

MCBS Highlights

Mental Health of Medicare Beneficiaries: 1995

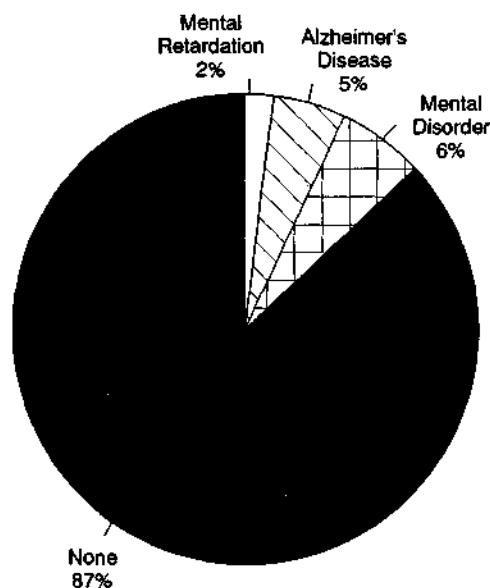
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The Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS) is a powerful tool for analyzing enrollees' access to medical care (Adler, 1994). Based on a stratified random sample, we can derive information about the health care use, expenditure, and financing of Medicare's 36 million enrollees. We can also learn about those enrollees' health status, living arrangements, and access to and satisfaction with care.

In the charts that follow, we present findings on the mental health of beneficiaries who were enrolled in Medicare on January 1, 1995. Survey respondents were asked three questions related to their mental health: "Has

a doctor ever told you that you had mental retardation?"; "Has a doctor ever told you that you had Alzheimer's disease or dementia?"; and "Has a doctor ever told you that you had a mental or psychiatric disorder?". Beneficiaries who responded yes to more than one of these questions were only counted once in the charts that follow. Enrollees who responded yes to the question on mental retardation were counted in that group regardless of other reported mental conditions. Enrollees who are not mentally retarded who reported Alzheimer's disease or dementia were counted in that group.

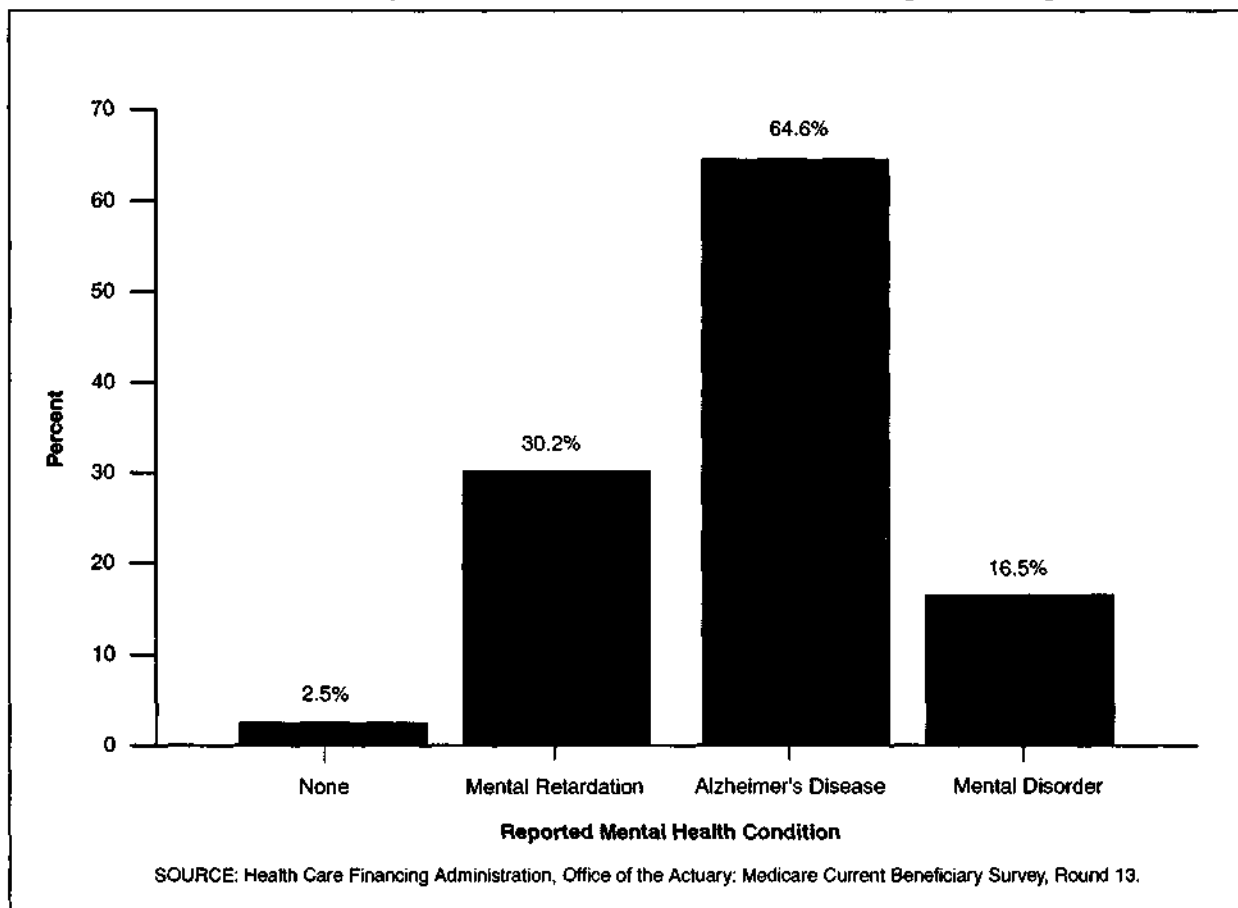
Percent of Medicare Enrollees With Reported Mental Health Conditions: 1995



