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July/August 2005 Health Poll Report Survey

August 2005

Methodology

The Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Poll Report Survey* was conducted and analyzed by researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation. A nationally representative sample of 1,205 adults ages 18 and older was contacted by telephone by Princeton Survey Research Associates International between August 4 and August 8, 2005.

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.

Q1a. To begin... What do you think is the most important problem for the government to address? Is there another problem you think is almost as important for the government to address?

Based on One-Half of Respondents (n=600) (Total Net Responses)

28	War (NET)
22	Health care (NET)
20	Economy (NET)
19	Miscellaneous Social Issues, includes Social Security (NET)
9	Terrorism/National Security (NET)
6	Taxes/Budget (NET)
6	Other Government Issues (NET)
5	Education (NET)
3	Crime (NET)
7	Other
18	Don't know/Refused

1b. 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 for the government to address?

Based on One-Half of Respondents (n=605)

17	Cost of health care
15	Cost of prescription drugs/medicines
11	Cost of insurance
11	Universal coverage/ coverage for uninsured
10	Health care availability (general)
7	Senior citizens' care/ issues
6	Medical Conditions/ Procedures – Other Specified
5	Medicare
5	Cancer/Cancer Research

NOTE: "Don't know" and responses mentioned by less than 5 percent are not shown

Q2 Now I'm going to read you some different health care issues. As I read each one, please tell me how important you think it is for the President and Congress to deal with this issue—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important. (First/Next,) How important is this issue... **(INSERT ITEM, READ & RANDOMIZE)?**

	Very <u>imp.</u>	Somewhat <u>imp.</u>	Not too <u>imp.</u>	Not at all <u>imp.</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a. Increasing the number of Americans covered by health insurance	81	14	2	2	2
b. Reforming the medical malpractice system	54	29	7	4	6
c. Lowering the cost of prescription drugs	81	14	2	2	1
d. Lowering the cost of health insurance	84	12	2	2	1
e. Reducing medical errors or mistakes	75	18	4	2	2
f. Assuring the smooth implementation of the new Medicare prescription drug benefit	55	26	5	4	11
g. Reforming the Medicaid system	56	26	5	2	10

Q2.1 Which of the following issues you say are very important do you think is MOST important?

- 26 Increasing the number of Americans covered by health insurance
- 25 Lowering the cost of health insurance
- 15 Lowering the cost of prescription drugs
- 8 Reducing medical errors or mistakes
- 7 Reforming the Medicaid system
- 6 Reforming the medical malpractice system
- 2 Assuring the smooth implementation of the new Medicare prescription drug benefit
- * **(VOL.)** Other issue is most important
- 9 **(VOL.)** All the same/equally important
- 1 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused
- 1 None very important

Q3. We're interested in what sources you have been using for information about health and health care. Please tell me how much health information you got from each of the following sources in the past 12 months – a lot of information, some information, only a little, or no information. In the past 12 months, how much health information did you get from...**(INSERT. READ AND ROTATE)**

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>No info.</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a. Television	33	34	20	12	1
b. Radio	11	25	27	36	1
c. Newspapers	25	33	18	23	1
d. Magazines	14	29	23	33	*
e. Street signs, flyers or billboards, including advertisements on public transportation	4	15	28	52	1
f. Your employer, through your job	17	15	14	53	2
g. Your doctor, or other health care provider	23	26	21	28	1
h. The internet, or computer online services	23	18	13	46	1
i. Your church or place of worship	4	12	17	66	1
j. Friends or family members	21	33	22	23	1

- Q4 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/Next,) how closely did you follow this story (**INSERT--READ AND RANDOMIZE**)? Did you follow this story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Military action and peace keeping efforts in Iraq	56	28	10	5	*
b. The debate in Congress over funding for embryonic stem cell research	27	31	19	22	1
c. The subway bombings in London, England	51	30	11	7	1
d. The start of a civil trial in Texas against Merck, maker of pain medication Vioxx	12	21	25	41	1
e. A study about the effects of aspirin and vitamin E on the risk of cancer and heart disease	14	23	22	41	1
f. The nomination of John Roberts to the United States Supreme Court	24	27	19	28	1
g. Reports of an outbreak of bird flu among migratory birds in China	10	20	25	44	1
h. The ongoing concerns about the possible spread of mad cow disease	16	31	29	23	*

- Q5. As you may know, beginning in 2006 there will be a new prescription drug benefit that will give all people on Medicare the option of enrolling in a Medicare drug plan. How well would you say you understand this new benefit? Would you say you understand it very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not well at all?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>
Very well	9	8	13
Somewhat well	22	21	24
Not too well	28	27	31
Not well at all	39	41	29
Don't know/Refused	2	1	2

- Q6. Would you say that you know more, less or about the same about the Medicare drug benefit as you knew a year ago?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>
More	26	26	28
Less	10	9	13
Same	60	61	53
Don't know/Refused	4	4	6

- Q7. Do you feel you have enough information about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit to understand how it will impact you personally, or not?

