

Primary Care in Massachusetts

A high-functioning primary care system leads to better patient outcomes, lower costs, and more equitable care. Tracking the health of primary care in Massachusetts is essential for identifying areas that need strengthening and monitoring the impact of investments. This is the inaugural release of this dashboard, which will serve as a baseline for future measurement years.



FINANCE

METRICS FOCUSED ON SPENDING FOR PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

[EXPLORE](#) ►

Primary care spending represents less than 8% of overall medical spending and declined across all insurance categories from 2019 to 2020.

Medicare Advantage plans had the lowest primary care spending (4.6%) compared with other insurance categories in 2020.



PERFORMANCE

METRICS FOCUSED ON ACCESS AND CARE

[EXPLORE ACCESS](#) ►

[EXPLORE CARE](#) ►

In 2021, more than one third of residents reported that they had difficulty obtaining necessary health care in the past 12 months, an increase from 2019.

Cancer and other preventive screening rates declined from 2018 to 2020.



CAPACITY

METRICS FOCUSED ON THE PRIMARY CARE WORKFORCE AND PIPELINE

[EXPLORE](#) ►

In 2020, Massachusetts had a higher proportion (3.6%) of physicians leaving primary care than the United States overall (3.3%), and these proportions increased from 2018.

In 2020, 33.7% of primary care physicians in Massachusetts were aged 60 or older, an increase from 31.8% in 2018.



EQUITY

METRICS FOCUSED ON ASSESSING INEQUITIES IN THE SYSTEM

[EXPLORE](#) ►

There were substantial racial and ethnic disparities in access to and utilization of primary care.

In 2021, only 64% of Hispanic residents reported that they had a preventive care visit in the last year, versus 81% of White residents.

CONTEXT

[CONTEXT ON THE MASSACHUSETTS PRIMARY CARE MARKET, IMPACTS OF COVID-19, AND AT-A-GLANCE HEALTH OUTCOMES MEASURES](#)

[EXPLORE](#) ►

Metrics included in this dashboard have been collected from various data sources. For additional information see the [databook](#) and [technical appendix](#).



FINANCE



CAPACITY



ACCESS



CARE



EQUITY

CONTEXT ON THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

At-a-glance health outcomes measures in Massachusetts and market notes

High-quality primary care is the provision of whole-person, integrated, accessible, and equitable health care by interprofessional teams who are accountable for addressing the majority of an individual’s health and wellness needs across settings and through sustained relationships with patients, families, and communities (as defined by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM)).

Some data points in this dashboard reflect care during the COVID-19 pandemic that began in March 2020. During this period, health care utilization and delivery were greatly impacted by the pandemic, including most notably for this context, delayed or cancelled primary care and preventive visits.

Metrics in this dashboard have been sourced from various publicly available datasets and reports. Data points reflect the most recent data available, as well as one data point before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, if available.

Additional data stratified by race/ethnicity for these health outcomes measures are included in the [databook](#).

Adult male life expectancy

Male life expectancy at birth in Massachusetts.

78.5

2019
All Males

76.7

2020
All Males

Adult female life expectancy

Female life expectancy at birth in Massachusetts.

83.5

2019
All Females

81.9

2020
All Females

Infant mortality

Infant mortality per 100,000 live births in Massachusetts.

3.7

2019
State Total

4.0

2020
State Total

Child mortality

Child mortality per 100,000 children in Massachusetts.

10.3

2019
State Total
(Ages 1-8)

6.7

2020
State Total
(Ages 1-8)

Low birth weight

Percentage of all newborns in Massachusetts who have low birth weight.

