

Laura Skopec

Research Associate

Health Policy Center

The Urban Institute

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Career Brief

Laura Skopec is an experienced researcher and health policy analyst. Her current research projects include access to and quality of care in Medicare Advantage plans relative to traditional Medicare, disparities in health insurance coverage and access to care among non-elderly adults, and the social determinants of health. She has experience with a wide variety of public and private surveys, administrative datasets, and quantitative methods.

Prior to joining the Urban Institute, Laura was a lead analyst for several key ACA implementation issues in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services, including essential health benefits and the private health insurance market reforms. Her work has been covered by numerous news outlets, including the New York Times, the Washington Post, USA Today, Politico, and CNBC. Laura holds an M.S. in Public Policy and Management from Carnegie Mellon University and a B.S. in Biopsychology and Cognitive Science from the University of Michigan.

Education

2009	M.S.	Public Policy and Management, Highest Honors, Carnegie Mellon University
2004	B.S.	Biopsychology and Cognitive Science, Highest Distinction and Phi Beta Kappa, University of Michigan

Professional Experience

2014 - present	Research Associate, Health Policy Center, Urban Institute, Washington, DC
2014-2014	Senior Policy Analyst, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Washington, DC
2011-2013	Social Science Analyst, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, US Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC
2010-2011	Management and Program Analyst, Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight, US Department of Health and Human Services, Bethesda, MD
2009-2010	Management Analyst, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA
2009-2009	Public Policy Associate, ALS Association Western Pennsylvania Chapter, Pittsburgh, PA
2008-2008	Teaching Assistant in Statistics, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA

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Fellowships, Honors, and Awards

2010	Council of Inspectors General Audit Award for Excellence, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA
2002-2004	James B. Angell Scholar, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2001	William J. Branstrom Freshman Prize, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Long, SK, Skopec, L, Shelto, A, Nordahl, K, Kenney Walsh, K. "Massachusetts Reform at 10 Years: Great progress but gaps remain." *Health Affairs*, 35(9): 1633-1637.

Skopec, L., Long, SK. "Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults Making Gains in Health Insurance and Access to Care." *Health Affairs*, 34(10): 1769-1773.

Skopec, L., Musco, T., Sommers, BD. "A Potential New Data Source for Assessing the Impacts of Health Reform: Evaluating the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index." *Healthcare* 2(2): 113-120, July 2014.

Policy Briefs and Reports

Guterman, S., Skopec, L., and Zuckerman, S. "Do Medicare Advantage Plans Respond to Payment Changes? A Look at the Data from 2009 to 2014." New York, NY: Commonwealth Fund. In press.

Skopec, L., Long, SK., Sherr, S., Dutwin, D., Langdale, K. "Findings from the 2017 Massachusetts Health Insurance Survey." Boston, MA: Massachusetts Center for Health Information and Analysis. December 2017.

Zuckerman, S., Skopec, L., Guterman, S. "Do Medicare Advantage Plans Minimize Costs? Investigating the Relationship between Benchmarks, Costs, and Rebates." New York, NY: Commonwealth Fund. December 2017.

Skopec, L. "Household Asthma Triggers Can Lead to ER Visits for Children, which Cost \$800 Million in 2014." Washington, DC: Urban Institute UrbanWire blog. November 2017.

Berenson, B. Skopec, L., and Zuckerman, S. "Restructuring Medicare: The False Promise of Premium Support." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. October 2017.

Ganesh, B., Scally, C., Skopec, L., and Zhu, J. "The Relationship between Housing and Asthma among School-Age Children." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. October 2017.

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Skopec, L., Gates, J., and Kenney, G.M. "2017 Profile of Virginia's Uninsured." Richmond, VA: Virginia Health Care Foundation. June 2017.

Skopec, L. and Bart, L. "The Geography of Uninsurance in Massachusetts, 2011-2015." Boston, MA: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. March 2017.

Zuckerman, S., Skopec, L., and Epstein, M. "Medicaid Physician Fees after the ACA Primary Care Fee Bump." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. March 2017

Skopec, L. and Long, S.K. "Community Matters: Exploring the Link Between Community Characteristics and Uninsurance in Massachusetts." Boston, MA: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. December 2016.

Skopec, L. and Long, S.K. "Poor Treatment by Health Care Providers and Staff Is More Common among Vulnerable Populations." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. October 2016.

Skopec, L., Kenney, G.M., and Zuckerman, S. "The Uninsured Drop Slowed but Continued Between 2014 and 2015." Bethesda, MD: Health Affairs Blog. October 2016.

