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# ***September/October 2004 Health Poll Report Survey***

**October 2004**

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### **Methodology**

The Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Poll Report Survey* was designed and analyzed by researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone by Princeton Survey Research Associates International between October 14 and October 17, 2004, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,202 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.

## OCTOBER 2004 KAISER HEALTH POLL REPORT

Q.1a Looking ahead to the presidential election in November, what issue will be most important to you in deciding who to vote for? Is there another issue that will be almost as important to you in deciding who to vote for?

***Based on One-Half of Total Respondents (n=606)*** (Total Net Responses)

- 30 War (NET)
- 29 Economy (NET)
- 20 Health care (NET)
- 16 Miscellaneous (NET)
- 14 Terrorism/National Security (NET)
- 13 Other Government Issues (NET)
- 9 Taxes/Budget (NET)
- 7 Education (NET)
- 2 Crime (NET)
- 6 Other
- 15 Don't know/Refused

*Note: adds to more than 100% because of multiple responses*

- Q.1b Looking ahead to the presidential election in November, what HEALTH CARE issue will be most important to you in deciding who to vote for? Is there another issue that will be almost as important to you in deciding who to vote for?

*Based on One-Half of Total Respondent (n=596)*

**28 Costs (NET)**

- 14 Cost of health care
- 10 Cost of prescription medicines
- 5 Cost of insurance
- \* Cost - other

**17 Access (NET)**

- 8 Universal coverage
- 5 Availability/Access

**16 Senior Issues (NET)**

- 7 Medicare
- 8 Senior Issues (including Social Security)
- 3 Coverage of prescription drugs (for Seniors)

**6 Insurance company concerns (NET)**

- 5 Health insurance (General)

**1 Medical conditions/procedures (NET)**

**12 Other social policy (NET)**

- 6 Other policy/social issues (e.g. abortion, drug abuse)
- 3 Children's care
- 5 Other
- \* No problems

**26 Other non health care issue**

**30 Don't know/Refused**

*Note: adds to more than 100% because of multiple responses*

Q.2 Next I'd like you to rate your satisfaction with the state of the nation in some different areas. For each of the following, please tell me whether you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not too satisfied, or not at all satisfied. (First,) how about (INSERT)? Are you very satisfied with this area, somewhat satisfied, not too satisfied, or not at all satisfied?

	<u>Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat Satisfied</u>	<u>Not Too Satisfied</u>	<u>Not At All Satisfied</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. The state of the nation's economy	11	34	25	29	2
b. The availability and affordability of health care	11	26	25	35	3
c. The nation's preparedness to deal with bioterrorism	14	43	17	18	7

Q.3 Thinking about 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)?

23	Very satisfied
31	Somewhat satisfied
20	Somewhat dissatisfied
23	Very dissatisfied
2	Don't know/Refused

- Q.4 Next, I'm going to read you a list of specific health care issues. For each one, please tell me how important it will be in your vote for president this year. Will it be extremely important in deciding your vote, very important, somewhat important, or not important? (First,) how important will this issue be in determining your vote for president... **(INSERT ITEM, READ & RANDOMIZE)?**

**REPEAT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY:** Will it be extremely important in deciding your vote, very important, somewhat important, or not important?

	<u>Extremely Important</u>	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not Important</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. The cost of health care and health insurance	32	46	17	5	*
b. The number of Americans without health insurance	31	41	18	8	1
c. Abortion	23	29	23	22	3
d. Medicare	27	42	22	8	1
e. Medical malpractice	17	33	32	14	4
f. Prescription drug benefits for seniors	30	43	19	7	1
g. The cost of prescription drugs	31	40	20	7	1
4/04:					
h. Problems with health care quality	23	37	25	13	2
i. Racial disparities in health care	18	34	24	17	7
j. Aid to developing countries to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS	14	32	34	17	3
k. Bioterrorism	26	41	22	6	4
l. Stem cell research	17	32	28	17	7
m. Gun control	22	30	25	21	2

- Q.5 How do you personally feel about **(INSERT ITEM, READ & ROTATE)?** Are you enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not angry, or angry?