Based on those 65 and older (n=300)

- 33 Yes
- 62 No
- 4 Don't know/Refused

- Q8. Given what you know about it, in general, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of this new Medicare prescription drug benefit?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>
Favorable	30	32	30
Unfavorable	31	32	31
Neither/Neutral (VOL)	22	18	23
Don't know/Refused	17	18	17

- Q9. Thinking ahead to 2006--when the new Medicare drug benefit becomes available--do you think you will enroll in a Medicare drug plan, you will not enroll in a Medicare drug plan, or have you not yet heard enough to decide?

Based on those 65 and older (n=300)

- 22 Will enroll in a drug plan
- 33 Will not enroll in a plan
- 40 Haven't heard enough to decide
- 5 Don't know/Refused

- Q10. For each of the following, please tell me whether it is a MAJOR reason you are not planning to enroll in a Medicare drug plan at this time, a MINOR reason, or not a reason. First..(INSERT. READ AND ROTATE). Is this a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason you are not planning to enroll in a Medicare drug plan at this time.

Based on those 65 and older who will not/don't know if they will enroll in a Medicare drug plan (n=241)

	<u>Major Reason</u>	<u>Minor Reason</u>	<u>Not a Reason</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. I don't know enough about the Medicare drug benefit	41	22	26	12
b. I already get help from an insurance plan or program paying for my prescription drugs	55	11	26	7
c. It's too complicated or too much trouble to sign up	26	19	45	11
d. I don't think it will save me money	42	13	27	17
e. I don't take enough prescription medicine or don't spend much money on prescription drugs, so I don't think I need a Medicare drug plan	28	21	41	10
f. Some other reason	24	5	51	20

- Q11. How helpful do you think the new Medicare prescription drug benefit will be for the following people? (First/Next), how helpful do you think the benefit will be for **(READ ITEM)**? Will it be very helpful, somewhat helpful, not too helpful, or not at all helpful? **(READ AND RANDOMIZE ITEMS, ALWAYS READ ITEM “e” LAST)**

	Very <u>helpful</u>	Somewhat <u>helpful</u>	Not too <u>helpful</u>	Not at all <u>helpful</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a. A typical person on Medicare	23	43	11	6	18
b. Low-income people on Medicare	42	27	8	6	16
c. People on Medicare with very high prescription drug costs	42	29	7	5	17
d. People on Medicare who currently have no drug coverage	44	29	6	6	15
<i>Based on those 65 and older (n=300):</i>					
e. You personally	22	15	9	35	18

- Q12. Have you received any information about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit, or not?

Based on those 65 and older (n=300)

- 52 Yes
- 44 No
- 4 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

- Q13. Did this information come to you in the mail, did you pick it up somewhere or did someone give it to you?

Based on those 65 and older who have received information about Medicare Rx plan (n=163)

- 90 In the mail
- 2 Picked it up
- 4 Someone gave it to you
- 4 **(VOL.)** Other
- 0 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

- Q14. Now please tell me if the information you received came from each of the following sources or not? Did you get anything about the new Medicare drug benefit from **(INSERT READ AND ROTATE)** or not?

Based on those 65 and older who have received information about Medicare Rx plan (n=163)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. The Social Security Administration	55	35	10
b. The Medicare program or the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	49	37	14
c. A health insurance company	35	58	7
d. A pharmacy	19	74	7
e. State Medicaid or Medical Assistance Program	19	69	12
f. The AARP	52	41	7
g. Another senior or community organization	12	80	8

- Q15. Would you say you read through the information you have received about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

Based on those 65 and older who have received information about Medicare Rx plan (n=163)

- 37 Very closely
- 33 Somewhat closely
- 12 Not too closely
- 13 Not at all closely
- 5 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

- Q16. Have you talked to anyone about the information you have received about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit, or not?

Based on those 65 and older who have received information about Medicare Rx plan (n=163)

- 40 Yes
- 60 No
- 0 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

- Q17. Have you seen any television ads about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit, or not?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>
Yes	29	41	27
No	69	55	72
Don't know/Refused	2	3	1

- Q18. To the best of your knowledge, do seniors need to sign up to get their new Medicare prescription drug benefit, or will coverage automatically begin by January 1, 2006?