Skopec, L., and Biertz, B. "Evaluation Considerations for the Buffalo Asthma Pay for Success Project." Washington, DC: Green and Health Homes Initiative Contractor Report. September 2016.

Skopec, L., Holahan, J., and Solleveld, P. "Health Insurance Coverage in 2014: Significant Progress, but Gaps Remain." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. September 2016.

Skopec, L., Holahan, J., and Solleveld, P. "Changes in Coverage by State and in Selected Metropolitan Areas." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. September 2016.

Skopec, L., Long, S.K., and Bart, L. "How are Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults Faring under the Affordable Care Act?" Washington, DC: ASPE Contractor Report. September 2016.

Skopec, L., Long, S.K., and Bart, L. "LGBT Adults Struggle with Unmet Needs for Care Due to Cost More Often than Non-LGBT Adults." ASPE Contractor Report. September 2016.

Skopec, L., Gates, J., Karpman, M., and Kenney, G. "Profile of Virginia's Uninsured, 2014." Richmond, VA: Virginia Health Care Foundation. May 2016.

Skopec, L. and Long, SK. "Less than Half of Insured Adults Who Reported an Unmet Need for Health Care Because of Cost Knew How Much the Care Would Cost." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. February 2016.

Skopec, L. and Long, SK. "Nonelderly Adults Consider Cost of Care Very Important When Choosing a Physician." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. February 2016.

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Skopec, L., Waidmann, T., Sung, J., Dean, O. "Fewer Americans Ages 50-64 Have Difficulty Paying Family Medical Bills after Early ACA Marketplace Implementation." Washington, DC: AARP Insight on the Issues. January 2016.

Skopec, L., Waidmann, T., Sung, J., Dean, O. "Access to Health Care Improved during Early ACA Marketplace Implementation." Washington, DC: AARP Insight on the Issues. January 2016.

Skopec, L., Long, S.K., Sherr, S., Dutwin, D., Langdale, K. "Findings from the 2015 Massachusetts Health Insurance Survey." Boston, MA: Massachusetts Center for Health Information and Analysis. December 2015.

Skopec, L. "ACS CAN Examination of Cancer Drug Coverage and Transparency in Health Insurance Marketplace Plans." Washington, DC: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. November 2015.

Blumberg, L.J., Skopec, L., Wengle, E. "Marketplace Antidepressant Coverage and Transparency." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. November 2015.

Skopec, L., Waidmann, T., Sung, J., Dean, O. "Uninsured Rate Dropped by Nearly Half between December 2013 and March 2015." Washington, DC: AARP Insight on the Issues. October 2015.

Skopec, L., Zuckerman, S. "Few Adults Have Difficulty Finding a Doctor, but the Problem is More Common for Low-Income Adults than for Higher-Income Adults." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. September 2015.

Anderson, N., Skopec, L., Kenney, G.M. "Profile of Virginia's Uninsured, 2013." Richmond, VA: Virginia Health Care Foundation. August 2015.

Dubay, L., and Skopec, L. "It takes more than insurance to improve the health of low-income city residents." Washington, DC: Urban Institute UrbanWire Blog. May 2015.

Sung, J., Skopec, L., and Waidmann, T.A. "Monitoring the Impact of Health Reform on Americans Ages 50-64." Washington, DC: AARP. May 2015.

Skopec, L., Long, S.K., Sherr, S., Dutwin, D., and Langdale, K. "Findings from the 2014 Massachusetts Health Insurance Survey." Boston, MA: Massachusetts Center for Health Information and Analysis. May 2015.

Karpman, M., Skopec, L., and Long, S.K. "Uninsurance Rate Nearly Halved for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults since Mid-2013." Washington, DC: Urban Institute. April 2015.

Skopec, L., Holahan, J., and McGrath, M. "Health Insurance Coverage in 2013: Gains in Public Coverage Continue to Offset Loss of Private Insurance." Washington, DC: The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. April 2015.

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Zuckerman, S., Skopec, L., and McCormack, K. "Reversing the Medicaid Fee Bump: How Much Could Medicaid Physician Fees for Primary Care Fall in 2015?" Washington, DC: Urban Institute. December 2014.

Skopec, L. and Sloan, K. "Cancer Drug Coverage in Health Insurance Marketplace Plans." Washington, DC: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. March 2014.

Skopec, L. and Gee, E. "Nearly 5 in 10 Uninsured Single Young Adults Eligible for the Health Insurance Marketplace Could Pay \$50 or Less per Month for Coverage in 2014." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. October 2013.

