

Health Insurance for the Aged: Persons Insured, Mid-1966 to Mid-1970

by MARTIN RUTHER*

The number of aged individuals who have some health insurance protection under one or both parts of the Medicare program—hospital insurance and supplementary medical insurance—continues to grow. Annual increases in the total number of persons with some coverage ranged from 1.4 percent to 2.2 percent between 1966, when the program began, and 1970. Changes have occurred in enrollment, reflecting the growth in the total population entitled to health insurance. The article describes these changes by age, race, sex, and residence. The increase in SMI enrollment (600,000 more than the rise in HI enrollment) represented those eligible HI enrollees who signed up during the annual general enrollment period, public assistance recipients whose States had elected to enroll them and pay their premiums, and persons ineligible for HI coverage who signed up for SMI only.

UNDER HEALTH INSURANCE for the aged—Medicare—about 20.5 million persons aged 65 and over had some protection by July 1, 1970. This number was 7.2 percent higher than the enrollment on July 1, 1966, the date of the program's inception.¹ Included in the enrollment were about 19.5 million persons covered by both parts of the program—hospital insurance (HI) and supplementary medical insurance (SMI). An additional 900,000 persons were entitled only to HI benefits, and about 130,000 were covered only by SMI (table 1). This article describes changes in enrollment by age, sex, race, and State of residence.

During the 4-year period from 1966 to 1970, HI enrollment increased 6.7 percent (from 19.1 million to 20.4 million), reflecting the growth

* Program Statistics Branch, Division of Health Insurance Studies, Office of Research and Statistics. For a fuller report on the data, see Martin Ruther, *Medicare: Number of Persons Insured, July 1, 1966–July 1, 1970* (Health Insurance Statistics Note No. 35), Social Security Administration, Office of Research and Statistics, 1972.

¹ The figures for July 1, 1970, are provisional and are from social security records summarized on March 31, 1971.

of the population aged 65 and over (table 2). Almost every aged person is eligible for hospital insurance, but participation in the medical insurance program is voluntary and the enrollee is required to pay a premium. The SMI enrollees numbered 19.6 million on July 1, 1970, about 10 percent more than the number when the program began.

Annual increases in the total number of persons with some protection under Medicare ranged from 1.4 percent to 2.2 percent between 1966 and 1970. The Bureau of the Census estimates that the U.S. population aged 65 and over will double in the next 50 years at an average annual rate of 1.4 percent,² which represents the excess of persons reaching age 65 over deaths among those aged 65 and over. The population covered by Medicare is therefore expected to continue to grow.

The two insurance programs give rise to three types of coverage, since SMI is voluntary and HI excludes certain persons. Most eligible persons have coverage under both programs; the total number of insured persons was 17.7 million on July 1, 1966, and 4 years later it was 19.5 million. When Medicare began, almost 1.4 million persons who were entitled to HI benefits had not enrolled for SMI. By July 1, 1970, this group had declined to approximately 900,000.

Hospital insurance protection under the Social Security Act is provided automatically to persons aged 65 and over who apply and qualify for—that is, establish entitlement for—monthly cash social security benefits or railroad retirement benefits. In addition, under a temporary special provision for the uninsured, individuals who do not meet the insured-status requirements for these programs may become entitled to HI benefits.

Thus, persons who attained age 65 before 1968 were entitled to HI benefits without earning any

² Bureau of the Census, "Projections of the Population of the United States, by Age and Sex," *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, No. 470, November 1971.

quarters of coverage in work covered under the Social Security Act.³ For those attaining age 65 in 1968 or later, at least 3 quarters of coverage are required for each calendar year after 1966 and before the year in which a person attains age 65. In the time period reported here, at least 3 quarters were required for those who reached age 65 in 1968, 6 quarters for those becoming age 65 in 1969, and 9 quarters for persons attaining age 65 in 1970.

Active or retired Federal Government employees who are covered or eligible for coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Act of 1959 are not entitled to HI benefits. From the start of the program they were eligible for SMI, and 26,000 of them enrolled for that program alone in 1966. By the end of the following year (July 1, 1967), their number had risen less than 1,000. The quarters-of-coverage requirement that became effective in 1968 made an additional group ineligible for HI benefits. As the number of quarters of coverage required under the transitional insured-status provision rises, the number of persons enrolling for only SMI benefits is expected to grow.

CHANGES IN POPULATION ENTITLED TO HI BENEFITS

Characteristics of the population enrolled under Medicare changed slightly as the total number coming under the program grew (table 3). The annual rates of change in enrollment figures—according to age, sex, race, and region of residence—are given for the years 1967 through 1970 in table 4.

Age and Sex

Because women live longer than men, they have represented an increasing proportion of persons entitled to HI benefits. Thus, from 1966 to 1970 the proportion of women among all those enrolled under HI grew from 57.4 percent to 58.2 percent. This change reflected primarily the rela-

³ For definitions of quarters of coverage, see Social Security Administration, *Social Security Handbook*, 4th edition, 1969.

tive growth in the number of women in the group aged 75 and over. Among those entitled to HI benefits in that group, the proportion that were women went from 60.1 percent to 61.8 percent, as the following figures show.