Based on those 65 and older (n=300)

- 55 Have to sign up OR
- 15 Coverage will begin automatically
- 31 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

- Q19. Now thinking about your own health status. In general, would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?

- 24 Excellent
- 32 Very good
- 22 Good
- 14 Fair
- 8 Poor
- * Don't know/Refused

- Q20. Do you currently take any prescription medicine on a daily basis, or not?

- Q21. How many different prescription drugs do you take? Do you take between one and three different prescription drugs, or do you take four or more different drugs?

- 51 Yes, take prescription medicine
- 32 1-3 prescription medicines
- 18 4 or more prescription medicines
- * Don't know how many
- 49 Don't take any prescription medicine
- 1 Don't know/Refused

- Q22. In the past year, have you ever not filled a prescription because of the cost, cut pills in half, or skipped doses in order to make a medicine last longer, or not?

- 25 Yes
- 74 No
- 1 Don't know/Refused

- Q23. Do you have any insurance plan or program that helps you pay for prescription medications or not?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>
Yes	75	74	76
No	24	26	24
Don't know/Refused	*	*	*

Q24. Are you NOW self-employed, working full-time for an employer, working part-time for an employer, are you retired, or are you not employed for pay?

- 11 Self-employed
- 37 Full-time for an employer
- 9 Part-time for an employer
- 22 Retired
- 14 Not employed
- 2 (VOL.) Homemaker
- 2 (VOL.) Student
- 3 (VOL.) Disabled
- 1 (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

Q25. Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do you not have health insurance at this time? A health plan would include any private insurance plan through your employer or a plan that you purchased yourself, as well as a government program like Medicare or (Medicaid)? **USE VARIANT WORDING IN CALIFORNIA:** (Medi-Cal)

- 81 Yes, insured
- 19 No, not insured
- 1 Don't know/Refused

Q26. Have you heard of a toll-free phone number set up by the government, 1-800-MEDICARE, that you can call to get information about Medicare?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>
Yes	35	46	33
No	63	49	67
Don't know/Refused	1	4	1

Q27. Have you ever called 1-800-MEDICARE, or not?

Based on those who have heard of 1-800-MEDICARE (n=435):

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>
Yes	14	15	13
No	85	85	86
Don't know/Refused	1	*	1

Q28. Have you EVER gone online to use (INSERT AND ROTATE ITEMS)?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. The Internet or World Wide Web	57	42	*
b. E-Mail	55	45	*

Q29. Have you heard of the website Medicare.gov?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>
Yes	30	29	30
No	70	69	70
Don't know/Refused	1	2	*

Based on those who go online only (n=723):

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>
Yes	33	45	32
No	67	53	68
Don't know/Refused	*	1	7

Q30. Have you ever looked for information on the website Medicare.gov, or not?

Based on those who go online and have heard of Medicare.gov (n=245)

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>
Yes	30	n/a	31
No	68	n/a	69
Don't know/Refused	1	n/a	*

Q31. As far as you know, has a friend or family member ever called 1-800-MEDICARE or visited an Internet web site or on your behalf for information about Medicare, or not?

Based on those 65 or older (n=300)

6 Yes
87 No
7 Don't know/Refused

DEMOGRAPHICS:

(READ) Finally, I have just a few questions we will use to describe the people who took part in our survey...

D1. RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX

- 49 Male
- 51 Female

D2. What is your age? (RECORD EXACT AGE AS TWO-DIGIT CODE.)

- 21 18-29
- 37 30-49
- 24 50-64
- 17 65 and older
- 1 Refused

D3. In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

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

D4. What is the LAST grade or class that you COMPLETED in school? (DO NOT READ)

- 4 None, or grade 1-8
- 9 High school incomplete (grades 9-11)
- 33 High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)
- 3 Technical, trade or vocational school AFTER high school
- 23 Some college, no four-year degree (includes associate degree)
- 16 College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other four-year degree)
- 10 Post-graduate or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a Master's degree or Ph.D; law or medical school)
- 1 Refused

D5. Last year -- that is, in 2004 -- what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes?
Just stop me when I get to the right category. **(READ)**

- 9 Less than \$10,000
- 11 \$10,000 to under \$20,000
- 13 \$20,000 to under \$30,000
- 17 \$30,000 to under \$50,000
- 14 \$50,000 to under \$75,000
- 10 \$75,000 to under \$100,000
- 8 \$100,000 to under \$200,000
- 2 \$200,000 or more
- 6 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know
- 10 **(DO NOT READ)** 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?)**

- 70 White, Non Hispanic
- 27 Total Non-White
 - 11 Black or African-American
 - 11 Hispanic
 - 3 Asian
 - 2 Other or mixed race
- 3 Don't know/Refused



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