

# Reforming the Health Care System: State Profiles 2001

by

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The information compiled in this publication is presented for purposes of information, discussion, and debate and does not necessarily represent formal policies of AARP.

# Introduction

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*Reforming the Health Care System: State Profiles 2001* is a compilation of major health system characteristics for each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Published annually since 1990 by the AARP Public Policy Institute (PPI), the *State Profiles* series was developed to help guide policy discussions among public and private sector leaders in health care throughout the United States. It offers a snapshot of each state's health care landscape by providing comparable state-level and national data for nearly 100 indicators that are otherwise difficult to obtain from a single source. This 11<sup>th</sup> edition of *State Profiles* presents the most up-to-date data available at the time of production.

In addition to containing many of the same features seen in previous editions, this year's *State Profiles* has added a new topic area – Key Trends – to each state's profile. The purpose of this new area is to show changes over time in both population and environmental characteristics that affect a state. It also shows state and population characteristics that, at least in part, can be affected by policies and priorities within a state. Data for these 15 indicators are shown at two points in time, usually 10 years apart. Indicators in this topic area that are new to *State Profiles* this year include the percent of workers in small firms who are uninsured, the portion of people with incomes below poverty who are covered by Medicaid, and non-Medicaid state and local health spending per \$1,000 personal income.

The State Health Profiles section has been revised to reflect current health care priorities. In the topic area of Health Status, indicators related to physical activity, mental health, oral health, mobility difficulties, and major chronic conditions have been added. The Resources Available area includes data on the number of geriatricians in the U.S. in comparison to the elderly population. Enrollment and year of enactment for state-subsidized prescription drug programs are in the newly titled Health Coverage and the Uninsured topic area. In the Expenditures and Financing area, three new indicators focus on differences in how states allocate resources: the percentage of a state's total budget spent on health care services, Medicaid expenditures as a percent of state health spending, and the percentage of a state's health spending that goes to public health and community services.

The section on Maps of Health Reform has been expanded to demonstrate the variation that exists among states on health care reform issues of greatest interest today. Regarding federal proposals for tax credits for the uninsured, states with income tax incentives for health premiums or medical expenses are identified. Other new maps include those detailing types of pharmaceutical assistance programs, state legislation on reporting medication errors, and reporting of Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS) data for Medicaid managed care plans and commercial plans.

Although the *State Profiles* series has a longstanding history, caution must be used when making comparisons with information contained in previous editions because of changes that may have been made in the source or definition of a particular indicator.

For additional copies of *State Profiles 2001*, please call the AARP Public Policy Institute at 202-434-3890.