Skopec, L. and Gee, E. "Fifty-Six Percent of the Uninsured Could Pay \$100 or Less per Month for Coverage in 2014." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. September, 2013.

Pilkey, D., Skopec, L., Gee, E., Finegold, K., Amaya, K., and Robinson, W. "The Affordable Care Act and Adolescents." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. August 2013.

Skopec, L. and Kronick, R. "Market Competition Works: Proposed Silver Premiums in the 2014 Individual Market Are Substantially Lower than Expected." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. August 2013.

Skopec, L. and Kronick, R. "Market Competition Works: Proposed Silver Premiums in the 2014 Individual Market Are Nearly 20% Lower than Expected." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. July 2013.

Skopec, L. and Sommers, B.D. "Seventy-one Million Additional Americans Are Receiving Preventive Services Coverage Without Cost-Sharing Under the Affordable Care Act." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. March 2013.

Beronio, K., Po, R., Skopec, L., and Glied, S. "Affordable Care Act Expands Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Benefits and Federal Parity Protections for 62 Million Americans." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. February 2013.

Simmons, A. and Skopec, L. "47 Million Women Will Have Guaranteed Access to Women's Preventive Services with Zero Cost-Sharing under the Affordable Care Act." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. July 2012.

Skopec, L., Henderson, A., Todd, S., and Yong, P.L. "Essential Health Benefits: Comparing Benefits in Small Group Products and State and Federal Employee Plans." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. December 2011.

Skopec, L. "Essential Health Benefits: Individual Market Coverage." Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. December 2011.

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Presentations and Posters

- November 2017 Podium Presentation: “Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults More Likely to Face Access and Affordability Barriers than Heterosexual Adults, Despite High Insurance Coverage and Strong Connections to Health Care System” APHA 2017 Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA.
- November 2017 Podium Presentation: “Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health and Access to Care: A Role for Neighborhood Quality?” APPAM Fall Research Conference, Chicago, IL.
- October 2017 Poster: “Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health and Access to Care: A Role for Neighborhood Quality?” Accepted for Improving Population Health: Now, Across People’s Lives and Across Generations to Come, Austin, TX.
- August 2017 Invited Panelist: “Getting the Most of Your Evaluator.” Social Innovation Fund Grantee Convening, Washington, DC.
- June 2017 Podium Presentation: “The Relationship Between Medicare Advantage Benchmarks, Plan Bids, and Rebates.” AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- June 2017 Poster: “LGB Adults More Likely to Face Access and Affordability Barriers than Heterosexual Adults, Despite High Insurance Coverage and Strong Connections to the Health Care System.” AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- June 2017 Poster: “Community Matters: Exploring the Link Between Community Characteristics and Uninsurance in Massachusetts.” AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- June 2016 Poster: “Negative Experiences with Health Care Providers and Staff Are More Common Among Vulnerable Populations.” AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, Boston, MA.
- June 2016 Poster: “Potential Pitfalls and Improvements to the ACA’s Risk Adjustment Mechanism.” AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, Boston, MA.
- March 2016 Podium presentation: “How Are LGB Adults Faring Under the Affordable Care Act? A Comparison of Results from the Health Reform Monitoring Survey and the National Health Interview Survey” Population Association of America Conference, Washington, DC.
- November 2015 Podium presentation (accepted): “Health Care Access and Affordability among Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults: Results from the Health Reform Monitoring Survey.” APPAM Fall Research Meeting, Miami, FL. Presented by Sharon Long due to maternity leave.
- August 2015 Poster: “Health Insurance Coverage and Health Care Access and Affordability among Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults.” National Conference on Health Statistics, Bethesda, MD.
- June 2015 Poster: “Changes in Health Care Access and Affordability for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults under the Affordable Care Act.” AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, Minneapolis, MN.

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- July 2014 Panelist: “The ACA and People with Special Health Care Needs.” O’Neill Summer Program on US Health Reform – Affordable Care Act, Washington, DC.
- May 2013 Public webinar: “Adolescents and the Affordable Care Act.” Solutions Desk: Helping Youth in Transition, Washington, DC.
- June 2013 Podium presentation: “A Potential New Data Source for Assessing the Impacts of Health Reform: Evaluating the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index.” AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, Baltimore, MD.
- June 2012 Podium presentation: “Defining Essential Health Benefits: Comparing Coverage Across Markets and Plans.” AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, Orland, FL.