SOURCE: Health Care Financing Administration, Office of the Actuary: Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, Round 13.

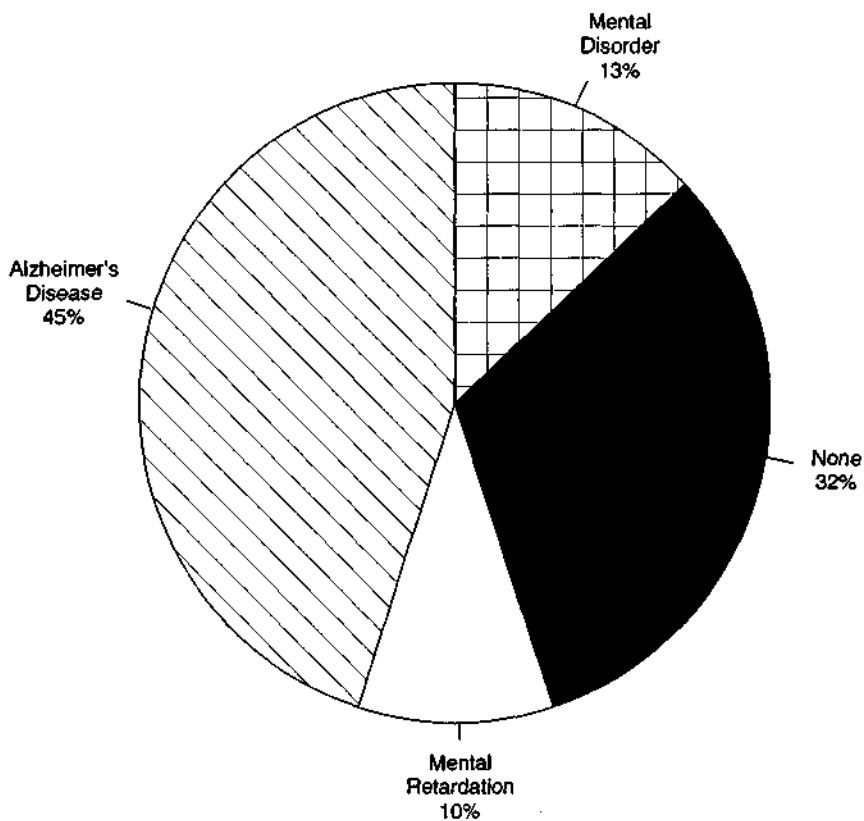
- Thirteen percent of the 36.9 million persons enrolled for Medicare on January 1, 1995, report being told by a doctor they had one or more of the following mental health conditions: mental retardation, Alzheimer's disease or a mental disorder.

Percent of Enrollees With Reported Mental Health Conditions Residing in Nursing Homes: 1995



- Enrollees who were told by a doctor they had a mental health condition were much more likely to reside in a long-term care facility.
- Almost two-thirds of the enrollees whom a doctor indicated had Alzheimer's disease reside in a long-term care facility.

