

HEALTH

Mental Health in New Hampshire

Prevalence & Rankings

In 2023, Mental Health America (MHA), a nonprofit focused on mental health education, research, and policy, provided an overall mental health ranking of all 50 states (plus D.C.) based on fifteen measures. These measures captured different aspects of mental illness and substance abuse prevalence in both adults and youths, as well as access to care. New Hampshire ranked 14th overall which, “indicates lower prevalence of mental illness and higher rates of access to care.” Among New England states, Maine had the lowest ranking at 26th while Massachusetts ranked highest at 3rd.

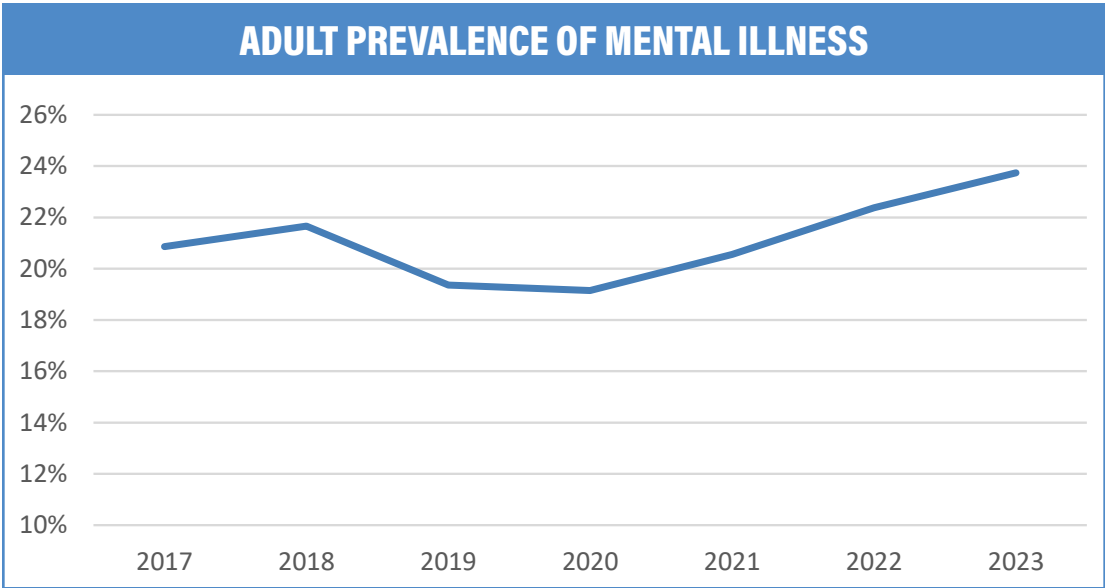
MHA also provided rankings for different components of the overall score, which provided a more nuanced view of mental health in New Hampshire. In a ranking of six measures regarding the prevalence of mental illness and substance abuse across both adult and youth populations, New Hampshire ranked much lower than on the overall scale, with a prevalence ranking of 35th. This low ranking indicated a higher prevalence for mental health and substance abuse issues. While 35th is quite low it was not the lowest in the New England region as both Maine

(42nd) and Vermont (45th) were among the lowest ranked states. In the access to care rankings, New Hampshire came in at 7th, only outranked by Vermont (1st) and Massachusetts (2nd) in the New England region. All New England states were given a high access ranking (top 13 states), indicating that these states, “[provide] relatively more access to insurance and mental health treatment.”¹

Focusing on the adult population, New Hampshire ranked 26th on the 2023 overall adult scale, which utilized 13 measures related to prevalence and access to care. In 2023, 24 percent of adults in New Hampshire, or roughly one in four, had a mental illness; this was slightly higher than the national average of 21 percent. This was the highest adult mental illness prevalence New Hampshire had in the last five years. The percentage of adults with serious thoughts of suicide had remained consistently around five percent since 2017, reaching a low of 4.62 percent in 2023.

In the 2023 overall youth rankings, which considered seven measures related to youth prevalence and access to care, New Hampshire

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Source: Mental Health America

¹ Mental Health America. "Ranking the States 2023." <https://www.mhanational.org/issues/2023/ranking-states#overall-ranking>.