Age and sex	Percentage distribution of enrollment				
	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
65 and over.....	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0
Men.....	42 6	42 3	42 1	42 0	41 8
Women.....	57 4	57 7	57 9	58 0	58 2
Under 75.....	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0
Men.....	44 2	44 0	44 0	44 1	44 1
Women.....	55 8	56 0	56 0	55 9	55 9
75 and over.....	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0
Men.....	39 9	39 4	39 1	38 7	38 2
Women.....	60 1	60 6	60 9	61 3	61 8

Between 1966 and 1970 the proportion of persons aged 75 and over rose 13 percent. Since the use of medical services increases with age, the growth of this age group has implications for the Medicare program—both for reimbursement and for type of service used.⁴ The Bureau of the Census estimates that persons aged 75 and over will continue to represent a rising proportion of the population aged 65 and over until the mid-1970's.⁵

The median age of enrollees was slightly higher in 1970—from 72.8 in 1966 to 73.0 in the later

⁴ Social Security Administration, Office of Research and Statistics, *Medicare: Health Insurance for the Aged, 1967, Section 1: Summary, 1971.*

⁵ *Current Population Reports*, op. cit.

TABLE 1.—Medicare enrollment and annual percentage change, by type of coverage, 1966–70

Type of coverage	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Enrollment (in thousands)					
Hospital insurance and/or supplementary medical insurance.....	19,109	19,521	19,821	20,103	20,491
Hospital insurance (HI).....	19,082	19,494	19,770	20,014	20,361
Supplementary medical insurance (SMI).....	17,736	17,893	18,805	19,195	19,584
Hospital insurance and supplementary medical insurance.....	17,710	17,866	18,754	19,107	19,455
Hospital insurance only.....	1,373	1,028	1,016	908	907
Supplementary medical insurance only.....	26	27	51	88	130
Annual percentage change					
Hospital insurance and/or supplementary medical insurance.....		2 2	1 5	1 4	1 9
Hospital insurance (HI).....		2 2	1 4	1 2	1 7
Supplementary medical insurance (SMI).....		9	5 1	2 1	2 0
Hospital insurance and supplementary medical insurance.....		9	5 0	1 9	1 8
Hospital insurance only.....		18 6	-37 6	-10 6	-1
Supplementary medical insurance only.....		2 7	88 2	73 3	46 9

TABLE 2.—Enrollment in the hospital insurance program, by age and State of residence, July 1, 1970

State of residence	Aged 65 and over	Aged 65-69	Aged 70-74	Aged 75-79	Aged 80-84	Aged 85 and over
All areas.....	20,361,149	6,778,831	5,537,326	4,139,600	2,438,234	1,467,158
United States.....	20,014,664	6,672,111	5,440,691	4,067,150	2,393,680	1,441,032
Alabama.....	325,943	112,821	88,498	63,524	37,202	23,898
Alaska.....	6,614	2,854	1,664	1,048	620	428
Arizona.....	158,052	59,121	44,793	30,128	15,529	8,483
Arkansas.....	238,961	80,425	62,340	48,476	27,751	17,969
California.....	1,788,185	593,230	482,795	369,007	217,623	134,530
Colorado.....	188,547	60,849	49,418	38,707	24,223	15,790
Connecticut.....	287,524	93,039	76,401	60,724	35,944	21,416
Delaware.....	44,981	15,049	12,362	9,075	5,285	3,210
District of Columbia.....	65,869	20,151	18,429	13,725	8,262	5,302
Florida.....	931,030	326,150	270,393	187,146	96,841	50,500
Georgia.....	365,099	126,079	100,626	71,471	41,122	25,801
Hawaii.....	44,737	17,070	12,383	7,596	4,900	2,788
Idaho.....	69,034	22,994	17,872	13,974	8,812	5,382
Illinois.....	1,094,099	360,697	294,825	227,179	134,003	77,395
Indiana.....	494,371	132,330	132,242	99,874	61,114	37,811
Iowa.....	353,963	107,110	93,244	75,111	47,610	30,888
Kansas.....	267,525	82,699	70,072	55,861	35,558	23,335
Kentucky.....	339,622	111,940	92,202	68,528	41,314	25,638
Louisiana.....	303,540	104,953	83,892	59,052	33,076	22,567
Maine.....	119,740	38,636	32,202	24,310	14,687	10,005
Maryland.....	291,436	101,011	80,284	57,570	32,976	19,595
Massachusetts.....	631,502	196,352	169,754	133,262	81,200	50,934
Michigan.....	764,495	260,769	206,663	156,645	89,748	50,670
Minnesota.....	412,762	128,599	110,774	87,389	53,352	32,648
Mississippi.....	223,901	74,000	60,786	44,735	25,986	18,394
Missouri.....	558,619	181,003	148,248	114,641	70,246	44,481
Montana.....	69,700	21,868	17,052	14,640	10,217	5,923
Nebraska.....	183,942	55,401	48,954	39,338	24,758	15,491
Nevada.....	31,471	12,582	8,624	5,562	3,018	1,685
New Hampshire.....	81,619	26,677	22,052	16,564	9,930	6,396
New Jersey.....	692,668	232,995	192,028	142,067	81,082	44,496
New Mexico.....	72,879	25,836	19,618	14,325	8,221	4,879
New York.....	1,961,981	651,866	543,049	404,338	232,926	129,782
North Carolina.....	415,597	148,158	115,622	80,426	44,567	26,824
North Dakota.....	67,623	21,590	17,820	13,799	8,880	5,534
Ohio.....	995,104	323,618	268,104	206,159	123,109	74,114
Oklahoma.....	295,848	98,580	78,305	59,412	35,883	23,668
Oregon.....	226,423	74,445	60,302	45,675	28,517	17,484
Pennsylvania.....	1,273,057	424,965	347,525	261,870	151,846	86,851
Rhode Island.....	104,678	34,289	28,450	21,647	12,647	7,645
South Carolina.....	193,124	68,692	54,147	37,684	20,455	12,146
South Dakota.....	81,178	24,606	21,833	17,161	10,914	6,664
Tennessee.....	386,066	132,817	105,293	76,225	44,259	27,472
Texas.....	984,531	342,887	267,238	193,001	111,695	69,710
Utah.....	77,306	26,770	20,804	15,204	9,202	5,326
Vermont.....	49,558	10,069	13,085	10,006	6,185	4,213
Virginia.....	364,300	124,931	100,234	71,910	41,634	25,591
Washington.....	322,986	105,514	83,963	65,434	41,062	26,423
West Virginia.....	198,603	66,659	54,658	39,070	23,387	14,829
Wisconsin.....	476,442	155,755	128,610	98,023	58,946	35,108
Wyoming.....	30,955	10,177	8,335	6,411	3,850	2,182
Residence unknown.....	8,874	4,013	1,824	1,383	916	738
Other areas						
Guam.....	1,313	431	402	297	114	69
Puerto Rico.....	173,637	54,315	45,567	34,304	22,678	16,773
Virgin Islands.....	2,964	976	762	602	370	254
All other areas.....	581	227	186	76	58	34
Foreign countries.....	167,990	50,771	49,718	37,171	21,334	8,996

