

No surprise: Health care hard on budgets

The Salt Lake Tribune

Updated: 05/01/2009 06:55:13 PM MDT

A new report shows that health care costs continue to burden Utah families. More than a quarter of Utahns will spend more than 10 percent of pre-tax income on health care needs in 2009, according to a projection in a new report from Families USA. Most of those families already have insurance.

The Utah Health Policy Project points to the expenditures as proof that health insurance can't protect families' budgets.

"Unless we enact comprehensive national health system reforms this year, families are not going to have the money to pay their mortgage, groceries and other necessary items," said Jessica Kendrick, the project's community engagement director in a news release.

One Utah family spends much more than 10 percent of their budget on health care, the group found.

"Our family spends at least \$12,000-\$15,000 a year on health care," said Steven Rosenberg in a news release.

The report also suggests that the growth of health care costs is faster in Utah than the rest of the nation. Since 2000, the state has seen costs rise 4.3 percent faster than the rest of the country.

-Julia Lyon