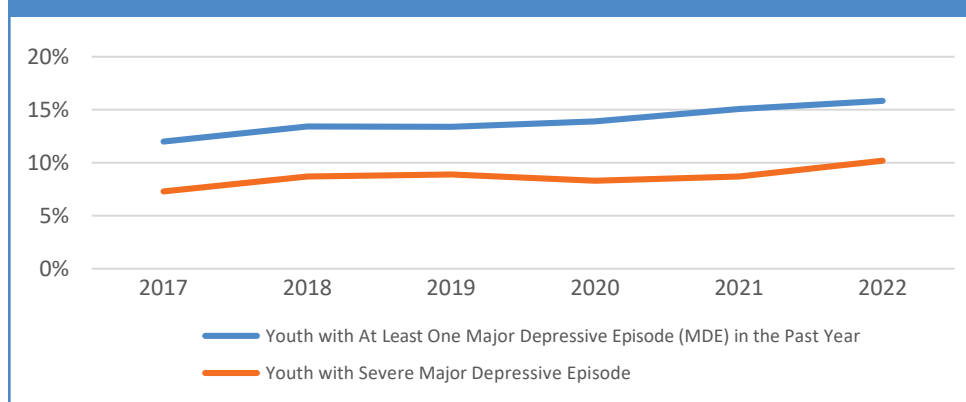
ranked 7th. Instead of looking at any mental illness, the youth measures utilized major depressive episodes (MDE) and defined them as “a period of two weeks or longer in which a person experiences certain symptoms of major depression.”² Approximately 17 percent of youth in New Hampshire experienced at least one MDE in 2023, while 13 percent of New Hampshire youth experienced at least one severe MDE, categorized as MDE with psychotic features and suicidal ideation. Both measures were the highest they had been in five years, with MDEs increasing seven percent and severe MDEs increasing 30 percent since 2022.³

Access to Care

With a 7th place ranking, New Hampshire provides a relatively high level of access to mental health care and insurance benefits, but there were still areas where the state struggled. In 2023, New Hampshire had a high percentage of uninsured mentally ill adults at 13.4 percent, which equated to approximately 38,000 individuals that may struggle to receive treatment; this figure had increased 52 percent since 2022, as pandemic-era expanded Medicare access expired in early 2023. Of those adults diagnosed with a mental illness, almost 50 percent, about 141,000 individuals, did

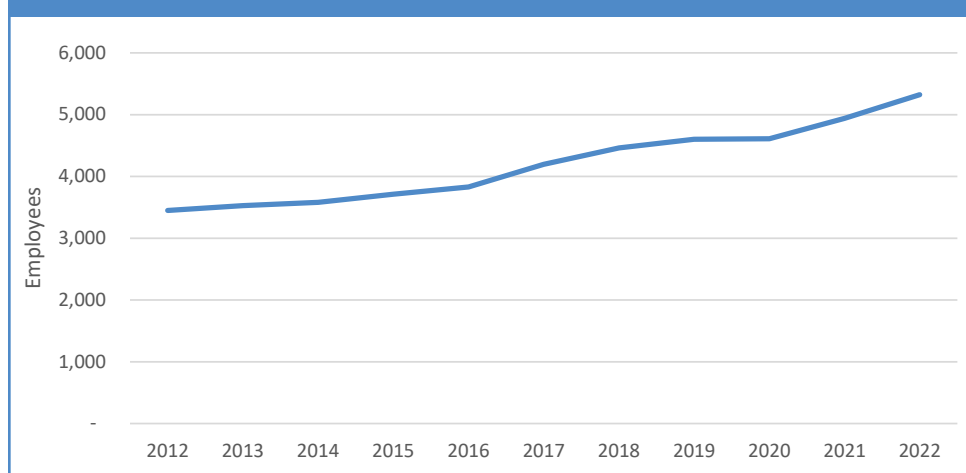
not receive any mental health treatment in the past year. While this was not as high as the national average of 54.7 percent, it was still substantial considering half of these New Hampshire residents were not receiving services. Among individuals categorized as having 14 or more mentally unhealthy days, cost was the most frequently cited reason they did not receive any mental health services. New Hampshire youth with MDE received more treatment than the adult population, but 36 percent reported they did not receive any mental health treatment. Youth with severe MDE had lower treatment ratings as 53.8 percent reported they had not been receiving consistent mental health treatment.