year. The median age of women was about a year more than that of men in 1970, and the median for the white enrollees was greater than that for all other races by less than a year. The changes in median ages since 1966 were small for the sex and race groups.

(table 4). As a result, the ratio of persons of all other races to the total enrollment rose slightly, and that of the white population remained virtually unchanged. The proportion of persons with race recorded as unknown declined slightly. The percentage distribution of HI enrollment by race follows:

Race

Enrollment of the white population increased at a slower rate than that of all other races

Race	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Total percent....	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0
White.....	89 3	89 2	89 2	89 2	89 3
All other races.....	7 6	7 7	7 7	7 8	7 9
Race unknown.....	3 1	3 1	3 1	3 0	2 8

TABLE 3.—Medicare enrollment, by age, sex, race, and area of residence, 1966-70

[In thousands]					
Age, sex, race, and area of residence	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Hospital insurance					
Total enrollment.....	19,082	19,494	19,770	20,014	20,361
Age:					
Under 75.....	11,990	12,116	12,168	12,195	12,316
75 and over.....	7,092	7,378	7,611	7,819	8,045
Sex:					
Men.....	8,133	8,243	8,318	8,396	8,507
Women.....	10,950	11,251	11,452	11,618	11,855
Race:					
White.....	17,042	17,385	17,632	17,859	18,187
All other races.....	1,445	1,496	1,525	1,558	1,608
Race unknown.....	596	613	613	597	566
Region:					
United States ¹	18,798	19,189	19,458	19,684	20,015
Northeast.....	5,021	5,082	5,130	5,156	5,202
North Central.....	5,548	5,621	5,671	5,699	5,750
South.....	5,402	5,584	5,694	5,807	5,966
West.....	2,813	2,893	2,953	3,014	3,087
Medical insurance					
Total enrollment.....	17,736	17,893	18,805	19,195	19,584
Age:					
Under 75.....	11,186	11,114	11,561	11,705	11,873
75 and over.....	6,550	6,779	7,244	7,490	7,711
Sex:					
Men.....	7,534	7,547	7,878	8,010	8,132
Women.....	10,202	10,346	10,927	11,185	11,452
Race:					
White.....	15,938	16,124	16,877	17,229	17,576
All other races.....	1,264	1,245	1,368	1,406	1,472
Race unknown.....	534	524	560	560	537
Region:					
United States ¹	17,626	17,781	18,693	19,075	19,459
Northeast.....	4,782	4,796	4,959	5,015	5,062
North Central.....	5,172	5,186	5,453	5,535	5,594
South.....	5,012	5,076	5,425	5,589	5,786
West.....	2,653	2,718	2,851	2,933	3,012

¹ Consists of 50 States, District of Columbia, and residence unknown

Geographic Changes

The beneficiary population of an area is determined not only by the number of people aging into the program and the number of deaths among persons aged 65 and over but also by the interstate migration of Medicare beneficiaries. There is evidence that about 1 percent of these persons migrate in a year, chiefly from the Northeast and North Central States to the South and to Western States.⁶

All four regions showed annual increases from 1966 to 1970 in the number of persons entitled to HI benefits. The South had the largest numerical growth (609,000) and the highest relative

⁶ See William J. Nelson, *Interstate Migration of Aged Beneficiaries* (Research and Statistics Note No. 3), Social Security Administration, Office of Research and Statistics, 1970. This ratio is based on data including only those aged beneficiaries receiving benefits on June 30, 1967. Similar unpublished data as of June 30, 1970, show the same migration patterns

increase (11.3 percent). Next was the West with an enrollment gain of 290,000 or 10.3 percent. The North Central and Northeastern States had smaller increases—4.1 percent and 4.0 percent, respectively. As a result of these differences in enrollment growth, the South succeeded the North Central States as the most populous region with respect to persons aged 65 and over.