7.7%

2019
State Total

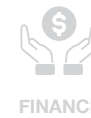
7.4%

2020
State Total



FINANCE

Metrics focused on spending for primary care services



FINANCE



CAPACITY



ACCESS



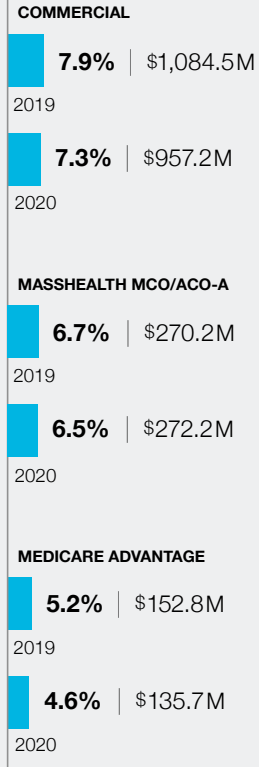
CARE



EQUITY

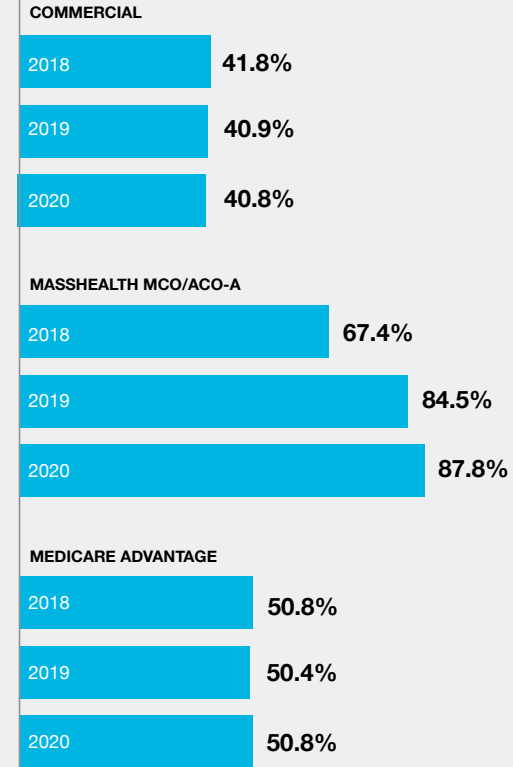
Primary Care Spending

Spending on primary care services, and as a percentage of total medical spending by insurance category.



Managed Member Months Under an APM

The share of Massachusetts resident member months whose care is paid for under an Alternative Payment Method (APM).



For at-a-glance health outcomes measures in Massachusetts, see the [context page](#). For additional information on the metrics displayed above, including data sources, see [technical appendix](#) and [databook](#).

Note: Public programs above reflect only members enrolled in a commercially managed public plan. As of December 2021, MassHealth MCO/ACO-A members represented approximately 55% of members for whom MassHealth was their primary insurer. Medicare Advantage members represented approximately 27% of Massachusetts Medicare beneficiaries. Commercial market spending does not reflect total commercial spending due to carved out services.



CAPACITY

Metrics focused on the primary care workforce and pipeline



FINANCE



CAPACITY



ACCESS



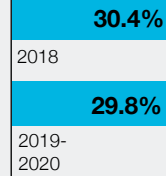
CARE



EQUITY

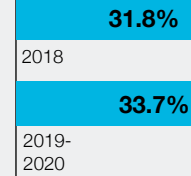
Percentage of Primary Care Physicians

Percentage of Massachusetts-based physicians who practice in primary care.



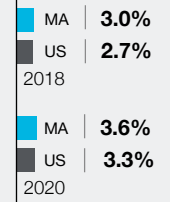
Percentage of Primary Care Physicians Aged 60 or Older

Percentage of Massachusetts-based physicians who practice in primary care aged 60 or older.



Percentage of Primary Care Physicians Leaving Primary Care

Percentage of primary care physicians in Massachusetts who leave primary care.



Primary Care Physicians per Population

Physicians who work in primary care per 100,000 Massachusetts residents.



Primary Care Nurse Practitioners per Population

Nurse practitioners (NPs) who work in primary care per 100,000 Massachusetts residents.



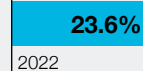
Primary Care Physician Assistants per Population

Physician assistants (PAs) who work in primary care per 100,000 Massachusetts residents.



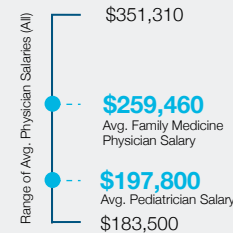
Percentage of Massachusetts Medical School Graduates Entering Primary Care

Percentage of students graduating from Massachusetts medical schools who reported intent to go into primary care.



Primary Care Physician Salary

Estimated average annual salary in 2021 for a family medicine physician and a pediatrician in Massachusetts, compared to the range of average salaries for all Massachusetts physicians.



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FINANCE



CAPACITY



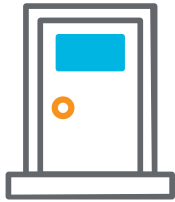
ACCESS



CARE



EQUITY

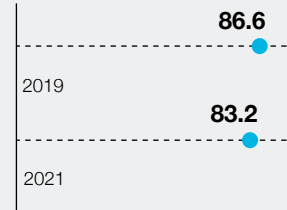


ACCESS

Metrics focused on access to primary care

Primary Care Access (Adult, Commercial)

Massachusetts patient-reported experiences of primary care access for adult commercially insured members, based on aggregate survey responses, on a 0-100 scale.



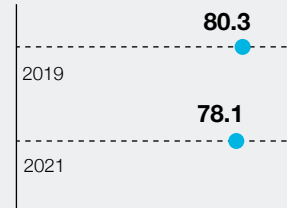
Primary Care Access (Child, Commercial)

Massachusetts patient-reported experiences of primary care access for pediatric commercially insured members, based on aggregate survey responses, on a 0-100 scale.