YOUTH MDE & SEVERE MDE PREVALENCE



Source: Mental Health America

TOTAL MENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

2 Bridges to Recovery Beverley Hills. "What is a major depressive episode?" <https://www.bridgestorecovery.com/major-depression/what-is-a-major-depressive-episode/>.
 3 Maddy Reinert, Danielle Fritze, & Theresa Nguyen, "The State of Mental Health in America 2022," Mental Health America, October 2021. <https://mhanational.org/sites/default/files/2022%20State%20of%20Mental%20Health%20in%20America.pdf>.

While all these rates are alarming considering the consequences of these individuals not receiving treatment, they were all lower than the related national averages.

Cost and insurance are an issue for New Hampshire residents with mental illness, but this does not necessarily mean there is a lack of potential available resources; however, availability dramatically changed based on an individual's need and location. Over the last ten years the New Hampshire mental health workforce has been constantly growing, rising 50 percent since 2012.⁴ Outpatient mental health centers accounted for the majority of employment, covering 61 percent of the available workforce in 2022.

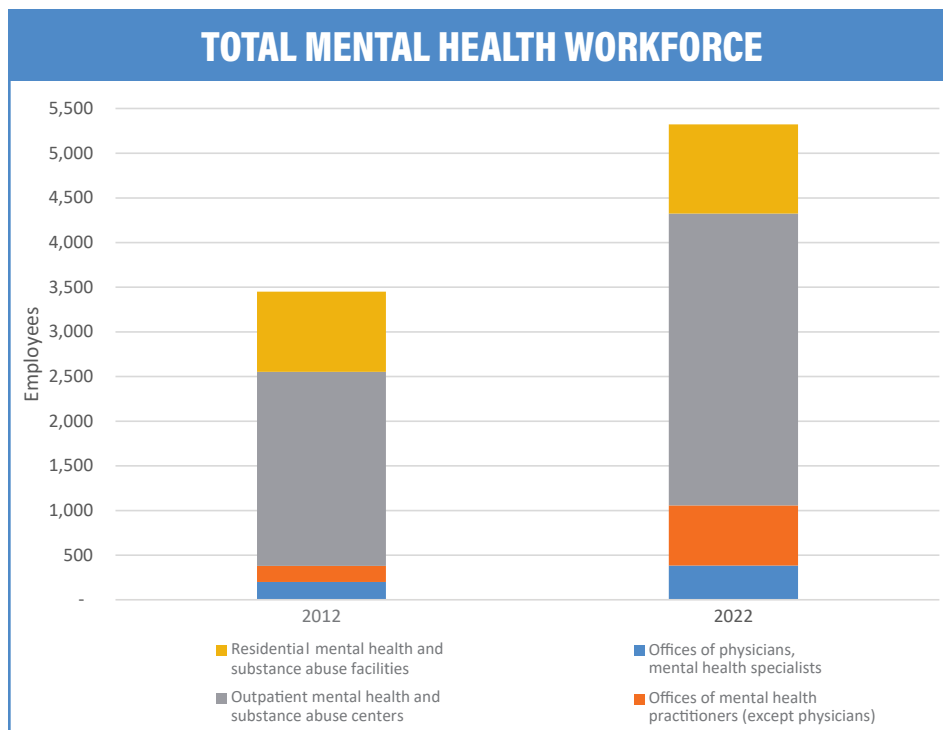
The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Behavioral Health (BBH) has contracted with private not-for-profit agencies, known as Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) to provide privately funded

mental health services throughout the state.⁵ The state is broken into ten regions with designated CMHCs for each area. Facilities were mostly located in southeastern New Hampshire, where the majority of the state's population is located, with the highest number of facilities per town being located in Concord, Manchester, and Nashua. Even with defined service areas, the resources available in the northern half of the state are limited, as 62 towns are being served by only eight Northern Human Services locations.⁶ Access to health care in rural areas can be a challenge due to limited options and long distances required to receive treatment, and mental health care is no exception.

