



# University Health Services

## November 2007

### INTRODUCTION

The focus of this survey is to assess University Park students' knowledge of University Health Services (UHS), where they receive health care, and other aspects related to UHS. Included in the survey are questions concerning students' awareness of UHS services, preferences for potential additional services and hours of operation, sources of information about medical care, and expectations about wait times for health care appointments. In addition, those students who did not use UHS services were asked the reasons they did not do so.

In total, 1,521 students responded to the survey for a 35.4% response rate. By phone, 758 participated; 763 participated by Web. The confidence interval for the total sample is +/-2.46%.

Of the respondents, 52.0% are between 18 and 20 years of age, 52.2% are female, 81.7% are White/Caucasian, 35.8% live on campus, 42.5% are first-year or sophomore students, and 83.2% are undergraduate students. For additional information on the Pulse methodology, please visit: <http://www.sa.psu.edu/sara/qa.shtml>.

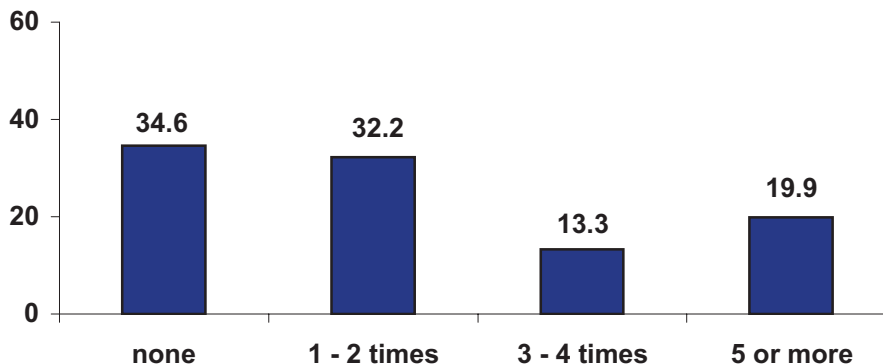
### FINDINGS

#### Use of UHS and Other Health Care Providers

When asked how many times students had received health services from UHS, 65.4% reported having used UHS at least once since coming to University Park (see Chart 1). On average, students reported having received services from UHS 3.02 times (data not shown).

**Students' knowledge and use of University Health Services**

**Chart 1: Number of Times Students Have Used UHS (by percent)**



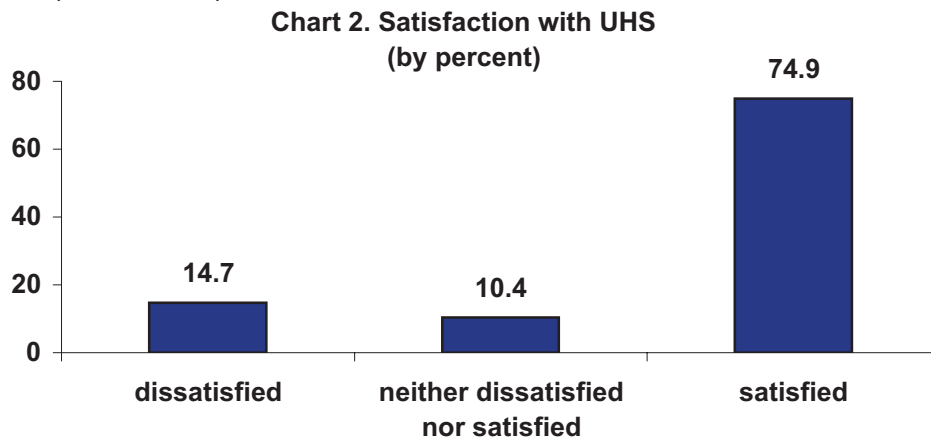
For more information please visit Student Affairs Research and Assessment at <http://www.sa.psu.edu/sara>



Penn State Pulse is a project of Student Affairs Research and Assessment.  
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Division of Student Affairs  
U.Ed. STA 08-75

Those students who had used UHS (65.4% of respondents) were asked to report on their satisfaction with the services they received. Three-quarters of students reported being either “somewhat” or “very satisfied” with the services they received (see Chart 2).



In addition to use of UHS, students were asked how many times they had used a number of other health care providers since coming to University Park. Nearly 63% reported having received health care from their family physician since coming to University Park (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Use of Other Health Services Since Coming to University Park**

Provider	Percent	Avg. # of Times
Family physician (at home)	62.7	2.33
A private physician in State College	19.7	0.70
Mount Nittany Medical Center emergency room	19.2	0.34
State College Planned Parenthood Clinic	3.7	0.08

Students were also asked about the length of time they expected to wait for a health care appointment; 66.8% expected to wait 15 minutes or less when they have an appointment. The expected wait time increases substantially when they don't have an appointment (data not shown).

### **UHS Services and Hours**

Students were asked if they were aware of several services offered at UHS, about additional services they would like to see offered at UHS, and about their preference of additional hours of service at UHS.