Every State had some increase in enrollment between 1966 and 1970 (table 5). The largest numerical rise was in Florida, where the Medicare population grew by 44,000 a year. Most of this growth probably came from the Northeast and North Central States.

For the six States with nearly 1 million or more enrollees in 1966, the 4-year growth was as follows: Texas, 10.6 percent, and California, 9.4 percent (both above the national average of 6.5 percent); Pennsylvania, 3.5 percent; New York, 3.1 percent; Ohio, 3.0 percent; and Illinois, 2.8 percent.

The States with smallest 4-year growth in

TABLE 4.—Annual percentage change in Medicare enrollment, by age, sex, race, and area of residence, 1966-70

Age, sex, race, and area of residence	1967	1968	1969	1970
Hospital insurance				
Total enrollment.....	2.2	1.4	1.2	1.7
Age:				
Under 75.....	1.0	.4	.3	1.0
75 and over.....	4.0	3.2	2.7	2.9
Sex:				
Men.....	1.4	.9	.9	1.3
Women.....	2.8	1.8	1.5	2.0
Race:				
White.....	2.0	1.4	1.3	1.8
All other races.....	3.5	1.9	2.2	3.2
Race unknown.....	2.8	.1	-2.7	-5.1
Region:				
United States ¹	2.1	1.4	1.2	1.7
Northeast.....	1.2	.9	.5	.9
North Central.....	1.3	.9	.5	.9
South.....	3.4	2.0	2.0	2.7
West.....	2.9	2.0	2.1	2.4
Medical insurance				
Total enrollment.....	0.9	5.1	2.1	2.0
Age:				
Under 75.....	-6	4.0	1.2	1.4
75 and over.....	3.5	6.9	3.4	3.0
Sex:				
Men.....	2	4.4	1.7	1.5
Women.....	1.4	5.6	2.4	2.4
Race:				
White.....	1.2	4.7	2.1	2.0
All other races.....	-1.5	9.9	2.8	4.7
Race unknown.....	-1.8	6.8	(²)	-4.0
Region:				
United States ¹9	5.1	2.0	2.0
Northeast.....	.3	3.4	1.1	1.0
North Central.....	.3	5.1	1.5	1.1
South.....	1.3	6.9	3.0	3.5
West.....	2.4	4.9	2.9	2.7

¹ Consists of 50 States, District of Columbia, and residence unknown

² Less than 0.05 percent.

TABLE 5.—Enrollment in the hospital insurance program and annual percentage change, by region, division, and State, 1966-70

[In thousands, except percent]

Area of residence	Number of persons					Annual percentage change			
	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1967	1968	1969	1970
All areas.....	19,082	19,494	19,770	20,014	20,381	2.2	1.4	1.2	1.7
United States ¹	18,798	19,189	19,468	19,684	20,015	2.1	1.4	1.2	1.7
Regions:									
Northeast.....	5,021	5,082	5,130	5,156	5,202	1.2	.9	.5	.9
North Central.....	5,548	5,621	5,671	5,699	5,750	1.3	.9	.5	.9
South.....	5,402	5,584	5,694	5,807	5,966	3.4	2.0	2.0	2.7
West.....	2,813	2,898	2,953	3,014	3,087	2.9	2.0	2.1	2.4
Divisions:									
New England.....	1,233	1,248	1,266	1,263	1,275	1.2	.7	.5	.9
Middle Atlantic.....	3,788	3,883	3,833	3,893	3,928	1.2	1.0	.5	.9
East North Central.....	3,685	3,732	3,767	3,788	3,825	1.3	.9	.6	1.0
West North Central.....	1,862	1,889	1,904	1,911	1,926	1.4	.8	.4	.8
South Atlantic.....	2,544	2,644	2,705	2,776	2,870	3.9	2.3	2.6	3.4
East South Central.....	1,190	1,221	1,238	1,251	1,276	2.5	1.4	1.1	1.9
West South Central.....	1,667	1,719	1,751	1,779	1,821	3.1	1.8	1.6	2.1
Mountain.....	623	644	658	676	698	3.4	2.2	2.8	3.2
Pacific.....	2,190	2,250	2,295	2,338	2,389	2.7	2.0	1.9	2.2
New England:									
Maine.....	116	117	118	118	120	1.0	.4	.6	1.1
New Hampshire.....	77	79	79	80	82	1.9	.6	1.1	1.7
Vermont.....	48	48	48	49	50	1.2	.6	.6	1.6
Massachusetts.....	619	625	628	629	632	1.0	.4	.1	.5
Rhode Island.....	100	101	102	103	105	1.4	.8	.9	1.6
Connecticut.....	273	278	281	284	288	1.6	1.1	1.1	1.3
Middle Atlantic									
New York.....	1,903	1,924	1,944	1,951	1,962	1.1	1.1	.3	.6
New Jersey.....	655	666	675	682	693	1.7	1.3	1.1	1.5
Pennsylvania.....	1,230	1,244	1,254	1,260	1,273	1.1	.9	.5	1.0
East North Central									
Ohio.....	966	977	984	987	995	1.1	.7	.3	.8
Indiana.....	477	483	487	489	494	1.3	.8	.6	1.0
Illinois.....	1,064	1,076	1,084	1,088	1,094	1.1	.8	.4	.5
Michigan.....	726	737	747	754	764	1.5	1.3	1.0	1.4
Wisconsin.....	453	460	465	470	476	1.6	1.2	1.0	1.4
West North Central									
Minnesota.....	396	402	407	409	413	1.6	1.1	.6	.9
Iowa.....	347	350	352	352	354	.9	.5	-.1	.5
Missouri.....	540	549	552	555	559	1.6	.7	.5	.7
North Dakota.....	65	65	66	67	68	1.3	1.4	.9	1.0
South Dakota.....	78	80	80	81	81	1.5	1.0	.3	.6
Nebraska.....	178	180	182	182	184	1.4	.8	.3	.8
Kansas.....	259	262	264	265	268	1.4	.8	.3	1.1