Along with CMHCs, the state runs seven facilities that are designated receiving facilities (DRF), which receive persons with mental health issues for involuntary admission, six for adults and one for children. All these facilities are located in the southern half of the state, with the northern most DRF located in Franklin.

The adult DRFs hold a combined total of 245 beds, and the children's facility holds 71. As of January 22, 2024, there were 34 adults awaiting involuntary admission into a DRF and seven children awaiting voluntary admission. Of these 34 adults, three were in correctional facilities throughout the state.⁷

Many individuals in the New Hampshire prison system suffer from mental illness. In January 2023, 46.7 percent of males and 82.6 percent of females in NH DOC residential



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

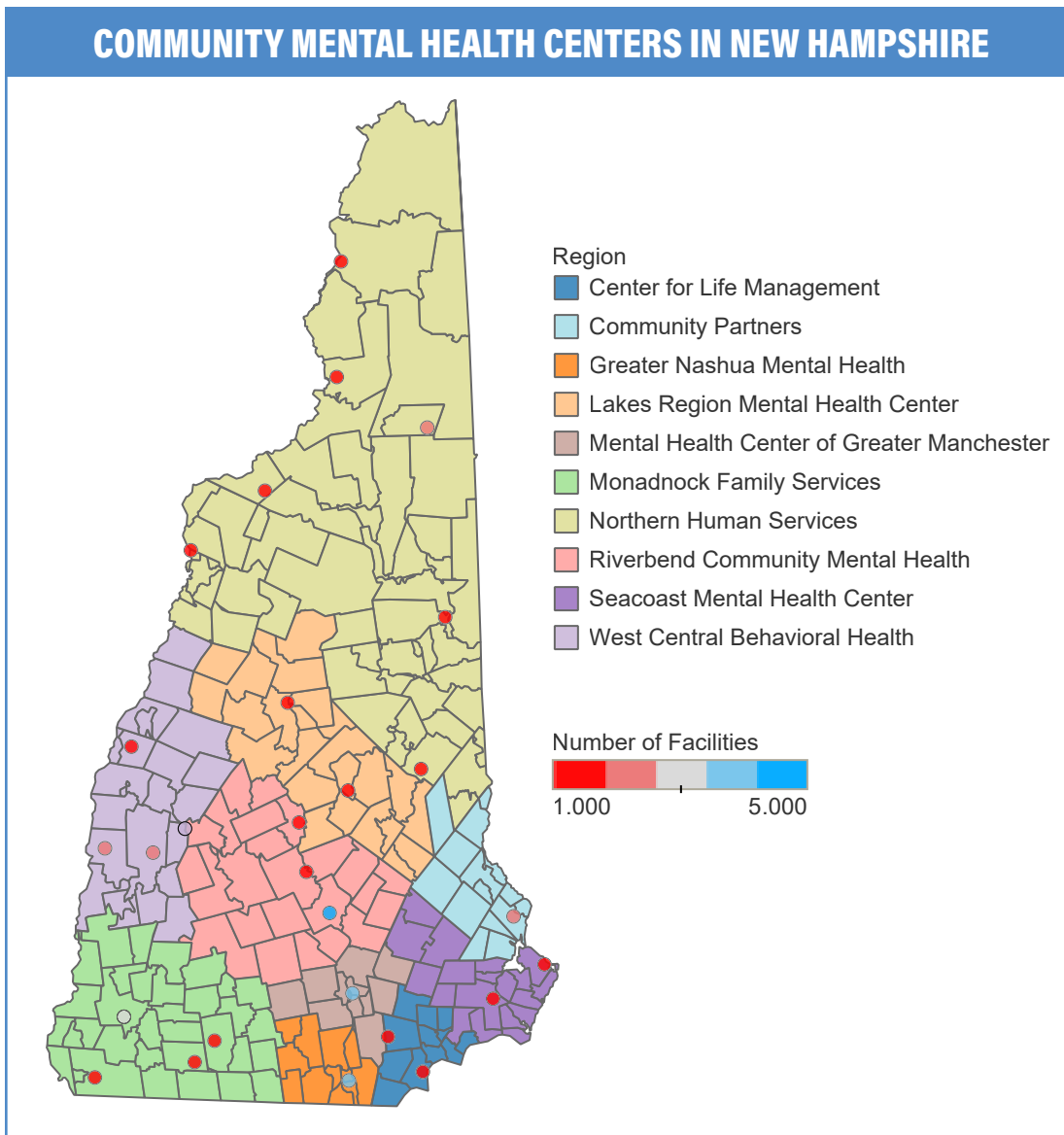
4 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. <https://www.bls.gov/cew/data.htm>.
 5 Enhanced Life Options Group, "Community Mental Health Centers." <https://www.elonh.org/communitymentalhealthcenters>.
 6 New Hampshire Community Behavioral Health Association. "NHCbHA Member Locations." <https://nhcbha.org/nhcbha-member-locations/>.
 7 New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. "State-run and designated acute psychiatric bed data." <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/about-dhhs/locations-facilities/state-run-and-designated-acute-psychiatric-bed-data>.

