
Toplines



ABC News/Kaiser Family Foundation/USA Today

Health Care in America 2006 Survey

October 2006

Methodology

The ABC News/Kaiser Family Foundation/*USA Today* Survey Project is a three-way partnership. Representatives of ABC News, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and *USA Today* worked together to develop the survey questionnaire. ABC News and *USA Today* individually retain editorial control over the content they broadcast or publish.

The *Health Care in America Survey* is a nationally representative survey of 1,201 adults ages 18 years and older, conducted between September 7 and September 12, 2006. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone by TNS of Horsham, PA. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points for results based on total respondents. For results based on smaller subsets of respondents the margin of sampling error is higher. 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. Percentages may not always add up to 100% due to rounding.

Q.1 What will be the single most important issue in your vote for Congress this year: (the U.S campaign against terrorism), (the war in Iraq), (the economy), (immigration), (gas prices), (health care) or something else?

- 26 Iraq
- 17 Economy
- 13 Health care
- 10 Immigration
- 12 Gas prices
- 15 Terrorism
- * All
- 5 Other
- 2 DK

Q.2 What will be the next most important issue?

- 19 Iraq
- 17 Economy
- 16 Health care
- 12 Immigration
- 15 Gas prices
- 18 Terrorism
- * All
- 4 Other
- * DK

Q.3 Which political party, the (Democrats) or the (Republicans), do you trust to do a better job handling health care?

<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK</u>
48	31	1	16	4

Q.4 Thinking about health care in the country as a whole, are you generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the quality of health care in this country? Would you say you are very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/ dissatisfied)?

----- Satisfied -----			----- Dissatisfied -----			
NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	DK
44	17	28	54	23	31	2

Q.5 And are you generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the total cost of health care in this country? Would you say you are very (satisfied/ dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?

----- Satisfied -----			----- Dissatisfied -----			
NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	DK
18	5	12	80	22	58	2

Q.6 Thinking now about the number of Americans who have no health insurance - do you think that's (a critical problem for the country, a serious problem but not a critical one, a problem but not serious, or not much of a problem at all)?

<u>Critical problem</u>	<u>Serious but not critical</u>	<u>Problem but not serious</u>	<u>Not much of a problem</u>	<u>DK</u>
52	36	7	4	1

Q.7 Do you have some form of health insurance or health care coverage, or not?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
87	13	*

Q.8 Are you mainly covered by Medicare, Medicaid, or do you have private medical insurance?

(IF NEEDED: Medicare is the government health insurance program for people 65 and over. Medicaid is the government health insurance program for low-income families.)

	----- Have health insurance -----					DK
	NET	Medicare	Medicaid	Private	No insurance	
All	87	15	4	66	13	2
Insured	100	17	5	76	NA	2

Q.9 There are three main types of private health insurance. There are traditional fee-for-service plans where you go to any doctor you want and the insurance company pays part of the cost. There are Preferred Provider Organizations that pay higher reimbursement if you go to a doctor on the insurance company's list. And there are Health Maintenance Organizations, or HMOs, where you can only go to HMO doctors, and nearly all costs are covered. Which type of plan do you have - traditional insurance, preferred provider, or HMO?

	----- Have health insurance -----					DK
	NET	Traditional	PPO	HMO	No insurance	
All	87	16	30	18	13	2
Insured	100	19	34	21	NA	2
Private Ins.	100	24	45	28	NA	3

Health insurance coverage Summary Table, based on questions 7, 8, 9:

----- Insured -----			----- Private -----				No	
NET	Medicare	Medicaid	NET	Traditional	PPO	HMO	Ins.	DK
87	15	4	66	16	29	18	13	*

Q.10 What's the main reason you do not currently have health insurance?

