Improving Estimates of the Uninsured from National Surveys

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CDC

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
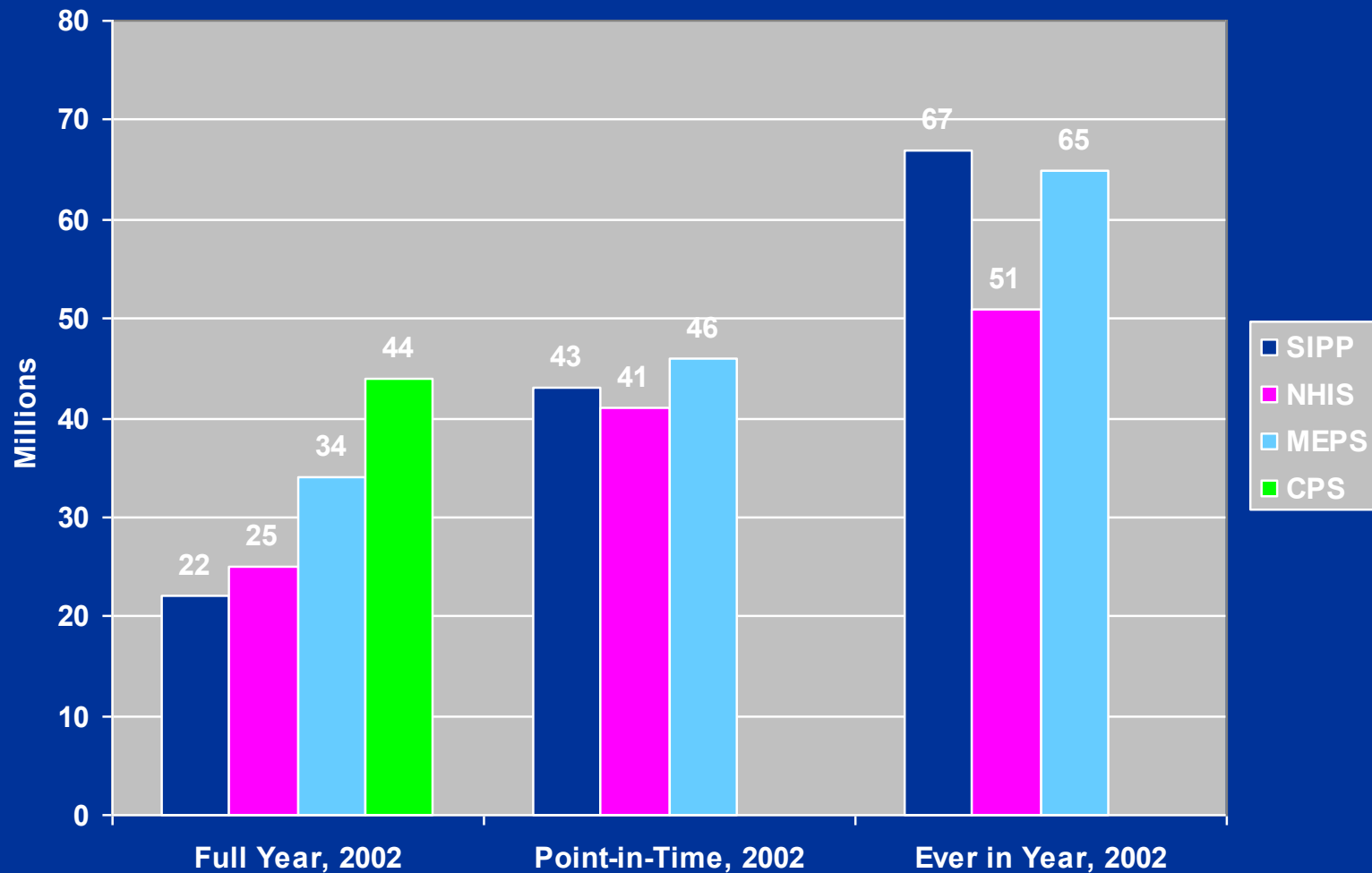**National Center for Health Statistics**

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Major National Surveys for Estimates of the Uninsured

- National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)
- Medical Expenditures Panel Survey (MEPS)
- Current Population Survey (CPS)
- Survey of Income & Program Participation (SIPP)
- American Community Survey (ACS) – insurance question proposed

National Estimates of the Uninsured Vary Widely

Source: Chris Peterson, Congressional Research Service, April 2005

Factors Contributing to Different Estimates of the Uninsured

- Sample design

- Survey mode

- Response rates

- Underlying focus of the survey

- Reference periods

- Question structure and wording

- Edits

ASPE's Concerns About Differing Estimates of the Uninsured

- Confusion of policymakers and the public

- Potential methodological flaws

- Appropriate differences, and what they can teach us

- Research strategies for understanding factors driving differences

NCHS Research Proposal to ASPE (1) Record Linkage Strategies

- Analyze linked NHIS/MEPS files to compare:
  - Health insurance responses
  - Income measures

- Link NHIS to Medicaid administrative records

NCHS Research Proposal to ASPE (2) Insurance Questions

- Ask CPS insurance questions on non-MEPS half of NHIS

- Ask ACS insurance questions on non-MEPS half of NHIS

- Conduct meta review of cognitive evaluations of insurance questions