See footnotes at end of table

the population aged 65 and over were Iowa (1.9 percent) and Massachusetts (2.0 percent). The District of Columbia had a decline in enrollment (2.2 percent) that may have reflected migration of the elderly to the suburbs of Maryland and Virginia.

CHANGES IN SMI ENROLLMENT

The increase in SMI enrollment between 1966 and 1970 was nearly 600,000 more than the rise in HI enrollment. The proportion of HI enrollees participating in SMI rose from 92.9 percent to 96.2 percent during this period. The greater growth of SMI was the result of the influx of three groups: (1) Eligible persons who signed up during the annual general enrollment period, (2) public assistance recipients whose States had elected to enroll them and pay their premiums,

and (3) persons ineligible for HI coverage who signed up for SMI only.

General Enrollment Period

Enrollment in the SMI program is voluntary—requiring the payment of a monthly premium by the enrollee—and is permitted only during the “initial period” or during the “general enrollment period” (GEP). The initial period is a 7-month span beginning 3 months before and ending 3 months after the month in which a person attains age 65. To encourage enrollment among persons who fail to enroll during their initial period, the law has also established a general enrollment period. Eligible persons may enroll during a GEP that begins no later than 3 years after the end of their initial period. The GEP also provides for people whose enrollment has

TABLE 5.—Enrollment in the hospital insurance program and annual percentage change, by region, division, and State, 1966-70—Continued

[In thousands, except percent]

Area of residence	Number of persons					Annual percentage change			
	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1967	1968	1969	1970
South Atlantic									
Delaware.....	42	43	44	44	45	2 1	1 0	1 5	1 8
Maryland.....	265	274	279	285	291	3 1	1 9	2 1	2 4
District of Columbia.....	67	67	68	67	66	(¹)	4	-1 6	-1 1
Virginia.....	334	344	350	356	364	3 2	1 7	1 7	2 4
West Virginia.....	191	193	195	196	199	1 5	1 0	5	1 2
North Carolina.....	373	387	396	404	416	3 2	2 2	2 0	3 0
South Carolina.....	176	181	185	188	193	2 8	1 9	1 6	2 9
Georgia.....	336	347	352	357	365	8 3	1 5	1 4	2 3
Florida.....	757	807	838	881	931	6 6	3 8	5 2	5 7
East South Central									
Kentucky.....	324	331	334	336	340	1 9	1 1	5	1 1
Tennessee.....	357	366	372	377	386	2 6	1 7	1 4	2 3
Alabama.....	299	309	314	319	326	3 2	1 6	1 6	2 3
Mississippi.....	210	215	218	219	224	2 3	1 3	8	2 1
West South Central									
Arkansas.....	220	226	230	232	237	2 8	1 5	1 1	2 1
Louisiana.....	280	289	293	297	304	3 2	1 5	1 2	1 3
Oklahoma.....	277	284	287	291	296	2 4	1 3	1 4	2 6
Texas.....	890	920	940	959	985	3 4	2 2	2 0	2 6
Mountain:									
Montana.....	67	68	69	69	70	1 0	9	4	1 0
Idaho.....	64	66	67	67	69	2 4	1 3	1 4	2 3
Wyoming.....	29	30	30	30	31	1 9	1 2	8	1 7
Colorado.....	177	181	183	185	189	2 2	1 2	1 3	1 7
New Mexico.....	63	66	68	70	73	4 1	3 0	3 2	4 1
Arizona.....	127	135	140	149	158	6 4	4 1	6 3	5 8
Utah.....	69	71	73	75	77	3 1	2 3	2 5	3 2
Nevada.....	25	27	28	30	31	6 5	4 4	6 3	6 0
Pacific									
Washington.....	304	309	313	317	323	1 7	1 2	1 3	1 9
Oregon.....	208	214	218	222	226	2 6	1 8	1 8	2 2
California.....	1,634	1,681	1,717	1,750	1,788	2 9	2 1	1 9	2 2
Alaska.....	6	6	6	6	7	5 0	4 4	3 9	4 4
Hawaii.....	38	40	41	43	45	4 8	4 4	4 2	4 0
Residence unknown.....	15 ¹	9	11	8	9	-38 6	15 1	-26 9	13 8
Other areas									
Guam.....	145	154	161	170	178	6 3	4 5	5 4	5 2
Puerto Rico.....	1	1	1	1	1	4 5	1 2	6 0	1 0
Virgin Islands.....	141	150	157	165	174	6 4	4 5	5 4	5 2
All other.....	2	3	3	3	3	10 9	2 5	4 9	4 3
Foreign countries.....	(²) 140	(²) 151	(²) 151	(²) 161	168	-22 9	2 9	12 3	32 3
						8 2	1	6 4	4 4