Based on those without insurance (n = 111)

Can't get it/refused due to poor health, illness, or age	15
Too expensive	54
Don't need it	4
Don't know how to get it	1
Employer doesn't offer it	5
Not eligible for employer coverage	9
Other	13
DK	*

Q.11 How long have you been uninsured - less than three months, three months to less than a year, one year to less than two years, or 2 years or more?

Based on those without insurance (n = 111)

<u>Less than 3 months</u>	<u>3 months to < 1 year</u>	<u>One year to < 2 years</u>	<u>2 years or more</u>	<u>DK</u>
6	16	12	66	*

Q.12 During the last 12 months, since September 2005, did you have health insurance all the time, or was there a time during the year when you did not have any health coverage?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

<u>Had coverage all the time</u>	<u>Was a time did not have coverage</u>	<u>DK</u>
92	7	*

Q.13 How would you rate your overall health insurance coverage - excellent, good, not so good or poor?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

----- Positive -----			----- Negative -----			
NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Not so good	Poor	DK
88	33	55	12	9	3	*

Q.14 For each specific item I name, please tell me whether you are very satisfied with it, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

	----- Satisfied -----			----- Dissatisfied -----			DK
	NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Smwt.	Very	
a. The quality of the health care you receive	89	52	37	10	5	5	1
b. Your health care costs, including both expenses not covered by insurance, and the cost of your insurance, if any	57	23	34	40	19	22	3
c. Your ability to get a doctor's appointment when you want one	82	51	31	17	9	8	1
d. Your ability to see top-quality medical specialists, if you ever need one	79	45	34	17	7	9	4
e. Your ability to get the latest, most sophisticated medical treatments	78	38	40	17	8	10	5
f. The quality of communication with your doctor	87	56	31	12	7	5	2
g. Your ability to get emergency medical care	83	50	33	13	5	8	4
h. Your ability to get non-emergency medical treatments without having to wait	73	36	36	25	13	12	3

Q.15 Have you or has anyone in your immediate family had a serious illness or injury under your current health insurance plan?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
40	59	*

Q.16 Have you or has anyone in your immediate family had a chronic, ongoing illness that requires medical care under your current health insurance plan?

Based on those with health care coverage who responded "No", "Don't know", or refused to respond to Question 15 (n = 619)

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
25	75	*

Q.17 How satisfied are you with the medical care that you or your family member received during that time - very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

Based on those with serious illness, injury, or chronic illness (n = 644)

----- Satisfied -----			----- Dissatisfied -----			DK
NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Smwt.	Very	
90	60	29	10	4	6	1

Q.18 And how satisfied are you with your insurance coverage during that time - very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

Based on those with serious illness, injury, or chronic illness (n = 644)

----- Satisfied -----			----- Dissatisfied -----			DK
NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Smwt.	Very	
87	56	31	13	8	5	1

Q.19 In general, do you think (ITEM), or not?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. more expensive doctors provide better medical care	21	76	3
b. expensive new drugs, treatments and medical technology produce better results than older, less expensive alternatives	47	43	10

Q.20 For each item I name, please tell me if you think it's one of the single biggest factors in rising health care costs, a major factor but not one of the single biggest ones, or less of a factor than that.

Items a – e based on half sample (n = 599); items f – j based on the other half sample (n = 602)

	<u>One of the biggest</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>Less</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. People getting medical treatments they don't really need	30	36	31	3
b. Drug and insurance companies making too much money	50	36	13	1
c. Doctors and hospitals making too much money	36	33	29	3
d. Too many medical malpractice lawsuits	37	41	19	3
e. More people are getting better medical care than ever before	12	40	44	4
f. The population is aging	23	51	25	1
g. The use of expensive new drugs, treatments, and medical technology	28	52	16	3
h. Administrative costs in handling medical insurance claims	30	46	21	3
i. People needing more medical care because of unhealthy lifestyles	29	49	19	2
j. Fraud and waste in the health care system	37	40	20	2

Q.21 In the past 12 months, did you or another family member in your household have any problems paying medical bills, or not?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
25	75	*

Q.22 How much of an impact have these bills had on you and your family — a major impact, a minor impact, or no real impact on you and your family?

