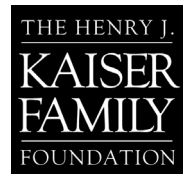




HARVARD
School of Public Health



Topline

Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard School of Public Health

The Public's Health Care Agenda for the 112th Congress

January 2011

Methodology

This Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard School of Public Health survey, *The Public's Health Care Agenda for the 112th Congress*, was designed and analyzed by public opinion researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation led by Mollyann Brodie, Ph.D., including Claudia Deane, Liz Hamel, Sarah Cho, Bianca DiJulio, and Theresa Boston and by Professor Robert Blendon, Sc.D. and John Benson at the Harvard School of Public Health. The survey was conducted January 4 through January 14, 2011, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,502 adults ages 18 and older. Telephone interviews conducted by landline (1,000) and cell phone (502, including 203 who had no landline telephone) were carried out in English and Spanish by Social Science Research Solutions.

The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based on other subgroups, the margin of sampling error may be higher. Note that sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll.

Trends in this document come from surveys listed on the last page.

Values less than 0.5% are indicated by an asterisk (*).

“VOL” indicates that a response was volunteered by respondent, not an explicitly offered choice.

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100.

16. As you may know, some state authorities are challenging the federal government's right to require all Americans to have health insurance. Which of the following do you think is the MAIN reason they are doing this? (SCRAMBLE 1-3) (READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

	01/11
Because they think the policy violates the constitution	32
Because they think it is a bad policy for the country	22
Because they are trying to gain political advantage	32
(VOL.) Combination of these reasons	7
(VOL.) Some other reason	3
Don't know	4
Refused	*

READ TO EVERYONE: Now on another subject,

17. How concerned, if at all, are you about the size of the federal budget deficit – very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not concerned at all? (ENTER ONE ONLY)

	01/11
Very concerned	64
Somewhat concerned	24
Not too concerned	7
Not at all concerned	5
Don't know	*
Refused	*

18. Do you think the new Congress should act quickly to reduce the federal budget deficit, or do you think they should wait until the economy gets better before tackling the deficit?

	01/11
Should act quickly to reduce the deficit	54
Should wait until the economy gets better	43
Don't know	3
Refused	*

19. Which of the following would you prefer to see the next Congress do about the federal budget deficit? (ROTATE 1-2; ALWAYS READ 3 LAST)

	01/11
Attempt to reduce the deficit mainly through increasing taxes	14
Attempt to reduce the deficit mainly by reducing spending on government programs and services	57
Not take any action to reduce the deficit now	19
(VOL.) Combination of tax increases and reduced spending	5
Don't know	5
Refused	*

20. If Congress decides to reduce the deficit by reducing spending on federal programs and services, I'd like to know in which programs you would be willing to see spending reduced. For each program I name, please tell me if you would support major spending reductions, minor spending reductions or no reductions at all as a way to reduce the federal deficit. First, to reduce the deficit would you support major reductions, minor reductions, or no reductions to spending on (INSERT) (SCRAMBLE ITEMS) How about (INSERT)? (IF NECESSARY: To reduce the deficit, would you support major reductions, minor reductions, or no reductions to spending on (INSERT))?

	Major	Minor	No reductions	Don't know	Refused
a. Medicare	8	35	56	1	*
b. Social Security	8	27	64	1	*
c. Foreign aid	52	36	11	1	*
d. Funding for the conflict in Afghanistan	43	31	23	2	*
e. National defense	21	40	38	1	*
f. Medicaid	13	39	47	1	*
g. Public education	13	24	63	*	*
h. Expanding insurance coverage under the health reform law	29	40	26	4	*
i. Salaries and benefits for federal government workers	41	43	15	1	*
j. Aid to farmers	18	44	36	1	*
k. Unemployment insurance	20	41	37	2	*
l. Food stamps	23	41	35	1	*

21. Do you think reductions in Medicare spending should be part of any discussion about reducing the federal deficit over the long term, or do you think the country's budgetary problems can be addressed without reductions in Medicare spending?

Based on one-half of total respondents (N=749)

	01/11
Reductions in Medicare should be part of any discussion	28
Country's budgetary problems can be addressed without reductions	68
Don't know	3
Refused	*

22. I'm going to read you two different views about the role Medicare should play in reducing the federal deficit, and I'd like you to tell me which comes closer to your own view. Some people say (that since Congress just reduced Medicare spending substantially as part of health reform, they should wait before making any further reductions). Other people say (that Congress needs to consider further reducing Medicare spending because it would be virtually impossible to substantially reduce the federal deficit without it). Which comes closest to your view? (SCRAMBLE VERBIAGE IN PARENTHESES)

Based on one-half of total respondents (N=753)

	01/11
Congress should wait before making any further reductions in Medicare spending	76
Congress needs to consider further reducing Medicare spending	21
Don't know	3
Refused	1

23. Do you think health care costs nationally are rising faster than the overall rate of inflation, slower than the overall rate of inflation, or at about the same rate?

