

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The physical health status of Utahns is similar to the U.S., overall, however it is slightly worse than the U.S. for younger adults, and somewhat better than the U.S. for older adults.
- The mental health status of Utahns was significantly above that of the U.S. sample for every age group.
- Overall, women scored significantly lower on both physical and mental health summary measures. While this finding is consistent with many other self-reported health measures (e.g., BRFSS) it is a dramatically different view than that which is provided by other health status indicators such as death rates and morbidity rates for heart disease. The sex difference seen here is probably due to a combination of factors, including actual health status and differences in response tendencies between men and women.
- Socio-economic status (income and education level) is strongly related to health status. It is unclear whether SES influences health status or health influences educational and income-earning opportunities. A third possibility is that a third factor, such as sense of control over one's destiny, may influence both health status and SES simultaneously. A 1996 Utah Health Status Survey report on socio-economic factors in health status is forthcoming.
- Physical health status was significantly lower for persons with medical conditions, especially for women, and for those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, who have had a stroke, or have back or neck problems.
- Persons with below-average physical or mental health status, taken as a group, mirror Utah's population characteristics relatively closely. They are most likely to be women, age 18-34, with a high school diploma or some college, married, working full time, and earning \$15-35 thousand per year.
- Persons with below-average physical or mental health status have more outpatient medical visits, and were more likely to have been hospitalized. This was especially true for older adults (age 65 and over). This information will be useful for predicting future health care system needs as our population ages.