Based on those with problems paying medical bills (n =254)

<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>	<u>No impact</u>	<u>DK</u>
61	33	6	*

Q.23 Within the last 12 months, have you or a member of your family put off any sort of medical treatment because of the cost you would have to pay?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
28	72	*

Q.24 When this medical treatment was delayed, was it for a condition or illness that was very serious, somewhat serious, not very serious, or not at all serious?

Based on those who put off medical treatment (n = 323)

----- Serious -----			----- Not Serious-----			
NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not very	Not at all	DK
70	28	41	29	23	7	1

Q.25 Does it seem to you that your costs for health insurance premiums have been going up lately, holding steady or going down? IF UP: Have they been going up a lot, or somewhat?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

----- Up -----					
NET	A lot	Smwt.	Steady	Down	DK
66	31	35	30	2	2

Q.26 Thinking about your deductible and co-pay – that is, the amount you have to pay for medical services above and beyond what insurance covers. Does it seem to you that your deductible and co-pay expenses have been going up lately, holding steady or going down? IF UP: Have they been going up a lot, or somewhat?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

----- Up -----					
NET	A lot	Smwt.	Steady	Down	DK
48	19	29	48	1	3

Q.27 What do you think about the possibility that you might lose your health insurance because of the loss of a job - is that something you're very worried about, somewhat worried, not so worried or not worried about at all?

Based on those with private medical insurance (n = 821)

----- Worried -----			----- Not worried -----			
NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not so	At all	DK
56	31	25	43	15	28	1

Q.28 What do you think about being able to afford the cost of your health care insurance over the next few years - is that something you're very worried about, somewhat worried, not so worried or not worried about at all?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

----- Worried -----			----- Not worried -----			
NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not so	At all	DK
60	27	33	40	18	22	*

Q.29 What do you think about being able to afford the cost of your health care over the next few years - is that something you're very worried about, somewhat worried, not so worried or not worried about at all?

Based on those without insurance (n = 111)

----- Worried -----			----- Not worried -----			
NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not so	At all	DK
85	63	21	15	7	9	*

Q.30 Would you say your health insurance plan tends to (pay your medical expenses without much problem), or would you say your health insurance plan tends to (give you a difficult time about paying for medical expenses)?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

Without <u>problem</u>	Difficult <u>time</u>	<u>DK</u>
80	18	2

Q.31 Has your health insurance plan ever refused to pay for all or part of a medical treatment that you believe should have been fully covered, or not?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
32	67	2

Q.32 If an expensive new drug or medical treatment becomes available, do you think insurance companies should (pay for it only if it's been proven to be MORE effective than other, less expensive treatments), or (pay for it even if it has NOT been proven to be more effective than other, less expensive treatments)?

Based on half sample (n = 600)

Pay only if proven <u>to be more effective</u>	Pay even if not proven <u>to be more effective</u>	<u>DK</u>
72	24	5

Q.33 If a doctor recommends an expensive new drug or medical treatment, do you think insurance companies should (pay for it only if it's been proven to be MORE effective than other, less expensive treatments), or (pay for it even if it has NOT been proven to be more effective than other, less expensive treatments)?

Based on half sample (n = 601)

Pay only if proven <u>to be more effective</u>	Pay even if not proven <u>to be more effective</u>	<u>DK</u>
62	34	4

Q.34 Which of these do you think is more important – (reducing health care costs) or (increasing the number of Americans who have health insurance)?

Reducing <u>costs</u>	Increasing number <u>who have insurance</u>	Both <u>(vol.)</u>	Neither <u>(vol.)</u>	<u>DK</u>
50	42	6	1	1

Q.35 Which of these do you think is more important: (providing health care coverage for all Americans, even if it means raising taxes) or (holding down taxes, even if it means some Americans do not have health care coverage)?