	<u>Enthusiastic</u>	<u>Satisfied But Not Enthusiastic</u>	<u>Dissatisfied But Not Angry</u>	<u>Angry</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. The Bush administration's health care policies	9	34	34	16	8
b. John Kerry's health care proposals	14	32	28	9	17

Q.6 Who do you trust to do a better job handling ...**(INSERT ITEMS, RANDOMIZE)**,  
**(ROTATE ANSWER CATEGORIES)**: (George W. Bush) OR (John Kerry)?

	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Kerry</u>	<u>Both equally</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK/ Ref</u>
<b><i>Items A-F based on One-Half of Respondents (n=606)</i></b>					
a. The cost of health care and health insurance	40	46	1	5	9
b. Abortion	43	39	1	5	12
c. Prescription drug benefits for seniors	39	46	1	4	10
d. Problems with health care quality	41	42	1	6	10
e. Aid to developing countries to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS	39	38	1	5	17
f. Stem cell research	37	43	1	3	16
<b><i>Items G-M based One-Half of Respondents ( n=596)</i></b>					
g. Gun control	45	35	2	5	14
h. The number of Americans without health insurance	34	49	1	4	11
i. Medicare	39	46	2	4	9
j. Medical malpractice	37	40	2	4	16
k. The cost of prescription drugs	35	46	1	4	14
l. Racial disparities in health care	33	46	2	4	15
m. Bioterrorism	50	32	2	4	11

Q.7 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**)

**REPEAT CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY:** 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	63	26	6	5	*
b. Campaigns for the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election	48	29	13	9	*
c. The recent hurricanes that hit Florida and other states in the Southeast	65	27	6	2	*
d. An FDA study on the link between antidepressants and the risk of suicide in children	27	25	18	29	1
e. Reports of former President Bill Clinton's heart bypass surgery	17	29	28	26	1
f. The start of a federal racketeering trial against large tobacco companies	12	17	25	46	1
g. A survey reporting an increase in the cost of employer-sponsored health insurance premiums	25	27	21	26	1
h. Stories about the 2004 U.S. presidential candidates' proposals for making health care more available and more affordable	36	35	17	13	*
i. Reports on the debate over the importation of lower cost drugs from Canada and other countries	34	33	19	14	*
j. The withdrawal of the drug Vioxx from the market because of a study finding it increased the risk of heart attack and stroke	34	27	19	20	1
k. The nationwide shortage of flu vaccine	53	28	11	7	*



- Q.8 Now, on another topic... A number of factors have been suggested as possible reasons for rising health care costs. For each factor I mention, please tell me whether you feel it is very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all in causing higher health care costs. If you do not know enough about some of these factors to have an opinion, just let me know. How important is **(INSERT AND RANDOMIZE)** as a factor in causing rising health care costs? (Next,) How about **(INSERT NEXT ITEM)?**

**REPEAT CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY:** Is this factor very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not Very Important</u>	<u>Not At All Important</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. High profits made by drug companies	69	17	5	3	6
b. The number of malpractice lawsuits	54	25	7	5	8
c. The amount of greed and waste that occurs in the health care system:	62	21	5	3	10
d. The aging of the population	55	29	5	4	7
e. The use of expensive, high-tech medical equipment and expensive new drugs	46	35	7	5	8
f. The fact that most people with health insurance have little incentive to look for lower-priced doctors and services	39	33	10	8	10

- Q.8 Of those factors you said are very important in causing rising health care costs, which one do you think is the MOST important reason health care costs are rising?

24	High profits made by drug companies
20	The number of malpractice lawsuits
20	The amount of greed and waste that occurs in the health care system
7	The use of expensive, high-tech medical equipment and expensive new drugs
5	The fact that most people with health insurance have no incentive to look for lower-priced doctors and services
7	The aging of the population
5	<b>(VOL.)</b> All equally important
1	<b>(VOL.)</b> Other reason is most important
8	None extremely important
2	Don't know/Refused

Q.9 As you may know, at the end of 2003 President (George W.) Bush and the U.S. (United States) Congress approved a new Medicare law that includes some coverage of prescription drug costs for seniors. How well would you say you understand this new law? Would you say you understand it very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not well at all?

