African Americans Happier With New Health Care Options

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There have been many changes in the United States the past decade: health care reform, the housing crisis, and high unemployment rates. But the view from black America, especially in terms of health care and positive financial attitudes, seems to actually be improving, said new survey results from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health, NPR reported.

The latest study asked 1,081 African-American participants in the South or in urban areas their opinions on a wide range of issues: finances, personal health, their communities, dating lives and much more. (This sample roughly matched the demographics of African Americans in the country on a broad spectrum, according to researchers.) The results, when compared with those from a similar poll in 2002, yielded some interesting findings.

In 2002, only about 25 percent of survey respondents said they were “very satisfied” with their care options. Today, 47 percent of African Americans approved of the health care system. What’s more, two thirds of poll participants said they believed that the last time they or a family member got sick, they were treated by one of the best doctors in their community.

The survey also showed that although government figures from 2011 said one in five African Americans were uninsured, the number of survey participants who said they or a family member couldn’t get medical care decreased since 2006, from one in five to about one in eight.

But even with improvements in health care access and positive outlooks in the black community, some areas of concern haven’t seen such stunning advancements. Nearly 20 percent of survey respondents said high blood pressure and stroke were the biggest health problems for their families. Another 19 percent of African Americans in the same survey cited diabetes as their greatest health threat.

According to the American Heart Association, heart disease is still the No. 1 killer of both men and women in the black community. Click here to read more.

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