Providing health care <u>for all Americans</u>	Holding down <u>taxes</u>	<u>DK</u>
68	28	4

Q.36 Which would you prefer – (the current health insurance system in the United States, in which most people get their health insurance from private employers, but some people have no insurance); or (a universal health insurance program, in which everyone is covered under a program like Medicare that’s run by the government and financed by taxpayers?)

<u>Current</u>	<u>Universal</u>	<u>DK</u>
40	56	4

Q.37 Would you support or oppose a universal health insurance program if it (ITEM)?

Based on those who prefer universal coverage (n = 635)

	<u>Support</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. limited your own choice of doctors	50	49	1
b. meant there were waiting lists for some non-emergency treatments	59	40	1
c. meant you’d have to pay more, either in higher health insurance premiums or higher taxes	62	36	3
d. meant that some medical treatments that are currently covered by insurance are no longer covered	31	64	5

Universal coverage preferences Summary Table, based on questions 36 & 37

----- Universal -----
----- IF LIMITED CHOICE -----

Current	NET	Support	Oppose	DK	No opinion
40	56	28	28	1	4

----- Universal -----
----- IF WAITING LISTS -----

Current	NET	Support	Oppose	DK	No opinion
40	56	33	23	1	4

----- Universal -----
----- IF HAD TO PAY MORE -----

Current	NET	Support	Oppose	DK	No opinion
40	56	35	20	2	4

----- Universal -----
- IF TREATMENTS NOT COVERED -

Current	NET	Support	Oppose	DK	No opinion
40	56	18	36	3	4

Q.38 Do you think a universal health insurance system would make (ITEM) better, worse or would it stay about the same?

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. The quality of your own health care	15	30	52	3
b. The availability of health care treatments to you and your family	20	31	47	2
c. The cost of health care for you and your family	26	26	45	3
d. Your choice of doctors and hospitals	15	36	47	2

Q.39 Do you think the government should or should not (ITEM)? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

Items a – d based on half sample (n = 601); items e – g based on the other half sample (n = 600)

	-----Should-----			---Should not---			DK
	NET	Strg.	Smwt.	NET	Smwt.	Strg.	
a. Require businesses to offer private health insurance for their full-time employees	79	69	10	19	7	12	2
b. Require businesses to offer private health insurance for their part-time employees	64	44	19	36	19	17	1
c. Offer tax credits or other aid to help low-income people buy private health insurance	79	49	30	18	7	11	3
d. Expand Medicare to cover people between the ages of 55 and 64 who do not have health insurance	75	55	20	23	9	14	2
e. Expand state government programs for low-income people, such as Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program, to provide coverage for people without health insurance	82	54	28	15	6	9	3
f. Require all Americans to have health insurance, either from their employer or from another source, with tax credits or other aid to help low-income people pay for it	65	35	29	32	14	18	3
g. Offer tax breaks or other incentives to businesses that provide health insurance for their employees	86	61	25	12	5	6	3

Q.40 As you may know, a new law in Massachusetts would require all residents to have health insurance. Low-income residents would get state subsidies to help pay insurance premiums, but everyone would pay something for health services. The plan would penalize people without any insurance and charge fees to employers who don't provide coverage.

MASSACHUSETTS RESIDENTS: Do you support or oppose this plan?

NON-MASSACHUSETTS RESIDENTS: Would you support or oppose this plan in your state?

<u>Support</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK</u>
52	44	4

Q.41 Some health insurance policies offer what's called a high-deductible plan, in which the amount of money you have to pay before insurance coverage begins is more than \$1000 for an individual, or more than \$2000 for a family. Are you yourself in a high-deductible plan, or not?

Based on those with health care coverage (n = 1,090)

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
21	74	5

Q.42 One idea for a new system would provide health insurance only for major medical problems. For routine medical care, you'd get a pool of money to spend on whatever doctors and treatments you choose. But if you spent it all in any year, any other routine medical care that year would have to be paid out of your own pocket. Would you support or oppose a plan like that?

