

RESEARCH STUDY

BASIC NEEDS SURVEY

Which basic needs are most common and most strongly associated with health outcomes? And, what impact do psychosocial factors have on health outcomes?

Target Population

604 adult respondents recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk, a crowdsourcing marketplace or “micro-labor” site that connects workers with online tasks including market and academic survey research studies.

Research Timeline

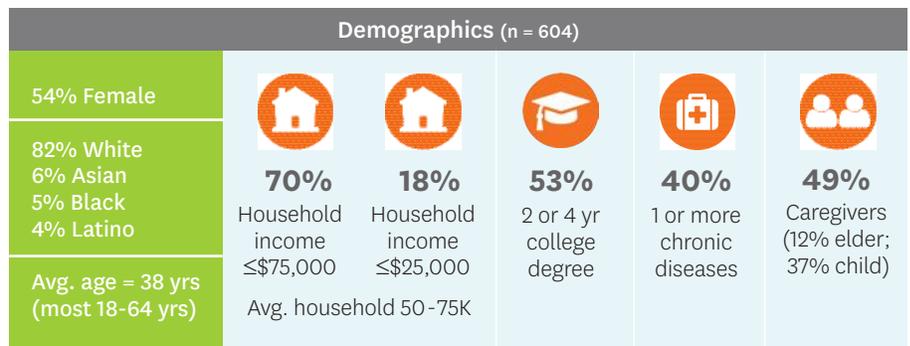
Q2 2017 - Q3 2017

Study Details

OBJECTIVE Formative research to gain insight into the basic and psychosocial needs of a general adult population: 1) determine which basic needs are of greater worry, and identify those most strongly associated with health outcomes, and 2) examine the impact of psychosocial factors on health outcomes.

DESIGN Participants completed a 20-minute online survey that explored money worries in general and in specific needs areas including medical, housing, transportation, legal, and family (child/elder care), along with their impact on daily health behaviors (nutrition and physical activity), ER visits, preventive care, and feelings of control over a chronic disease. Also explored were participant levels of social support and sense of purpose in life, and their associated effects.

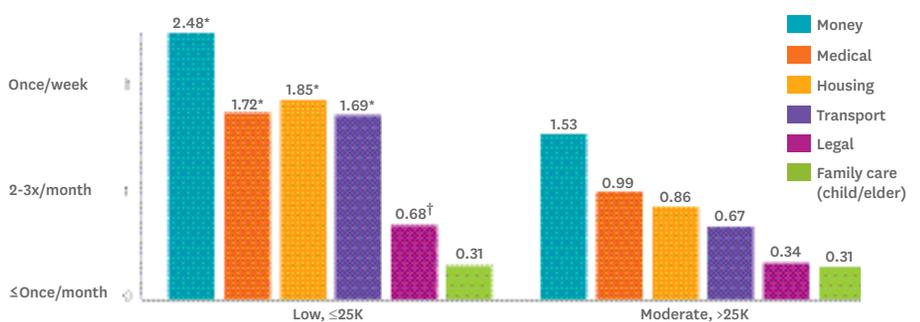
KEY RESULTS



BASIC AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

Participants reported worrying most often about having or saving enough money (less than once/wk but more than 2-3x/mo on average), followed by medical (2-3x/mo) and housing, transportation, legal and family costs. Low-income respondents worried significantly more often about most basic needs costs compared to those with higher household incomes as shown below.

Basic Needs Worries by Household Income



*Statistically significant difference between low and moderate income, $p < .001$.

†Statistically significant difference, $p = .02$.

(continued)

KEY RESULTS *(cont'd)*

Basic Needs *(cont'd)*

Caregivers reported higher levels of worries about basic needs compared to non-caregivers. Additionally, among caregivers, those who reported worrying more often about child or elder care costs, also reported higher levels of worries about the other basic needs.

Low-income participants reported significantly lower levels of social support and sense of purpose compared to those with higher incomes. Caregivers reported significantly higher levels of purpose compared to non-caregivers.

Impact of Basic and Psychosocial Needs on Health Outcomes

On average, participants reported “sometimes” (3-4x/wk) participating in daily health behaviors during the past six months and 1.29 ER visits and .67 preventive care in the past two years. Low-income participants reported lower rates of daily health behaviors, overall less preventive care visits, and lower feelings of control of a chronic disease compared to those with higher incomes.

Higher money worries in several needs areas were associated with three of the four health outcomes as shown below. Surprisingly, general money worries were associated with fewer ER visits. An overall positive relationship between psychosocial factors and health outcomes was observed. All associations were statistically significant.

Associated Needs	Health Outcomes			
	Daily Health Behaviors	ER Visits	Disease Control	Preventive Care
Basic - Higher Worries				
Having or saving enough money	▼	▼		
Medical expenses		▲	▼	
Family expenses		▲		
Psychosocial - Higher Levels				
Sense of purpose	▲ [†]		▲	
Social support		▼	▲	

†Statistically significant among low-income respondents.

Application of Findings

Although the findings suggest that basic needs are associated with several health outcomes, the relationship between these may vary by sociodemographic factors such as income and caregiver status and across basic needs. Additional research will determine which basic needs are of greatest concern, particularly among Centene’s Medicaid members, and associated with key health outcomes. There are four basic needs studies planned for 2018.

Currently, the Centene Center is examining the impact of unmet basic needs among Medicaid beneficiaries with type II diabetes, and exploring coaching methods that address psychosocial factors. This second project is studying whether peer coaching can provide a greater source of social support while also helping to address lifestyle barriers. Additionally, data from a life values survey with members is being analyzed and will inform our care management and health coaching programs. Results from these studies will impact how Centene delivers healthcare services in the future.