



*Toplines*

# *July/August 2001 Health News Index Survey*

**August 2001**

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### **Methodology**

The Kaiser Family Foundation *Health News Index Survey* was designed and analyzed by researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone by Princeton Survey Research Associates International between August 2 and August 5, 2001, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,005 adults ages 18 and over.

The margin of sampling error for the survey is plus or minus 3 percentage points for total respondents. For results based on smaller subsets of respondents the margin of sampling error is higher. Note that sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll.

Values less than 0.5% are indicated by an asterisk (\*). “VOL” indicates that a response was volunteered by respondent, not an explicitly offered choice.

1. To begin... What do you think is the most important problem in health or health care for the government to address? Is there another health problem you think is almost as important?

<b>COSTS (NET)</b>	<b>34</b>
Cost of health care	11
Cost of prescription drugs/medicines	17
Cost of insurance/affordable insurance	10
Costs – other (incl. doctor and hospital costs)	1
<b>ACCESS (NET)</b>	<b>18</b>
Universal coverage / coverage for uninsured	3
Health insurance (general)	4
Health care availability (general)	8
Health care for the poor	2
Access to health care – other (incl. staff cutbacks and difficulties w/pre-existing conditions)	2
<b>POLICY/SOCIAL ISSUES (NET)</b>	<b>30</b>
Senior citizens' care/ issues (incl. Social Security)	17
Coverage of rx drugs (for elderly and disabled)	2
Medicare	5
Children's care/issues	2
Policy/Social issues – other (incl. abortion, drug abuse, Medicaid, etc.)	9
<b>MEDICAL CONDITIONS/PROCEDURES (NET)</b>	<b>14</b>
Cancer/Cancer Research	9
AIDS/AIDS research/HIV	5
Medical Conditions/ Procedures – other	6
<b>QUALITY OF CARE (NET)</b>	<b>7</b>
HMO/Managed care concerns	7
Quality of care – other	1
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>DON'T KNOW/REFUSED</b>	<b>16</b>

*NOTE: "Don't know" and responses mentioned by less than 5 percent are not shown. Percentages add to more than 100% due to multiple responses*

2. Now I'm going to read you a list of some stories covered by news organizations in the last month or so. As I read each one, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (First,) how closely did you follow this story...? (INSERT--READ AND RANDOMIZE)

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. The debate over federal funding for stem cell research	24	31	16	27	2
b. The continuing debate in Congress over the "Patients' Bill of Rights"	24	34	20	22	1
c. The implant of the first self-contained artificial heart	16	37	23	23	1
d. News about federally funded medical trials at Johns Hopkins University involving human subjects	9	21	23	44	3
e. The United Nations (UN) AIDS conference in New York City	7	15	23	54	2
f. President Bush's proposal to immediately help seniors with their prescription drug costs	26	37	19	17	1
g. A new study suggesting that hormone therapy may not provide heart benefits to women	9	17	20	51	3
h. The indictment of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic on war crime charges	13	27	24	35	1
i. The disappearance of Chandra Levy, a former Washington, D.C. intern	29	33	21	16	1

3. Now, I have a few more questions about some of the news stories that I just mentioned. If you're not sure of an answer, that's okay. Just tell me and I'll go to the next question.

You may have seen or heard news reports about the controversy involving federal funding of stem cell research. From what you may have seen or heard in the news, what is the major reason for this controversy? (**INSERT--READ AND ROTATE**)

- 51 Human embryos are destroyed in the research process - *correct answer*
- 7 Stem cell research is potentially dangerous to the adult subjects who participate in the research trials
- 9 There is not enough money in the federal budget to fund stem cell research
- 33 Don't know/Refused

4. Debate over Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation has been in the news lately. From what you may have seen or heard, is the major dispute about . . .(**INSERT – READ AND RANDOMIZE**)

- 46 Allowing patients to sue their health insurance plans - *correct answer*
- 14 How much managed care plans can charge patients
- 9 The privacy of medical records
- 30 Don't know/Refused

5. From what you may have seen in the news in the last month, what did President Bush recently propose to do in order to start immediately helping seniors pay for prescription drugs?