8	Very well
29	Somewhat well
30	Not too well
31	Not well at all
2	Don't know/Refused

Q.10 Given what you know about it, in general, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of this new Medicare law?

32	Favorable
38	Unfavorable
8	Neither/Neutral (VOL)
22	Don't know/Refused

Q.11 Which of the following comes closest to how you personally feel about the new Medicare law? Are you enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not angry, or angry?

4	Enthusiastic
36	Satisfied but not enthusiastic
34	Dissatisfied but not angry
8	Angry
19	Don't know/Refused

**THERE ARE NO QUESTIONS 12 OR 13**

Q.14 Do you favor or oppose changing the law to allow Americans to buy prescription drugs from pharmacies in Canada if they think they can get a lower price?

*Based on One-Half of Respondents (n=606)*

80	Favor
14	Oppose
6	Don't know/Refused

- Q.15 I'm going to read you a list of things some people have said about allowing Americans to buy prescription drugs from pharmacies in Canada, and I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of these statements. Some people say that allowing Americans to buy prescription drugs from Canada...**(READ AND RANDOMIZE)**. Do you agree or disagree?

**(Get answer then ask: Is that strongly or somewhat?)**

*Based on One-Half of Respondents (n=606)*

	Strongly <u>Agree</u>	Somewhat <u>Agree</u>	Somewhat <u>Disagree</u>	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a. Will expose Americans to unsafe medicines from other countries	15	24	23	32	6
b. Will lead U.S. drug companies to do less research and development	9	15	28	43	5
c. Will make medicines more affordable without sacrificing safety or quality	38	32	13	11	6

- Q.16 Do you favor or oppose changing the law to allow the federal government to use its buying power to negotiate with drug companies to try to get a lower price for prescription drugs for people on Medicare?

79 Favor  
12 Oppose  
8 Don't know/Refused

Q.17 I'm going to read you a list of things some people have said about allowing the federal government to use its buying power to negotiate with drug companies to try to get a lower price for prescription drugs for people on Medicare, and I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of these statements. Some people say that allowing the federal government to negotiate with drug companies for lower prices...(READ AND RANDOMIZE). Do you agree or disagree?

(Get answer then ask: Is that strongly or somewhat?)

*Based on Form B respondents (n=596)*

	Strongly <u>Agree</u>	Somewhat <u>Agree</u>	Somewhat <u>Disagree</u>	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a. Will mean government price controls on prescription drugs	21	36	18	13	12
b. Will lead U.S. drug companies to do less research and development	13	23	29	28	7
c. Will make medicines more affordable for people on Medicare	40	38	7	8	6
d. Makes sense because the government already negotiates lower prices for the Defense Department and Veterans Administration	32	37	11	9	11

(READ) Now, on another topic...

Q.20 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?

12	Self-employed
44	Full-time for an employer
8	Part-time for an employer
20	Retired
11	Not employed
1	Homemaker (VOL.)
2	Student (VOL.)
2	Disabled (VOL.)
*	Don't know/Refused

Q.21 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)

- 87 Yes, insured
- 12 No, not insured
- 1 Don't know/Refused

Q.22 I'm going to read you a list of things that some people worry about and others do not. I'd like you to tell me how worried you are about each of the following things. (First,) how worried are you about...? (**INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE**)