	01/11
Faster	63
Slower	3
About the same rate	30
Don't know	4
Refused	*

24. When it comes to rising health care costs, please tell me how concerned you are about each of the following. How about (INSERT)? (SCRAMBLE ITEMS) Are you...? (READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not too concerned	Not at all concerned	Don't know	Refused
a. Increases in the amount people pay for their health insurance premiums, deductibles and other out-of-pocket costs	60	30	6	3	1	*
b. Increases in what the nation as a whole spends on health care	51	36	8	4	1	*
c. Increases in spending on government health insurance programs like Medicare and Medicaid	38	42	14	5	1	*
d. Increases in the amount employers pay for their employee's health insurance premiums	39	38	14	8	1	*

25. And when it comes to rising health care costs, which of these are you MOST concerned about? (READ ITEMS THAT RECEIVED 'VERY CONCERNED' RESPONSE IN Q24 IN SAME ORDER)

24/25. Combo table based on total⁸

	01/11
Increases in the amount people pay for their health insurance premiums, deductibles and other out-of-pocket costs	37
Increases in what the nation as a whole spends on health care	18
Increases in spending on government health insurance programs like Medicare and Medicaid	10
Increases in the amount employers pay for the employees' health insurance premiums	8
Equally concerned about all mentioned	4
Not most concerned about any mentioned	*
Not very concerned/Don't know/Refused	22

⁸ Question only asked of respondents who answered 'very concerned' to more than one item in Q24. Table also includes those who said 'very concerned' to only one or no items, and thus is based on total.

26. In general, Medicare costs are rising faster than the cost of living. For each of the following, please tell me if you think it is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why Medicare's costs are growing so rapidly. (INSERT) (SCRAMBLE ITEMS) (READ IF NECESSARY: Is this a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why Medicare costs are growing so rapidly?)

Items a, c, e, g, i, k based on one-half of total respondents (N=753)

Items b, d, f, g, j, l based on one-half of total respondents (N=749)

	Major	Minor	Not a reason	Don't know	Refused
a. Health care costs in general are going up	71	23	5	1	-
b. Some people on Medicare are getting more tests and services than they really need	46	35	16	3	*
c. The Baby Boomers are reaching retirement	56	30	12	2	-
d. People are living longer	48	31	20	*	*
e. Doctors are paid too much	33	42	24	2	*
f. Hospitals are paid too much	52	30	15	3	*
g. Insurance companies make too much money	69	20	9	2	-
h. Drug companies make too much money	73	17	10	*	*
i. There is too much fraud in the Medicare program	68	23	6	3	-
j. Advances in drugs, treatments and new medical technologies are often very expensive	60	29	10	1	*
k. The cost of defending against medical malpractice lawsuits	58	32	8	3	-
l. The Medicare program is inefficient and wastes money	49	29	18	4	*

DEMOGRAPHICS:

E. RECORD GENDER OF RESPONDENT

Male	48
Female	52

9. What is your age?

9a. Could you please tell me if you are between the ages of ...? (READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

18-29	22
30-49	36
50-64	25
65+	17
Refused	*

27. Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do you not have health insurance at this time? (READ IF NECESSARY: 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/Medi-CAL])?

Yes, covered	84
No, not covered	16
Don't know	-
Refused	*

28. Which of the following is your MAIN source of health insurance coverage? Is it a plan through your or your spouse's employer, a plan you purchased yourself, are you covered by Medicare or (Medicaid/Medi-CAL), some other government program, or do you get your health insurance from somewhere else? (ENTER ONE ONLY)

Based on those who have health insurance (N=1336)

Plan through your/your spouse's employer	56
Plan you purchased yourself	10
Medicare	17
Medicaid/Medi-CAL	5
Some other government program	5
Somewhere else	6
Don't know	*
Refused	1

42. Last year -- that is, in 2010 -- what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. (READ LIST. ENTER ONE ONLY)

Less than \$20,000	14
\$20,000 to less than \$30,000	12
\$30,000 to less than \$40,000	11
\$40,000 to less than \$50,000	9
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	14
\$75,000 to less than \$90,000	8
\$90,000 to less than \$100,000	5
\$100,00 or more	15
Don't know	4
Refused	8

Trend Information

12/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (December 1-6, 2010)
11/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (November 3-6, 2010)
10/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (October 5-10, 2010)
09/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (September 14-19, 2010)
08/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (August 16-22, 2010)
07/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (July 8-13, 2010)
06/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (June 17-22, 2010)
05/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (May 11-16, 2010)
04/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (April 9-14, 2010)
03/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (March 10-15, 2010)
02/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (February 11-15, 2010)
01/10: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (January 7-12, 2010)
12/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (December 7-13, 2009)
11/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (November 5-12, 2009)
10/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (October 8-15, 2009)
09/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (September 11-18, 2009)
08/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (August 4-11, 2009)
07/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (July 7-14, 2009)
06/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (June 1-8, 2009)
04/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (April 2-8, 2009)
02/09: Kaiser Family Foundation *Kaiser Health Tracking Poll* (February 3-12, 2009)
06/03: Kaiser Family Foundation *Public Views on Medicare Survey* (April 25-June 1, 2003)



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The Kaiser Family Foundation is a non-profit private operating foundation, based in Menlo Park, California, dedicated to producing and communicating the best possible analysis and information on health issues.