



# The link between poverty and health in Kentucky

There are many ways to assess a person's health. One way is to ask people to evaluate their own health. The **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)** asks Kentucky adults "Would you say that, in general, your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?" Research has found a powerful link between people's response to this question and the predicted length and quality of their lives.<sup>1</sup>

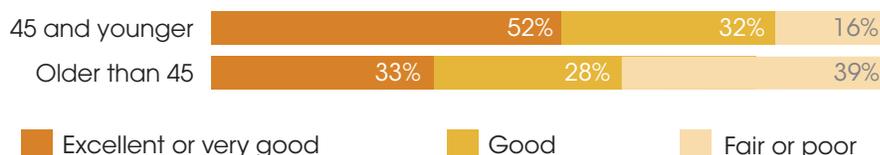
## Current health status of Kentucky adults

In 2014, 4 in 10 Kentucky adults (41%) reported that their health, in general, was "excellent" or "very good." About 3 in 10 Kentucky adults (29%) said their health was "good." Another 3 in 10 (29%) reported "fair" or "poor" health.

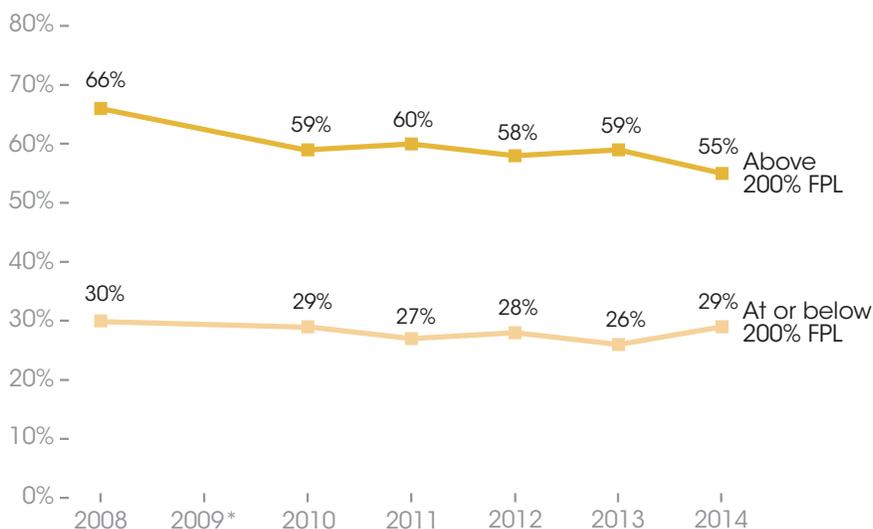
Adults 45 years old and younger were more likely than adults older than 45 to report "excellent" or "very good" health. About 5 in 10 adults age 45 and younger (52%) reported "excellent" or "very good" health. Only 3 in 10 adults older than 45 (33%) reported this.

<sup>1</sup> DeSalvo, K.B., et al. (2006) Clinical Review: Mortality Prediction with a Single General Self-Rated Health Question. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. 21 (3): 267-275.

## Self-reported health status, by age



## Kentucky adults reporting "excellent" or "very good" health, by household income, 2008-2014\*



\* The question "Would you say that in general your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?" was not asked on the 2009 KHIP.

## Better health reported by higher-income adults

In 2014, more than 5 in 10 Kentucky adults living above 200% of the Federal Poverty Level

(FPL<sup>2</sup>) (55%) said their health was "excellent" or "very good." Only 3 in 10 Kentucky adults living at or below 200% FPL (29%) said this.

Since KHIP began, Kentucky adults with higher incomes have

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<sup>2</sup> In 2013, 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) was \$47,100 for a family of four.

consistently reported better health status than those with lower incomes.<sup>3</sup> About 6 in 10 Kentucky adults living above 200% FPL reported being in “excellent” or “very good” health each year since 2008. This compares with about 3 in 10 Kentucky adults living at or below 200% FPL in those years. However, the percentage of adults living above 200% FPL reporting “excellent” or “very good” health has declined significantly since 2008.

Overall, the percentage of Kentucky adults reporting their health as “excellent” or “very good” has dropped significantly from almost half (49%) in 2008 to only 4 in 10 (41%) in 2014 (not shown).

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<sup>3</sup> For information on income and health, please see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s report, *CDC Health Disparities and Inequalities Report — United States, 2011*. Access at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/ind2011\\_su.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/ind2011_su.html)