**READ FOR FIRST ITEM AND THEN AS NECESSARY:** Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

	<u>Very Worried</u>	<u>Somewhat Worried</u>	<u>Not too Worried</u>	<u>Not at all Worried</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Having to pay more for your health care or health insurance	47	31	9	12	1
b. Not being able to afford the health care services you think you need	38	26	16	21	*
c. The quality of health care services you receive getting worse	30	28	16	26	1
d. Not being able to afford the prescription drugs you need	35	25	16	23	1
e. Being the victim of a violent crime	19	27	27	27	1
f. Being the victim of a terrorist attack	23	33	22	21	1
g. Your income not keeping up with rising prices	46	25	11	17	*
h. Losing your savings in the stock market	22	18	12	46	1
i. Not being able to pay your rent or mortgage	27	16	17	39	1
<b>Item J based on those who are employed (n=746)</b>					
j. Losing your job	18	15	21	46	*
<b>Item K based on those who are employed and insured (n=674)</b>					
k. Having to stay in your current job instead of taking a new job for fear of losing health benefits	19	13	16	51	1
<b>Items L-M based on those who are insured (n=1080)</b>					
l. Losing your health insurance coverage	29	20	18	33	*
m. Your HEALTH PLAN being more concerned about saving money for the plan than about what treatment is best for you	33	31	17	17	2

- Q.23 During the past three years, has the amount of money you pay directly each month or have deducted from your paycheck for your health insurance premiums gone up a lot, gone up a little, stayed the same, or gone down?

*Based on those who are insured (n=1080)*

- 31 Gone up a lot
- 39 Gone up a little
- 22 Stayed the same
- 2 Gone down
- 6 Don't know/Refused

- Q.24 Was this a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem for you and your family?

*Based on those whose insurance premiums have gone up in past three years (n=781)*

- 26 Major problem
- 42 Minor problem
- 32 Not a problem
- \* Don't know/Refused

## DEMOGRAPHICS:

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

- Q.25 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	74	26	*
b. E-Mail	72	28	*

Q.26 Please tell me if you have heard of the following web sites. The first is **(INSERT. FIRST ITEM)**--is this a web site you have heard of? How about **(INSERT NEXT ITEM)**?

*Based on those who go online (n=946)*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Medicare.gov	45	55	1
b. WebMD	66	34	*

Q.27 Have you ever visited the Medicare.gov site on the Internet, or not?

*Based on those who go online (n=946)*

12 Yes  
87 No  
1 Don't know/Refused

E1 Do you or someone in your immediate family currently work in a health care related job?  
E2 Is that you or someone else?

31 Yes  
8 Yes, self  
22 Yes, someone else  
1 Both (**VOL.**)  
\* Don't know/Refused  
68 No  
\* Don't know/Refused

E3 Are you or any other member of your household--that is, any other adult living in your home or apartment--a member of a labor union?  
E4 Is that person you or someone else?

17 Yes  
7 Yes, self  
8 Yes, someone else  
1 Both (**VOL.**)  
0 Don't know/Refused  
82 No  
1 Don't know/Refused



V1. Some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you currently registered to vote at your present address?

- 86 Yes, registered to vote
- 13 No, not registered to vote
- \* Don't have to register (**VOL.**)
- 1 Don't know/Refused

V2. As you may know, around half the public does not vote in presidential elections. How about you—did you vote in the presidential election in 2000, when George W. Bush ran against Al Gore, Ralph Nader, and Pat Buchanan, or did you skip that one?

- 69 Yes, voted
- 30 No, did not vote
- 1 Don't remember
- \* Refused

V3. I'd like you to rate the chances that you will vote in the November 2004 election for president. Are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, or are the chances 50-50 or less that you will vote?

- 78 Absolutely certain
- 7 Probably will vote
- 14 50-50 or less
- 1 Don't know/Refused

D1. **RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX**

- 48 Male
- 52 Female

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

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

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

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

D5. What is your age? (**RECORD EXACT AGE AS TWO-DIGIT CODE.**)

- 19 18-29
- 38 30-49
- 24 50-64
- 17 65 and older
- 2 Refused
  
- 57 Total Under 50
- 40 Total 50 and older

D6. Last year -- that is, in 2003 -- what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. **(READ)**

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

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

D8. 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? CODE AS WHITE (1) OR BLACK (2). IF RESPONDENTS REFUSED TO PICK WHITE OR BLACK HISPANIC, RECORD HISPANIC AS "OTHER," CODE 4)**

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



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