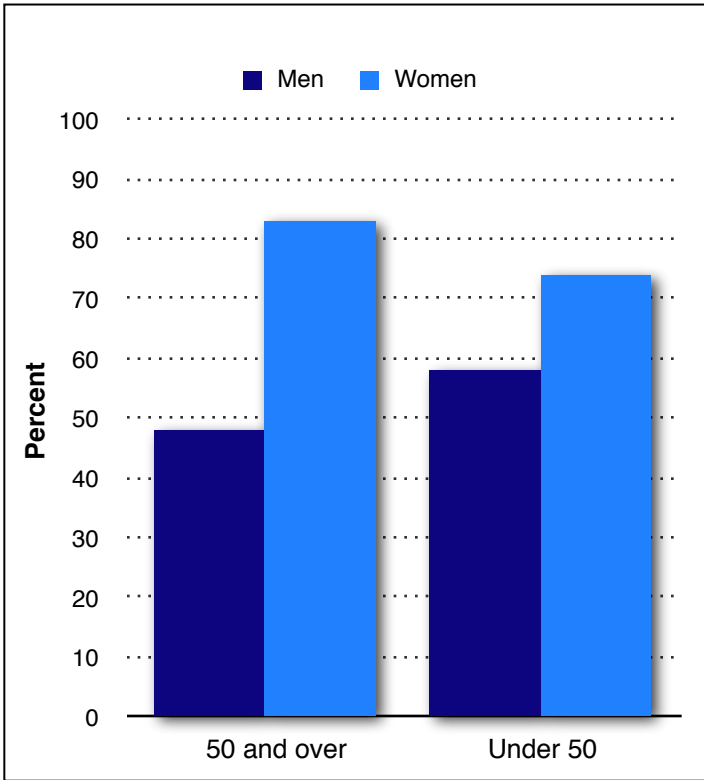
Of those who received the BMI screening, 35 percent were normal weight, 26 percent were overweight, and 39 percent were classified as obese (see Figure 1). The percentage of HOPE attendees with a normal weight was identical to the U.S. population in which 35.5 percent had a normal BMI. The percentage of overweight attendees was markedly lower than typically found in the U.S. population where 36.2 percent are classified as overweight. Conversely, HOPE attendees had a considerably higher percentage of persons who were obese relative to the U.S. population which in 2010, reported approximately 28 percent of the U.S. adult population were obese. In Arkansas, 30 percent of adults are obese, making Arkansas one of 12 U.S. states with 30 percent or more of adults being obese.

Sociodemographic Differences

To further explore these categories, we examine BMI in the context of both age and gender. Among those persons attending the HOPE 2011 event (see Table 1), women were more likely than men to be overweight or obese. While men over 50 were less likely to be overweight or obese than those under 50 years old, the opposite was true for women. Eighty-three percent of women age 50 and older were either overweight or obese, while only 48 percent of men over 50 were overweight or obese.

U.S. data show that men are significantly more likely to have an unhealthy BMI compared to women. As a nation, we also have evidence that suggests percentages of persons who are overweight increase as age increases. The same is true for obesity, up until age 65 where there is a comparatively lower percentage (24.5%) of obese individuals.

Table 1. Percentage of Overweight/Obese HOPE 2011 Attendees by SEX and by AGE



Source: Hope 2011 Health Intake

Blood Pressure and Hypertension

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in three Americans have hypertension (high blood pressure). In 2007, hypertension caused or contributed to over 300,000 deaths among adults 18 years of age and over. Of those attending the *HOPE 2011* event, **39 percent** had hypertension. Approximately 45 percent of males, as well as those over the age of fifty, had hypertension. Consistent with national statistics, a higher percentage of men below the age of fifty had hypertension, while those age fifty and above showed a higher risk among women than men for this particular condition. Approximately 48 percent of males under the age of fifty had hypertension, making them the most likely to have the condition among those attending the HOPE event.

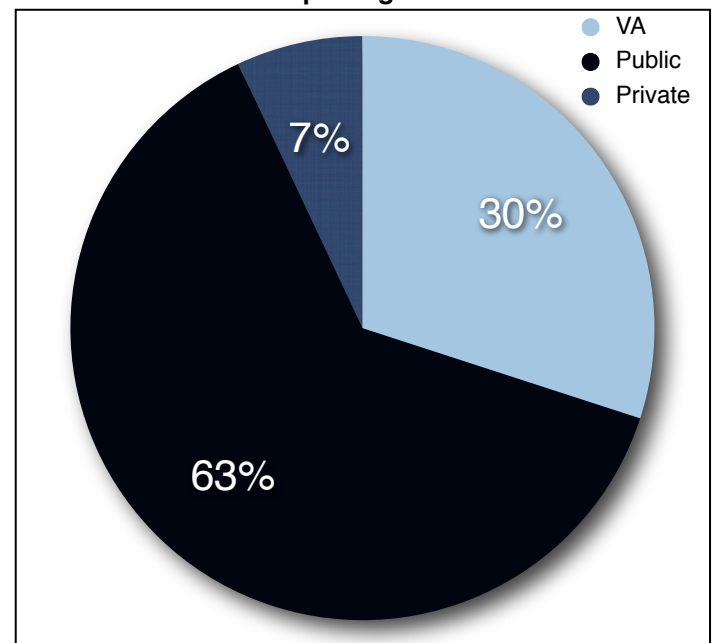
Who is Covered?

The majority of *HOPE 2011* attendees had no health insurance (57 percent). Lack of health insurance is a continuing problem for needy people in Northwest Arkansas. In the two previous years of HOPE, 80 percent reported having no health insurance in 2009 and 65 percent in 2010. The percentage of HOPE attendees without health insurance is far greater than

in the U.S. population generally; 16.3 percent of Americans reported no health insurance in 2010.

Of the HOPE attendees who were insured (43 percent), 63 percent had public health insurance, either Medicaid or Medicare, 30 percent had insurance with the VA, and 7 percent had private health insurance (**see Figure 2**). Homeless were significantly less likely to be insured compared to those that said they slept in their own home or apartment the night before. Sixty-six percent of those who were currently experiencing homelessness reported being uninsured, compared with 46 percent of those persons who had their own housing.

Figure 2. Percentage Breakdowns for HOPE 2011 Attendees Reporting Some Insurance



Source: Hope 2011 Health Intake

The Health Service Picture

The most popular services at the *HOPE 2011* event were related to well-being or physical health/appearance. There are some possible explanations for this trend. For instance, 57 percent of this population reported they had no health insurance and nearly three out of four participants reported a disabling chronic condition. Nearly half of those individuals with a disabling condition said they were currently receiving no treatment. Approximately 65 percent of those who reported having no health insurance also reported some type of disabling condition. A combination of the lack of health insurance, the prevalence of severe health issues, and the tendency to be untreated, could be creating a “perfect health storm” for those already in crisis.