¹ Consists of 50 States, District of Columbia, and residence unknown.

² Less than 0.05 percent

³ Less than 500.

terminated and who want to be reinstated. They may reenroll only once, during a GEP that begins no later than 3 years after the termination of their earlier enrollment.

Originally, GEP's were limited to October 1 through December 31 of each odd-numbered year, but Public Law 90-97 extended the first GEP through March 31, 1968. Later, the Social Security Amendments of 1967 provided for an annual GEP from January 1 through March 31. Coverage for those who sign up during a GEP begins on July 1 of each year. The number eligible and the number who chose to enroll during the first three GEP's were:

Year	Eligible	Enrolled
1967-68	1,300,000	650,000
1969	900,000	250,000
1970	310,000	140,000

The decrease in the number eligible to enroll

between 1969 and 1970 was partly the result of the 3-year time limit on enrollment. Because of this limit, more than 400,000 persons eligible for the 1969 GEP became ineligible to enroll in future GEP's. One factor that may influence eligible persons in deciding not to enroll for SMI is the amount of the premium they must pay. (The law permits the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to increase the premium annually if medical costs rise.) The premium paid by enrollees rose from \$3 a month at the start of Medicare to \$4 a month on April 1, 1968, and then to \$5.30 a month on July 1, 1970. In addition, the monthly premium of persons who do not enroll in their initial enrollment period is increased by 10 percent for each full 12 months in which they could have but did not enroll. This increase also applies to persons reenrolling 12 or more months after their first coverage was terminated.

Public Assistance Recipients

A second factor in the increased enrollment under SMI is the additional number who are public assistance recipients brought into the program through the State "buy in" provision in the law. At the start of Medicare, 22 States elected to enroll and pay premiums for aged persons receiving cash payments under public assistance programs. Public Law 90-248 then extended eligibility, effective April 1, 1968, to persons aged 65 and over who qualify for medical care under State medical assistance programs but not for public assistance money payments. By January 1, 1970—the closing date for requesting this arrangement—46 States and the District of Columbia had agreed to pay premiums for certain categories of public assistance recipients.

As of July 1, 1970, nearly 2 million public assistance recipients were enrolled for SMI under "buy in" agreements. Only four States—Alaska, Louisiana, Oregon, and Wyoming—are not taking part in the program, a fact that may be reflected in the State SMI/HI participation rate. Table 6 shows that the proportion of HI enrollees who were also enrolled in SMI in 1970 was lowest for Alaska (81.8 percent) and Louisiana (92.5 percent), but for Oregon and Wyoming the proportions (95.9 percent and 96.6 percent, respectively) were only slightly below the national average of 97.2 percent.

HI ENROLLEES PARTICIPATING IN SMI

When Medicare began, 92.9 percent of the total HI enrollment was enrolled for SMI, but this ratio fell to 91.8 percent a year later (table 6). The first GEP, with coverage effective July 1, 1968, together with increasing enrollment of public assistance recipients under the "buy in" provision, helped raise the ratio to 95.1 percent on July 1, 1968. The ratio continued to rise in the next 2 years.

The SMI participation rate for the United States has been about one percentage point higher than the rate for all of the areas covered by Medicare. The lower rate for persons in all covered areas results from the inclusion of two groups with low participation—those residing in foreign countries and those in outlying areas. (Medi-

TABLE 6.—Percent of persons enrolled in the hospital insurance program participating in the medical insurance program, by region, division, and State, 1966-70

