

**Table 8. Perceived Top Health Problems in Hamilton County**

	(% Ranking Among Top 3)			
	All	White	Black	Latino
<b>Obesity</b>	55%	61%	40%	49%
<b>Violent crime</b>	39%	36%	45%	29%
<b>Drug abuse</b>	38%	42%	31%	41%
<b>Heart disease and stroke</b>	28%	30%	25%	16%
<b>Diabetes</b>	25%	23%	29%	21%
<b>Teenage pregnancy</b>	24%	21%	33%	24%
<b>Tobacco use</b>	22%	23%	19%	28%
<b>Cancer</b>	21%	21%	20%	16%
<b>STDs</b>	17%	10%	36%	29%
<b>Respiratory Disease</b>	12%	13%	9%	15%
<b>Aging problems</b>	7%	8%	2%	9%
<b>Infant mortality</b>	6%	7%	4%	13%

Source: Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department, Hamilton County Health and Wellness Survey (2013)

## Access to Health Care and Coverage

### Health Insurance Status

Access to health care coverage encourages individuals to seek and obtain continuous and preventative health care. Persons without health coverage are less likely to seek timely medical care and are more likely to have hospitalizations and emergency department visits.<sup>x</sup>

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, almost 44,000 (15%) of Hamilton County residents under age 65 did not have health insurance in 2013. Note that these figures pre-date the implementation of the mandatory coverage provision of the Affordable Care Act. Among working age adults (ages 18 to 64), 19% did not have health insurance. Residents under age 65 living at or below 138% of poverty were more likely to be uninsured (27%) than those living between 138% and 400% of poverty (17%).<sup>xi</sup>

**Table 9. The Uninsured – As a Share of the Non-elderly Population and by Poverty Levels, 2013**

	Hamilton County		Tennessee
	Number Uninsured	% Uninsured	% Uninsured
<b>Age Group</b>			
Under 65 Years	43,983	15.4%	16.2%
18-64 Years	40,309	18.9%	20.1%
Under 19 Years	4,117	5.4%	6.0%
<b>Poverty Status</b>			
<= 138% FPL	19,579	26.8%	27.1%
<=200% FPL	27,209	26.1%	26.0%
138% to 400% FPL	19,753	16.5%	16.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 Small Area Health Insurance Estimates

## Medicare and TennCare

Medicare is the program run by the federal government that provides health insurance for people 65 years of age and older, certain disabled people, and people with kidney failure. TennCare is the State of Tennessee’s Medicaid program and serves primarily low-income children, parents, pregnant women, and elderly and disabled adults. More than one-third (35.7%) of Hamilton County residents receive health care coverage from either Medicare or TennCare.

**Table 10. Current Medicaid (TennCare) and Medicare Enrollment in Hamilton County**

	Enrollment	% Population	Enrollment % Change from 2008	U.S. % Change in Enrollment from 2008
<b>Medicare (2012)</b>	<b>66,765</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>+ 21.2%</b>	<b>+ 12.5%</b>
--- Aged (65+)	52,928	15.3%	+ 17.6%	+ 10.8%
--- Disabled	13,837	4.0%	+ 37.3%	+ 19.9%
<b>TennCare (2014)</b>	<b>57,297</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>+ 5.5%</b>	<b>+ 37.9%</b>
--- Age Birth-18	32,119	9.2%	+15.6%	n/a
---Age 20+	25,178	7.2%	- 23.1%	n/a

Sources: Bureau of TennCare and Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, TN Dept of Health, U.S. Census

## Enrollment Trends

### TennCare

In Hamilton County, 57,297 Hamilton County residents, 16% of the population, were enrolled in TennCare as of April 2014. Over the past six years, TennCare enrollment in Hamilton County increased by 5.5% overall, primarily among children. Enrollment among children under age 18 increased by 16% while enrollment among residents age 19 and older decreased by 23% over 2008 levels.