facilities were on psychiatric medications.⁸ Individuals in 24-hour residential facilities are those defined as having chronic or complex conditions requiring constant supervision, but the only secure psychiatric unit in New Hampshire for those deemed too dangerous to themselves or others to be housed at New Hampshire Hospital are sent to the State Prison for Men.⁹ In the secure psychiatric unit housed within the State Prison

for Men there were 22 individuals suffering from a complex condition requiring the secure supervision the unit provides but had not been convicted of a crime. To address the needs of these types of individuals, the state began building a 24-bed forensic hospital on the grounds of New Hampshire Hospital in August 2023, with construction expected to be complete in 2025.

– Cailee King

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE



Source: New Hampshire Community Behavioral Health Association

8 Governor's Advisory Commission on Mental Illness and the Corrections System. "Advisory commission report of findings and recommendations," New Hampshire Department of Corrections, January 2023. <https://www.nh.gov/nhdod/divisions/commissioner/documents/commission-report-jan-2023.pdf>.

9 Paula Tracy, "State breaks ground on \$42m adult forensic facility at New Hampshire Hospital in Concord." InDepthNH.org, August 31, 2023. <https://indepthnh.org/2023/08/31/state-breaks-ground-on-42m-adult-forensic-facility-at-new-hampshire-hospital-in-concord/>.

HOSPITAL INSURANCE	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
HOSPITAL INSURANCE					
Original Medicare	250,636	251,956	243,068	240,172	234,830
Medicare Advantage & Other Health Plans	30,354	38,222	55,666	67,394	81,726
	280,990	290,178	298,734	307,566	316,556

PRESCRIPTION DRUG (Medicare Part D)					
Prescription Drug Plans	160,943	163,105	162,971	161,729	158,170
Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug	23,910	31,454	40,242	51,411	65,118

Yearly Aged and Disabled Enrollment					
Aged Total	233,852	243,236	252,381	262,000	271,946
Disabled Total	47,138	46,941	46,353	45,567	44,611

Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Last Update 9/27/2023

MEDICAID INSURANCE	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Medicaid Enrollees	204,458	200,850	193,363	210,094	239,439
Federal Share, Medicaid Expenditures (Millions)	\$4,616.2	\$4,742.9	\$3,892.9	\$7,217.8	\$8,626.1
New Hampshire Share, Medicaid Expenditures (Millions)	\$2,523.4	\$2,707.0	\$2,687.8	\$4,143.1	\$4,543.2

Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Last Update 9/27/2023

MEDICARE UTILIZATION	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES (Medicare)					
Total Persons With Utilization*					
New Hampshire	10,745	10,162	9,235	7,549	7,304
United States	1,763,018	1,703,381	1,622,835	1,467,350	1,394,575
Covered Admissions Per 1,000 Original Medicare Part A Enrollees					
New Hampshire	58	55	52	41	41
United States	65	62	60	55	53
Covered Days of Care Per 1,000 Original Medicare Part A Enrollees					
New Hampshire	1,392	1,339	1,247	1,057	1,059
United States	1,623	1,559	1,475	1,453	1,399
Program Payments Per Covered Day					
New Hampshire	486	490	493	551	571
United States	459	471	489	534	550