Area of residence	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
All areas.....	92 9	91 8	95 1	95 9	96 2
United States ¹	93 8	92 7	96 1	96 9	97 2
Regions					
Northeast.....	95 2	94 4	96 7	97 3	97 3
North Central.....	93 2	92 3	96 2	97 1	97 3
South.....	92 8	90 9	95 3	96 2	97 0
West.....	94 3	93 9	96 5	97 3	97 6
Divisions					
New England.....	95 9	95 4	97 4	97 9	98 0
Middle Atlantic.....	95 0	94 0	96 4	97 0	97 1
West North Central.....	93 8	92 8	96 1	97 0	97 2
East North Central.....	92 1	91 3	96 3	97 3	97 5
South Atlantic.....	92 3	90 7	95 3	96 3	96 9
East South Central.....	92 5	89 7	94 6	95 5	97 2
West South Central.....	93 8	92 1	95 7	96 7	96 9
Mountain.....	93 9	92 6	95 5	96 3	96 9
Pacific.....	94 5	94 3	96 8	97 6	97 8
New England					
Maine.....	95 7	95 4	97 4	98 1	98 3
New Hampshire.....	91 3	92 6	95 3	96 3	96 5
Vermont.....	95 5	95 3	97 2	97 7	97 9
Massachusetts.....	96 4	95 7	97 6	98 0	98 1
Rhode Island.....	94 5	93 8	97 0	97 6	97 6
Connecticut.....	96 6	96 0	97 8	98 2	98 3
Middle Atlantic					
New York.....	95 4	94 4	96 4	96 9	97 0
New Jersey.....	96 2	95 5	97 6	98 0	98 1
Pennsylvania.....	93 8	92 7	95 8	96 7	96 7
East North Central					
Ohio.....	93 4	92 1	95 6	96 7	96 9
Indiana.....	92 9	92 2	95 3	96 4	96 5
Illinois.....	93 4	92 4	96 1	97 0	97 2
Michigan.....	94 9	93 6	96 6	97 4	97 5
Wisconsin.....	94 7	94 3	97 0	97 9	98 0
West North Central					
Minnesota.....	94 8	94 3	97 1	97 9	98 1
Iowa.....	94 6	94 1	96 8	97 6	97 7
Missouri.....	91 0	89 2	95 7	96 9	97 2
North Dakota.....	91 5	90 6	96 3	97 2	97 4
South Dakota.....	93 2	92 3	96 0	97 0	97 1
Nebraska.....	91 9	91 3	95 9	97 1	97 3
Kansas.....	86 8	87 0	95 8	97 0	97 2
South Atlantic					
Delaware.....	95 2	93 7	96 4	97 1	97 2
Maryland.....	90 1	89 0	92 9	93 9	95 4
District of Columbia.....	90 7	88 0	93 0	95 0	95 4
Virginia.....	91 6	90 0	94 2	95 5	95 9
West Virginia.....	94 3	92 5	96 0	96 8	97 1
North Carolina.....	92 4	89 7	94 5	95 1	96 8
South Carolina.....	90 0	90 0	94 2	95 4	95 7
Georgia.....	87 6	84 9	95 5	96 7	97 2
Florida.....	95 4	94 5	97 0	97 8	97 9
East South Central					
Kentucky.....	93 6	91 5	96 5	97 6	97 9
Tennessee.....	93 4	92 2	96 0	97 0	97 4
Alabama.....	93 6	90 6	94 8	95 3	97 5
Mississippi.....	87 5	81 2	89 3	90 0	95 5
West South Central					
Arkansas.....	92 7	91 9	95 3	96 5	96 9
Louisiana.....	91 8	86 6	91 6	92 7	92 5
Oklahoma.....	93 8	93 2	96 5	97 4	97 7
Texas.....	94 7	93 5	96 9	97 9	98 1
Mountain					
Montana.....	94 3	93 6	96 5	97 3	97 4
Idaho.....	92 4	91 3	96 0	97 0	97 1
Wyoming.....	93 5	93 0	95 5	96 5	96 6
Colorado.....	95 5	94 8	97 0	97 8	97 9
New Mexico.....	91 0	86 5	89 9	90 4	94 8
Arizona.....	93 4	92 5	95 5	96 4	96 6
Utah.....	94 6	92 9	96 0	96 5	96 4
Nevada.....	93 1	91 6	95 3	96 4	96 5
Pacific					
Washington.....	93 7	93 2	96 9	97 5	97 6
Oregon.....	92 5	91 9	94 8	95 8	95 9
California.....	94 9	94 9	97 1	97 9	98 1
Alaska.....	79 1	75 6	80 2	83 4	81 8
Hawaii.....	95 5	94 4	97 4	97 8	98 4
Residence unknown.....	43 6	49 0	52 2	45 0	50 2
Other areas					
Guam.....	65 7	59 1	58 5	57 5	55 8
Puerto Rico.....	60 6	47 4	75 2	76 8	86 8
Puerto Rico.....	65 8	59 3	58 2	56 9	55 1
Virgin Islands.....	66 5	60 9	74 4	86 5	86 8
All other.....	22 3	26 6	36 8	32 8	41 5
Foreign countries.....	10 7	14 0	11 6	14 0	15 6

¹ Consists of 50 States, District of Columbia, and residence unknown.

care benefits are not paid for services provided in foreign countries.) Participation rates were much lower than the U.S. average in every outlying area. Factors such as lower incomes and differing arrangements for medical care in these areas probably account for the lower enrollment.

Age, Sex, and Race

The participation rate for each age-race-sex group increased between 1966 and 1970, and the range of the ratios among the groups narrowed (table 7). By July 1, 1970, only 1.6 percentage points separated the rate for ages 65-69 from that for those aged 85 and older.