- Most students (86.3%) were aware of the 24 hour nurse advice line that is offered at UHS, and 74.8% were aware of UHS's Saturday hours (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Awareness of Select UHS Services**

Type of Services	Percent
24/7 nurse advice line	86.3
Saturday hours	74.8
Direct access (w/o referral) appt. for physical therapy	63.7
Providing birth control without an exam	53.4

- When asked about several possible additional services, 86.0% responded positively to having stress management offered through UHS, and 83.3% would like to see dermatology offered (see Table 3).
- In addition, 80.0% were interested in having psychiatric services and 78.1%, in orthopedics (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Additional Services Students Would Like to See Offered at UHS**

Services	Percent
Stress management	86.0
Dermatology	83.3
Psychiatry	80.0
Orthopedics	78.1
Massage therapy	73.1
Acupuncture	34.2

- Half of the respondents indicated that, if hours were extended at UHS, they would prefer Monday through Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 pm (see Table 4).
- Approximately 30% would prefer hours on Saturday from 3 to 5 pm (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Preference of Additional Hours of Service at UHS**

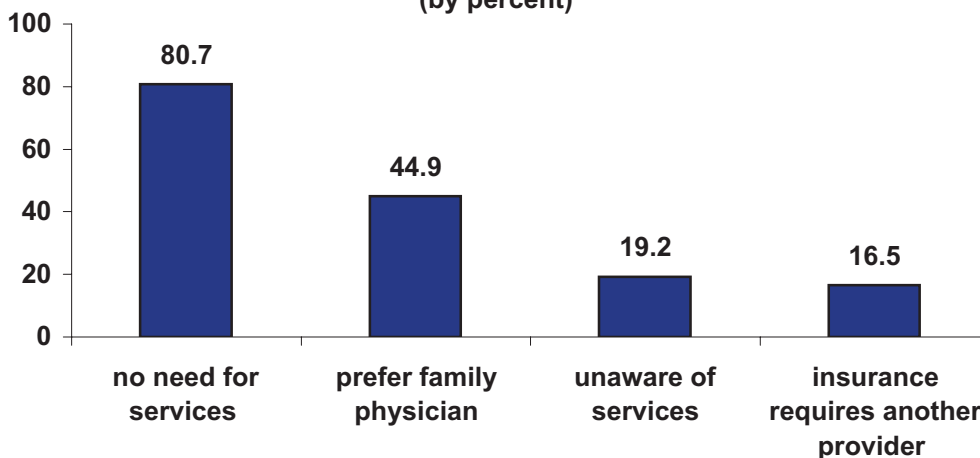
Options	Percent
Monday through Thursday 6-8 pm	50.0
Saturday 3-5 pm	29.5
Saturday 8-11 am	9.6
Monday through Thursday 5-6 pm	9.0
None of the options provided	2.0

### **Reasons for Not Using UHS**

Students who had not used UHS were asked a series of questions regarding the reasons why they hadn't used the services offered at UHS.

- As depicted in Chart 3, the most frequently given reason for not using UHS was students had no need for services (80.7%) followed by students preferring care from their family physician (44.9%)<sup>1</sup>.
- In addition, 19.2% indicated they hadn't used UHS because they were unaware of the services they provided and 16.5% that their insurance requires another health care provider (see Chart 3).

**Chart 3. Reasons Why Students Haven't Used UHS (by percent)**



- Over 10% of students who had not used UHS attributed it to the following reasons: had heard there was a long wait (15.4%), had concerns about the quality of care (14.4%), and the hours at UHS did not fit their schedule (11.5%) (see Table 5)<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 5: Other Reasons Why Students Have Not Used UHS**

Reasons	Percent
Heard there was a long wait	15.4
Concerns about the quality of care	14.4
UHS hours don't fit their schedule	11.5
Can't afford it	5.3
Concerns about confidentiality	4.0
Concerns about a possible language barrier	1.2

### **Sources of Medical Care Information**

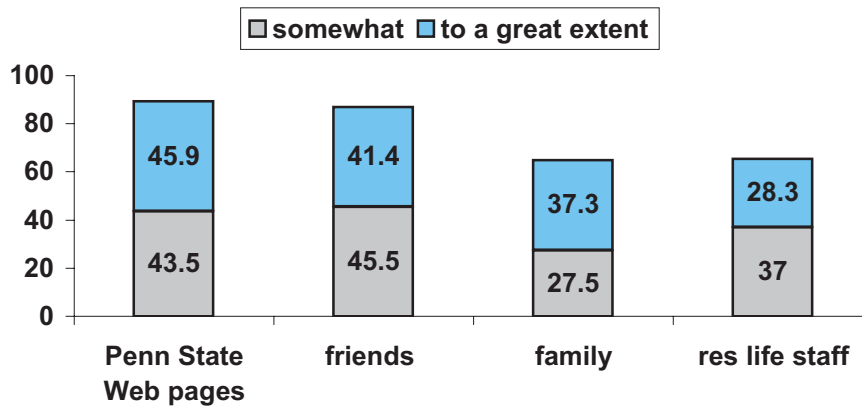
In addition, students were asked how useful various sources of information are when they are deciding where to go for medical care.

- Overall, students reported that Penn State Web pages and friends were the most useful sources of information when deciding where to go for medical care followed by family and residence life staff (see Chart 4).

<sup>1</sup> Note: students were asked about each of the reasons for not using UHS as separate questions. Percentages are out of all respondents and do not equal 100%.

- Brochures and Penn State’s telephone directory were also reported to be at least “somewhat” useful by the majority of students (see Table 6).
- Furthermore, 34.7% of students reported having read articles in the UHS’s health column in *The Daily Collegian* (data not shown).

**Chart 4. Usefulness of Sources of Medical Care Information (by percent)**



**Table 6: Usefulness of Sources of Medical Care Information (cont.)**

Sources	“somewhat”	“to a great extent”
Brochures on campus	52.4	16.0
Penn State’s telephone directory / phone book	40.4	16.9
<i>The Daily Collegian</i>	32.8	9.9