

Health insurance elusive for many Californians

By Ken Carlson, Modesto Bee

A much smaller percentage of California residents receive health insurance through an employer than was the case 25 years ago, a report said.

Data compiled by the California Healthcare Foundation showed that 54 percent of residents received coverage through their jobs last year. That's down from 63 percent in 1988.

Despite its reputation for sunny beaches and affluent lifestyles, California has more residents than any other state who live without insurance to pay for medical bills, which restricts their access to doctors and makes them vulnerable to financial ruin if they get sick.

Although more residents have resorted to public health programs, 1 in 5 Californians under age 65 have no insurance, the seventh-highest uninsured rate in the nation.

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