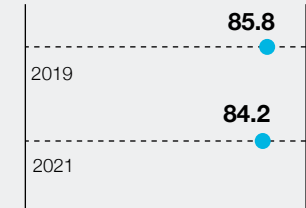
Primary Care Access (Adult, MassHealth)

Massachusetts patient-reported experiences of primary care access for adult MassHealth members, based on aggregate survey responses, on a 0-100 scale.



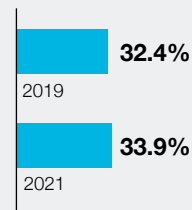
Primary Care Access (Child, MassHealth)

Massachusetts patient-reported experiences of primary care access for pediatric MassHealth members, based on aggregate survey responses, on a 0-100 scale.



Difficulty Obtaining Necessary Healthcare

Percentage of Massachusetts residents who reported that they had difficulty obtaining necessary health care in the past 12 months.



For at-a-glance health outcomes measures in Massachusetts, see the [context page](#). For additional information on the metrics displayed above, including data sources, see [technical appendix](#) and [databook](#).

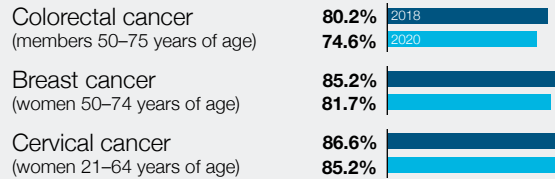


CARE

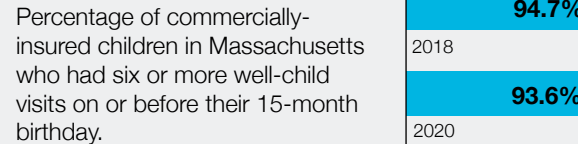
Metrics focused on utilization and quality of primary care



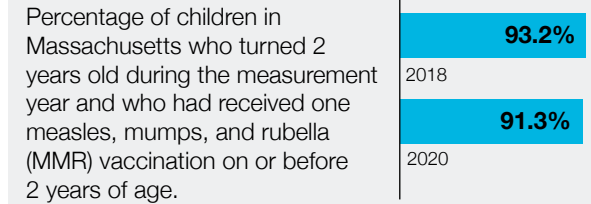
Screenings (Adult, Commercial)



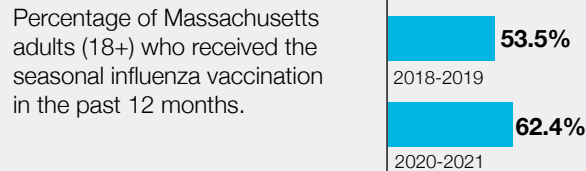
Well-Child Visits in the First 30 Months of Life, 0-15 Months



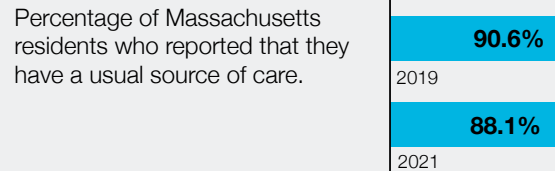
Childhood MMR Immunization



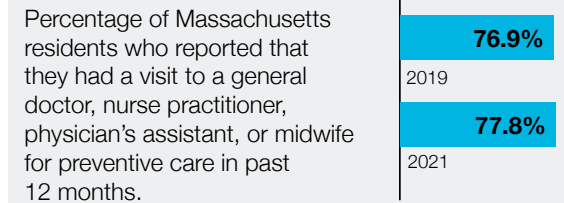
Adult Influenza Vaccinations



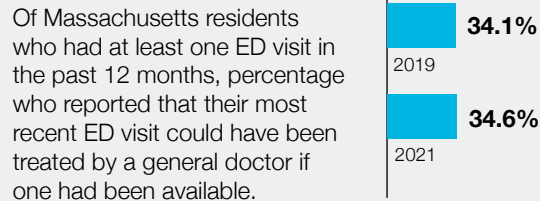
Usual Source of Care



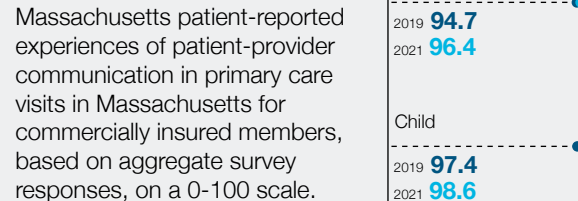
Preventive Care Visit



Avoidable Emergency Department (ED) Use



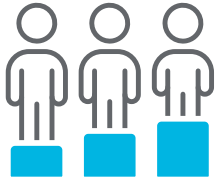
Patient-Provider Communication (Commercial)