- 31 Provide discount cards to seniors that would enable them to buy prescription drugs at a lower price - *correct answer*
- 7 Give tax credits to seniors with high prescription drug costs
- 21 Expand the Medicare program to include a prescription drug benefit
- 42 Don't know/Refused

6. Next, I am going to read a few statements about the drug Mifepristone or RU-486. For each one please tell me, to the best of your knowledge, whether you think it is true or false or if you don't know.

	<u>True</u>	<u>False</u>	<u>Don't know</u>	<u>Refused</u>
a. It is a drug used primarily to TERMINATE pregnancy	49	7	42	2
b. It is a drug used primarily to PREVENT unintended or unplanned pregnancy	40	15	43	2
c. It is the same thing as morning-after pills	36	14	47	2
d. It is the same thing as emergency contraceptive pills	25	22	52	2

7. From what you know, how safe is Mifepristone or RU-486 when used under a doctor's care for medical abortion - is it very safe, somewhat safe, not too safe, not at all safe or don't you know enough about this issue to answer?

13 Very safe  
 15 Somewhat safe  
 7 Not too safe  
 7 Not at all safe  
 57 Don't know  
 2 Refused

8. From what you know, how effective is Mifepristone or RU-486 when used under a doctor's care for medical abortion - is it very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective, not at all effective or don't you know enough about this issue to answer?

23 Very effective  
 11 Somewhat effective  
 3 Not too effective  
 1 Not at all effective  
 60 Don't know  
 2 Refused

9. And before this interview, had you ever heard of the drug Mifepristone or RU-486?

- 56 Yes
- 39 No
- 4 Don't know
- 1 Refused

10. Now, I have a question about SURGICAL abortion. From what you know, how safe is surgical abortion when performed under a doctor's care. Is it very safe, somewhat safe, not too safe, not at all safe, or don't you know enough about this issue to answer?

- 30 Very safe
- 35 Somewhat safe
- 7 Not too safe
- 8 Not at all safe
- 18 Don't know
- 2 Refused

11. Which ONE of the following has been your MOST important source of news and information about health issues? Would you say...(READ)?

11a. (IF TELEVISION ASK) Would you say your MOST important source of news and information about health issues is specifically...(READ)

- 46 Television
  - 21 News shows on major broadcast TV networks, such as ABC, CBS, NBC or PBS
  - 13 Cable TV channels such as CNN, MSNBC, or Fox News Channel,
  - 5 Local TV news,
  - 4 Morning shows like Today or Good Morning America
  - 3 TV in general (VOL.)
  - 1 Don't know/Refused
- 21 Newspapers
- 9 Talking with friends and family
- 8 Radio
- 6 The Internet
- 6 Magazines
- 2 Other most important source (VOL.)
- 1 Don't know/Refused

**DEMOGRAPHICS:****D1. RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX:**

- 48 Male
- 52 Female

D2. Finally, I have just a few questions we will use to describe the people who took part in our survey... In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

- 30 Republican
- 32 Democrat
- 29 Independent
- 5 No preference/Not interested in politics (**VOL.**)
- 1 Other party (**VOL.**)
- 1 Don't know
- 2 Refused

D3. What is the LAST grade or class that you COMPLETED in school?

- 4 None, or grade 1-8
- 9 High school incomplete (grades 9-11)
- 32 High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)
- 5 Business, technical, or vocational school AFTER high school
- 24 Some college, no 4-year degree
- 16 College graduate (B.S., B.A. or other 4-year degree)
- 9 Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a master's degree or Ph.D; law or medical school)
- \* Don't Know
- \* Refused

D4. What is your age?

- 19 18-29
- 41 30-49
- 21 50-64
- 17 65+
- \* Don't know
- 1 Refused



D5. Last year -- that is, in 2000 -- what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category.

- 6 Less than \$10,000
- 11 \$10,000 to under \$20,000
- 15 \$20,000 to under \$30,000
- 19 \$30,000 to under \$50,000
- 15 \$50,000 to under \$75,000
- 8 \$75,000 to under \$100,000
- 6 \$100,000 to under \$200,000
- 1 \$200,000 or more
- 6 Don't know
- 14 Refused

D6. Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish background?

D7. What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian or some other race? **(IF RESPONDENT SAYS HISPANIC ASK: Do you consider yourself a white Hispanic or a black Hispanic**

- 76 White, Non Hispanic
- 23 Total Non-White
  - 10 Black or African-American
  - 9 Hispanic
  - 2 Asian
  - 3 Other or mixed race
- 2 Don't know/Refused



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