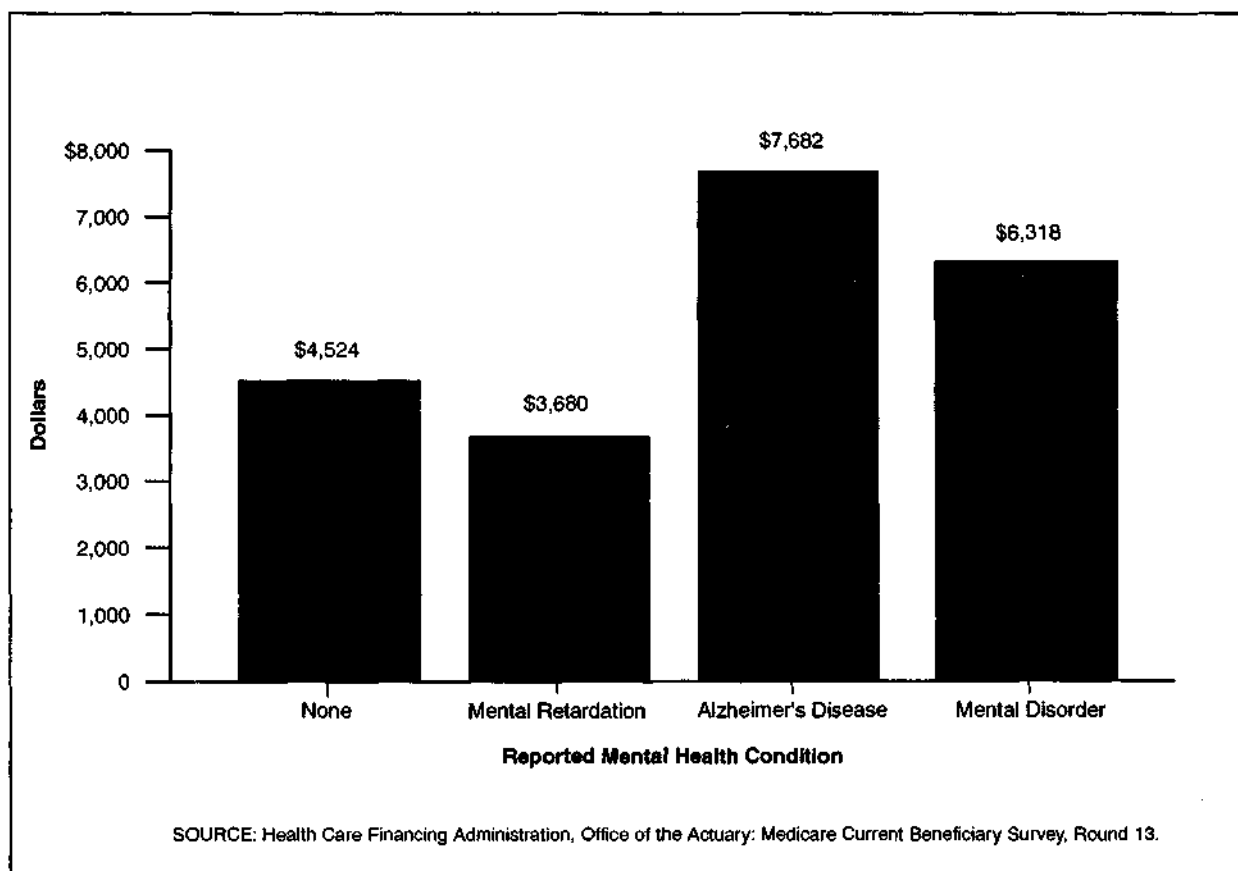
Percent of Facility Residents With Reported Mental Health Conditions: 1995



SOURCE: Health Care Financing Administration, Office of the Actuary: Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, Round 13.

- Over two-thirds of Medicare enrollees who reside in nursing homes have Alzheimer's disease, mental retardation or a mental disorder.

Medicare per Capita Expenditures, by Reported Mental Health Conditions: 1995



- Medicare per capita expenditures are lower for enrollees with no reported mental health conditions than for the overall Medicare population. However, Medicare per capita expenditures are even lower for enrollees who report that a doctor told them they are mentally retarded.
- Enrollees who report being told by a doctor that they have Alzheimer's or a mental disorder have significantly higher-than-average Medicare per capita expenditures.

REFERENCE

Adler, G.: A Profile of the Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey. *Health Care Financing Review* 15(4):153-63, Summer 1994.

The authors are with the Office of the Actuary, Health Care Financing Administration. The opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Health Care Financing Administration.

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