By comparison, Medicaid enrollment nationwide increased by 37.9% between 2008 and 2014. Tennessee is one of 21 states that did not expand Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act, which would have extended Medicaid coverage to all individuals under 138% of the federal poverty level.<sup>xii</sup> In April 2014, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) reported over 6 million new Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) enrollees over the pre-ACA July-September reporting period. In addition, CMS reported a 15.3% increase in enrollment over the baseline period among states that adopted and implemented the Medicaid expansion, compared to a 3.3% increase among states that had not, to date, implemented the Medicaid expansion.<sup>xiii</sup>

During the 2015 Legislative Session, the Tennessee State Legislature rejected Governor Haslam’s proposal to expand Medicaid coverage in Tennessee through a program known as Insure Tennessee. The Tennessee Health Care Coalition, an advocacy group, estimated that Insure Tennessee could have covered as many as 18,873 Hamilton County residents.<sup>xiv</sup>

### Medicare

In 2012, the most recently available year for county-level data, 66,765 Hamilton County residents (19.3% of the population) were enrolled in Medicare. Medicare enrollees included 52,928 (15.3% of the

population) who were eligible based on age (65 and older) and 13,837 (4% of the population) who were eligible due to disability.

Since 2008, Medicare enrollment in Hamilton County increased by 21.2% overall. Enrollment of older adults, up 17.6%, reflects the increasingly aging population. However, the numbers of individuals under age 65 with Medicare disability coverage increased by 37.3%. While Medicare disability enrollment increased nationwide, Hamilton County’s growth far outpaced the national rate (37.3% vs. 19.9%).

Growth in Medicare disability enrollment may reflect changes to the TennCare program in 2005. In an effort to control escalating state costs of the TennCare program in its then-current form, most of the adults in the expansion population were removed from TennCare. Statewide, this affected 170,000 individuals, many of whom had multiple chronic conditions and may have subsequently qualified for Medicare disability coverage.

**Health Care Providers**

The County Health Rankings includes measures of the ratio of the county population to the number of providers for three types of health care professionals: primary care physicians, dentists, and mental health providers. According to the 2015 County Health Rankings, Hamilton County has 366 primary care physicians (one per 944 residents), 241 licensed dentists (one per 1,447 residents), and 585 mental health providers (one per 596 residents). On a per-resident basis, Hamilton County has a greater supply of these health care providers than the state as a whole, which reflects Hamilton County’s status as a center for health care in the region. The County Health Rankings set national benchmarks based on counties in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. (Only ten percent of counties are better.) Hamilton County rated better than the national benchmark counties for primary care physicians (fewer residents per provider), but worse for dentists and mental health providers (more residents per provider).

**Table 11. Health Care Providers in Hamilton County, Tennessee**

	<b>Number Hamilton County</b>	<b>Ratio Hamilton County</b>	<b>Ratio Tennessee</b>	<b>Ratio National Benchmark†</b>
<b>Primary Care Physicians</b>	366	944:1	1388:1	1045:1
<b>Dentists</b>	241	1447:1	1996:1	1377:1
<b>Mental Health Providers</b>	585	596:1	786:1	386:1

†90th percentile. Only 10% of counties are better.

Primary care physicians include non-federal practicing physicians specializing in general practice, family practice, internal medicine, and pediatrics. Mental health providers include psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, counselors, and advanced practice nurses specializing in mental health care.

Source: 2015 County Health Rankings

## Hospitals in Hamilton County

Thirteen hospitals are located in Hamilton County, including seven general medical and surgical hospitals, two chemical dependency/psychiatric hospitals, and three long-term care hospitals. In total these hospitals provide 1,667 staffed hospital beds or 4.9 beds per 1,000 Hamilton County residents. Among general medical and surgical hospitals, there are 1,235 staffed hospital beds or 3.7 per 1,000 Hamilton County residents.