<u>Support</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK</u>
30	66	3

Q.43 The current system for most people has employers purchase insurance on behalf of workers from private insurance companies. Do you think this system is very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective, or not at all effective at controlling health care costs?

----- Effective -----			----- Not effective -----			
NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	DK
67	11	56	30	17	13	3

Q.44 How about (ITEM)? Do you think that would be very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective, or not at all effective at controlling health care costs?

	---- Effective ---			-- Not effective ---			
	NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not too	At all	DK
a. letting individuals shop around for the best prices they can get for health care and health insurance	79	37	43	18	10	8	2
b. having the government regulate health care costs	62	21	41	36	18	18	2

Q.45 Do you think it's better to keep a terminally ill person alive as long as possible, regardless of the expense; or better to make a judgment as to whether its worth the expense to keep that person alive?

<u>Keep alive, regardless of expense</u>	<u>Make judgment as to whether it is worth expense</u>	<u>DK</u>
40	48	12

Q.46 Do you think health insurance companies should or should not be permitted to charge higher premiums for people who are overweight?

Based on half sample (n = 601)

<u>Should</u>	<u>Should not</u>	<u>DK</u>
30	68	2

Q.47 Do you think health insurance companies should or should not be permitted to charge higher premiums for people who smoke cigarettes?

Based on half sample (n = 600)

<u>Should</u>	<u>Should not</u>	<u>DK</u>
63	36	1

Q.48 How would you rate your own personal health - would you say your personal health is excellent, good, not so good or poor?

--- Excellent/Good ---			--- Not Good/Poor ---			
NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Not Good	Poor	DK
87	31	57	13	9	4	*

DEMOGRAPHICS

Now just a few more questions so we can classify your answers...

D1. RECORD RESPONDENT'S GENDER:

- 48 Male
- 52 Female

D2. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as:

- 36 A Democrat
- 27 A Republican
- 30 An Independent
- 4 Or what?
- 2 Don't know

D3. Would you say your views in most political matters are liberal, moderate, or conservative?

- 20 Liberal
- 43 Moderate
- 34 Conservative
- 1 (VOL) Don't think in those terms
- 2 Don't know

D4. What is the LAST grade or class that you COMPLETED in school?

- 2 8th grade or less
- 13 Some high school
- 31 Graduated high school
- 22 Some college
- 20 Graduated college
- 11 Post-graduate
- * Don't know

D5. What is your age?

- 20 18-29
- 17 30-39
- 22 40-49
- 26 50-64
- 15 65+

D6. At present, are you yourself employed part-time or full-time, or are you retired or something else?

- 10 Employed part-time
- 53 Employed full-time
- 8 Unemployed
- 1 Laid off
- 19 Retired
- 5 Full-time homemaker
- 2 Student
- 2 Don't know

D7. Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Latin American background?

D8. What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian, or some other race?

IF "HISPANIC" OR "LATINO" ASK: Do you consider yourself a WHITE Hispanic/Latino or a BLACK Hispanic/Latino? THEN CODE AS WHITE OR BLACK. IF R REFUSES TO CHOOSE BETWEEN WHITE OR BLACK HISPANIC, CODE AS OTHER

- 76 White
- 10 Black
- 5 White Hispanic
- * Black Hispanic
- 2 Hispanic (no race given)
- 1 Asian
- 4 Other race
- * Don't know

D9. Which of the following CATEGORIES best describes your total annual household income before taxes, from all sources? (READ LIST)

- 16 Under \$20,000
- 17 \$20,000 to under \$35,000
- 18 \$35,000 to under \$50,000
- 17 \$50,000 to under \$75,000
- 13 \$75,000 to under \$100,000
- 15 \$100,000 or more
- 3 Don't know



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