Patient-Provider Communication (MassHealth)



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EQUITY

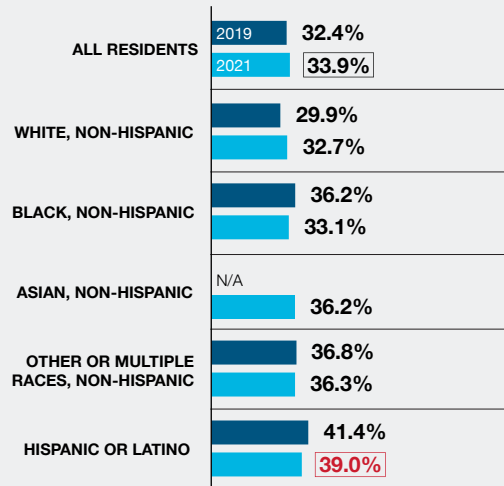
Metrics focused on assessing inequities in the system



Difficulty Obtaining Necessary Health Care, by Race/Ethnicity

Percentage of Massachusetts residents who reported that they had difficulty obtaining necessary health care in the past 12 months, stratified by resident race/ethnicity.

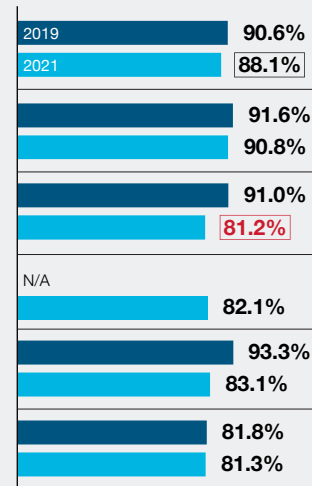
Lower is better.



Usual Source of Care, by Race/Ethnicity

Percentage of Massachusetts residents who reported that they have a usual source of care, stratified by resident race/ethnicity.

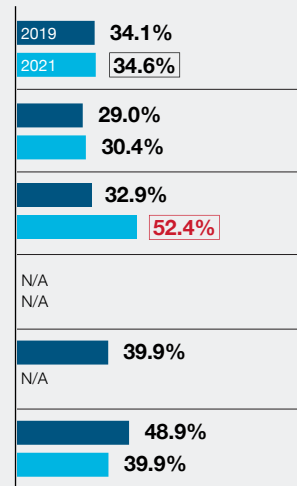
Higher is better.



Avoidable Emergency Department (ED) Use, by Race/Ethnicity

Of Massachusetts residents who had at least one ED visit in the past 12 months, percentage who reported that their most recent ED visit could have been treated by a general doctor if one had been available, stratified by resident race/ethnicity.

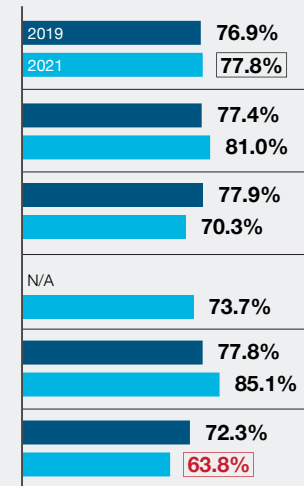
Lower is better.



Preventive Care Visit, by Race/Ethnicity

Percentage of Massachusetts residents who reported that they had a visit to a general doctor, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, or midwife for preventive care in past 12 months, stratified by resident race/ethnicity.

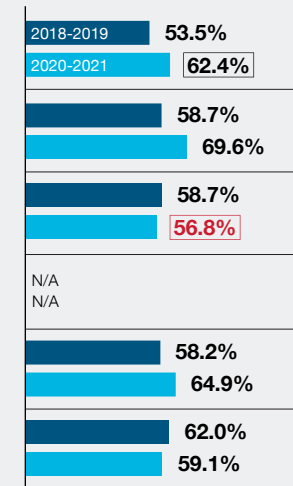
Higher is better.



Adult Influenza Vaccinations, by Race/Ethnicity

Percentage of Massachusetts adult residents (18+) who received the seasonal influenza vaccination in the past 12 months, stratified by race/ethnicity.

Higher is better.



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Note: Red boxes identify worst performing percentage for each metric compared with percentages for all residents (gray boxes) for each metric in 2021. In 2019, "Asian, non-Hispanic" residents were reported as part of the "Other or multiple races, non-Hispanic" group. 2021 values for "Asian, non-Hispanic" and "Other or multiple races, non-Hispanic" were suppressed due to small sample size.