**Table 12. Staffed Hospital Beds in Hamilton County Tennessee**

	<b>Staffed Beds</b>
<b>General Medical and Surgical Hospitals</b>	
CHI Memorial Hospital	336
CHI Memorial Hospital Hixson	69
Erlanger East	37
Erlanger Medical Center	491
Erlanger North	12
Parkridge East Hospital	113
Parkridge Medical Center, Inc.	177
<b>Total staffed general medical and surgical beds</b>	<b>1,235</b>
<b>Staffed beds per 1,000 population</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Psychiatric/Chemical Dependency Hospitals</b>	
Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute	150
Parkridge Valley Hospital	140
<b>Total staffed psychiatric /chemical dependency</b>	<b>290</b>
<b>Other Long-term Care Hospitals</b>	
HealthSouth Chattanooga Rehabilitation Hospital	50
Kindred Hospital - Chattanooga	44
Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation	48
<b>Total other long-term care hospitals</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>Total Staffed Beds – all hospital types</b>	<b>1,667</b>
<b>Staffed beds per 1,000 population</b>	<b>4.9</b>
Source: Tennessee Department of Health, 2012 Tennessee Joint Annual Report of Hospitals	

## Health Care Utilization Adults

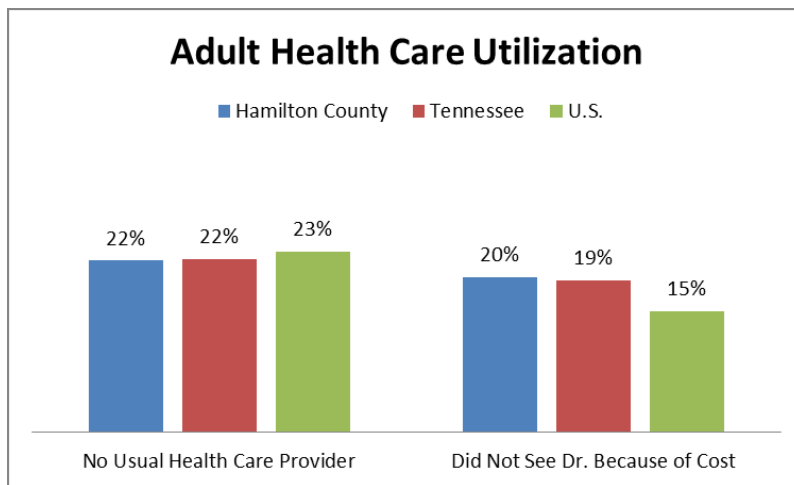
The leading causes of hospitalizations come from the Tennessee Department of Health's Hospital Discharge Data System. Hospitalizations are the number of discharges from the short term hospitals by first listed diagnosis. Newborns and childbirths were excluded. Overall, there were 31,470 inpatient discharges among Hamilton County residents in 2012. Approximately 56.4% of those hospitalizations

were paid by Medicare and 10.2% by TennCare. Private insurance made up 25.6% of the total, while 6.5% were self-paid hospitalizations and 0.7% was “free care.” The leading causes of short –term hospitalizations in Hamilton County during 2012 are listed in Table 13.

**Table 13. Leading Causes of Hospitalizations in Hamilton County, 2012\***

	Number	Rate per 1,000
<b>All Causes</b>	31,470	91.1
<b>Diseases of the Digestive System</b>	3,669	10.6
<b>Injury and Poisoning</b>	3,343	9.7
<b>Diseases of the Respiratory System</b>	3,085	8.9
<b>Musculoskeletal/ Tissue Disease</b>	2,437	7.1
<b>Heart Disease</b>	2,223	6.4

\*Excludes psychiatric, rehabilitation, and long-term acute care hospitals; Excludes newborns and childbirths  
Source: TN Department of Health



According to 2011-2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 22% of Hamilton County adults self-report that they do not have at least one person who they think of as their personal doctor or health care provider and 20% of adults reported they were unable to see a doctor in the past 12 months due to cost.

**Figure 8 Source: 2011-13 BRFSS, TN Department of Health; 2012 BRFSS, CDC**