The difference in participation rates declined to less than one percentage point for the 2-year age groups between ages 65 and 75. By 1970, those aged 65 and 66 were no longer the 2-year group with the lowest proportion of SMI enrollment.

TABLE 7.—Percent of persons enrolled in the hospital insurance program participating in the medical insurance program, by sex, race, and age, July 1, 1966 and July 1, 1970

Age and year	All persons ¹			White			All other races		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
65 and over									
1966	92.9	92.6	93.2	93.5	93.2	93.7	87.5	87.1	87.8
1970	96.2	95.6	96.6	96.6	96.1	97.0	91.5	90.3	92.5
65 and 66									
1966	91.8	92.0	91.6	92.8	93.0	92.7	84.5	85.3	83.3
1970	96.5	95.1	97.7	96.9	95.8	97.8	89.1	86.5	91.5
67 and 68									
1966	94.1	94.2	94.0	94.7	94.8	94.7	88.9	89.6	88.4
1970	96.9	96.7	97.1	97.4	97.2	97.5	92.2	91.6	92.8
69 and 70									
1966	93.8	93.3	94.2	94.4	94.0	94.8	88.2	87.0	89.3
1970	96.1	96.2	96.1	96.7	96.7	96.7	91.7	92.0	91.5
71 and 72									
1966	93.5	92.7	94.1	94.0	93.3	94.5	88.0	86.2	89.4
1970	96.3	96.2	96.4	96.8	96.6	96.9	92.7	92.7	92.7
73 and 74									
1966	93.5	92.7	94.0	94.0	93.3	94.5	88.3	86.7	89.5
1970	96.1	95.4	96.5	96.6	96.0	97.0	91.6	89.8	93.1
85-89									
1966	93.1	93.2	93.0	93.9	93.9	93.9	86.9	87.3	86.6
1970	96.6	95.9	97.1	97.0	96.5	97.4	90.7	89.4	91.9
70-74									
1966	93.5	92.8	94.1	94.1	93.4	94.6	88.0	86.4	89.4
1970	96.2	95.9	96.4	96.7	96.4	96.9	92.2	91.7	92.7
75-79									
1966	93.0	92.4	93.5	93.5	92.9	93.9	88.0	86.9	88.8
1970	96.1	95.2	96.8	96.5	95.7	97.1	92.1	89.7	93.8
80-84									
1966	92.3	92.1	92.4	92.6	92.5	92.7	88.0	88.4	87.6
1970	95.9	95.2	96.4	96.3	95.6	96.7	92.1	90.7	93.1
85 and over									
1966	90.4	90.2	90.4	90.7	90.7	90.7	86.0	86.7	85.5
1970	95.0	94.4	95.2	95.5	95.0	95.8	90.1	90.1	90.1

¹ Includes persons with race unknown

TABLE 8.—Percent of persons enrolled in the hospital insurance program participating in the medical insurance program, by region, division, and race, July 1, 1966 and July 1, 1970

Region and division	All persons		White		All other races	
	1966	1970	1966	1970	1966	1970
United States.....	93.8	97.2	94.3	97.6	88.6	93.1
Northeast.....	95.2	97.3	95.6	97.6	89.8	92.0
New England.....	95.9	98.0	96.1	98.0	91.6	93.7
Middle Atlantic.....	95.0	97.1	95.4	97.4	89.7	91.8
North Central.....	93.2	97.3	93.6	97.6	87.1	93.0
East North Central.....	93.8	97.2	94.2	97.5	88.4	93.0
West North Central.....	92.1	97.5	92.5	97.7	82.8	93.1
South.....	92.8	97.0	93.7	97.7	88.5	93.0
South Atlantic.....	92.3	96.9	93.5	97.6	86.3	93.2
East South Central.....	92.5	97.2	93.5	98.0	89.0	94.2
West South Central.....	93.8	96.9	94.3	97.8	91.4	91.7
West.....	94.3	97.6	94.6	97.7	91.0	94.8
Mountain.....	93.9	96.9	94.3	97.2	81.1	85.6
Pacific.....	94.5	97.8	94.7	97.9	92.5	96.1

Among women, the percentage of SMI enrollment continued to be a little above that among men. For the white population it remained above that for all other races in every age-sex category.

Geographic Variation

Regional differences in the proportion of HI enrollees participating in SMI almost disappeared by July 1, 1970. The figures ranged from 97.6 percent for the West to 97.0 percent for the South (table 8). The West replaced the Northeast as the region with the highest SMI participation rate.

For the white population, the participation rate was 4.5 percentage points higher than that for all other races in 1970; the gap between these rates had been 5.7 points in 1966. In every geographic area of the country, the percentage of SMI enrollment for the white population continued to exceed that of all other races. Since persons of these races represent a small proportion of the total population, their lower participation rate had little effect on the overall rate of participation, even in the South, where they are relatively most numerous.

As table 6 shows, every State had higher participation in 1970 than at the start of Medicare. The rate ranged from 81.8 percent in Alaska to 98.4 percent in Hawaii. With Alaska excluded, the range narrows to 5.9 percentage points.