*Utilization expresses the number of services used per year or per number of persons eligible for the services

MEDICARE UTILIZATION (continued...)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
SHORT STAY HOSPITALS (Medicare)					
Total Persons With Utilization*					
New Hampshire	34,043	33,472	31,590	26,674	25,923
United States	6,217,622	6,079,501	5,904,483	5,089,330	4,859,432
Discharges Per 1,000 Original Medicare Part A Enrollees					
New Hampshire	206	202	199	165	165
United States	258	252	246	210	208
Covered Days of Care Per 1,000 Original Medicare Part A Enrollees					
New Hampshire	975	985	962	833	862
United States	1,225	1,197	1,164	1,064	1,093
Program Payments Per Covered Day					
New Hampshire	2,624	2,683	2,809	2,859	2,936
United States	2,507	2,603	2,726	2,858	2,918
Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Last Update 9/27/2023					
*Utilization expresses the number of services used per year or per number of persons eligible for the services					

RELATED SERVICES	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
HOSPICES (Medicare)					
Total Persons With Utilization*					
New Hampshire	6,397	6,783	7,164	7,464	7,630
United States	1,495,384	1,553,637	1,612,018	1,717,193	1,725,374
Covered Days of Care Per 1,000 Original Medicare Part A Enrollees					
New Hampshire	1,454	1,503	1,682	1,707	1,619
United States	1,858	1,936	2,026	2,079	2,044
Program Payments Per Covered Day					
New Hampshire	\$176	\$176	\$178	\$178	\$184
United States	\$169	\$169	\$171	\$175	\$181
*Utilization expresses the number of services used per year or per number of persons eligible for the services					

HOME HEALTH AGENCIES (Medicare)					
Total Persons With Utilization					
New Hampshire	22,155	22,300	21,531	20,053	19,871
United States	3,385,968	3,358,470	3,274,563	3,048,115	3,012,151
Service Visits Per 1,000 Original Medicare Enrollees					
New Hampshire	2,259	2,207	2,146	1,868	1,727
United States	2,754	2,731	2,640	2,265	2,147
Total Service Visits					
New Hampshire	566,260	555,981	521,512	448,747	405,620
United States	104,648,562	103,769,954	100,038,606	84,024,970	76,622,816
Program Payments Per Service Visit					
New Hampshire	\$179	\$185	\$190	\$206	\$222
United States	\$170	\$173	\$178	\$203	\$220
Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Last Update 9/27/2023					

OTHER HEALTH MEASURES	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Obesity (Percent of adult population)	28.1	29.6	31.8	29.9	30.6
Physical Inactivity (Percent of adult population)	23.9	21.5	21.7	19.3	20
Diabetes (Percent of adult population)	8.4	10.3	9.2	8.8	8.7
Frequent Mental Distress ¹	12	13.8	13.9	13.7	14.6
Frequent Physical Distress ²	11.9	11.3	13	10.2	9.6
Source: United Health Foundation. Last Update 9/27/2023					
¹ Percentage of adults who reported their mental health was not good 14 or more days in the past 30 days					
² Percentage of adults who reported their physical health was not good 14 or more days in the past 30 days					

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE	2018	2019	2020 ⁴	2021	2022
Employer	57.5%	56.2%	N/A	57.7%	55.9%
Non-Group	5.0%	5.3%	N/A	5.0%	6.5%
Medicaid	14.1%	13.2%	N/A	13.5%	13.4%
Medicare ³	17.1%	17.7%	N/A	17.6%	18.6%
Military	1.1%	1.2%	N/A	1.2%	1.1%
Uninsured	5.2%	6.4%	N/A	5.0%	4.5%
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation. Last Update 1/10/2024					
³ The percentage of people with Medicare excludes those who report having both Medicare and Medicaid coverage.					
⁴ Estimates for 2020 were not published, due to the coronavirus pandemic affecting data collection..					
Prepared by: New Hampshire Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau					
www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi (603) 228-4124					