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March/April 2004 Health Poll Report Survey

April 2004

Methodology

The Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Poll Report Survey* was designed and analyzed by Dr. Mollyann Brodie, Elizabeth Hamel, and Jaime A. Valdez of the Kaiser Family Foundation and Dr. Robert J. Blendon and John M. Benson at the Harvard School of Public Health. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone by Princeton Survey Research Associates International between April 1 and April 5, 2004, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,201 adults ages 18 and over, including 262 adults ages 65 and older.

The margin of sampling error for the survey is plus or minus 3 percentage points for total respondents; for respondents ages 65 and older it is plus or minus 6.3 percentage points. 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.

INTRODUCTION: Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling for Princeton Survey Research. We're taking an important national survey about some things in the news. May I please speak with the YOUNGEST MALE age 18 or older, who is now at home? **(IF NO MALE AT HOME NOW:** Then, may I speak with the OLDEST FEMALE age 18 or older who is now at home) **(REPEAT INTRODUCTION IF RESPONDENT DID NOT ANSWER THE TELEPHONE.)**

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentage may not add to 100%.

NOTE: an asterisk () indicates values less than 0.5%.*

Q.1a 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 Form A Respondents (n=627) (Total Net Responses)

- 42 Economy (NET)
- 27 War (NET)
- 19 Terrorism/National Security (NET)
- 18 Health care (NET)
- 13 Miscellaneous (NET)
- 11 Taxes/Budget (NET)
- 8 Education (NET)
- 7 Other Government Issues (NET)
- 6 Crime (NET)
- 5 Other
- 10 Don't know/Refused

Q.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 Form B Respondents (n=574) (Total Net Responses)

- 43 Costs (NET)
- 21 Seniors' issues (NET)
- 19 Access (NET)
- 20 Medical conditions/procedures (NET)
- 9 Insurance company concerns (NET)
- 9 Other policy (NET)
- 11 Other
- 1 No problems
- 12 Don't know/Refused

Q.2 Next, I'm going to read you a list of health care issues. For each one, please tell me how important it will be in your vote for president this year. Will it be one of the single most important issues in deciding your vote, very important, somewhat important, or less important than that? (First,) how important will this issue be in determining your vote for president... (INSERT)?

	One of the Single Most <u>Important</u>	Very <u>Important</u>	Somewhat <u>Important</u>	Less Important <u>Than That</u>	Don't know/ <u>Refused</u>
a. The cost of health care and health insurance	23	59	12	5	1
b. The number of Americans without health insurance	18	54	18	9	2
c. Abortion	12	32	23	29	4
d. Medicare	15	55	20	9	2
e. Medical malpractice	7	34	34	22	3
f. Prescription drug benefits for seniors	17	54	20	9	1
g. The cost of prescription drugs	18	55	18	8	1
h. The quality of health care	14	59	19	7	1
i. Racial disparities in health care	8	38	26	20	8
j. Aid to developing countries to help improve health	5	22	38	34	1

Q.3 Who do you trust to do a better job handling (INSERT), (George W. Bush) or (John Kerry)?

	<u>George W. Bush</u>	<u>John Kerry</u>	<u>Both Equally</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a. The cost of health care and health insurance	35	43	1	7	14
b. The number of Americans without health insurance	33	44	1	6	17
c. Abortion	39	35	1	7	18
d. Medicare	37	42	1	5	15
e. Medical malpractice	37	37	1	7	18
f. Prescription drug benefits for seniors	36	41	*	6	16
g. The cost of prescription drugs	35	41	1	7	15

Q.4 How do you personally feel about (INSERT)? 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>Don't know/Refused</u>
a. The Bush administration's health care policies	3	36	38	14	8
b. John Kerry's health care proposals	7	34	21	5	34

Q.5 Now, I'd like to ask you a question about a story that has been in the news recently. If you're not sure of the answer, that's okay. Just tell me and I'll go to the next question.

You may have heard news in late 2003 about debates in Congress on a bill that would add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare. To the best of your knowledge, was this bill passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bush, or not?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
31	40	Yes, has been passed and signed into law
16	15	No, has NOT been passed
54	45	Don't know/Refused

Q.6 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...?

	<u>Total Closely</u>	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Total Not 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	88	61	28	11	7	4	*
b. The bombings of several commuter trains in Madrid, Spain	75	42	33	25	13	11	1
c. Campaigns for the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election	70	33	37	30	16	14	*
d. Reports about the U.S. economy	76	39	37	22	13	9	1
e. Discussions in Washington about the cost of the recently passed Medicare prescription drug law	48	17	31	51	26	25	1
f. A CDC report that obesity is on pace to surpass smoking as the top avoidable cause of death in the United States	58	26	32	41	19	21	1
g. A government decision to end a clinical trial of estrogen because of a slightly increased risk of stroke in women	35	15	19	64	21	43	1
h. A recommendation by the FDA to put new labels on popular antidepressants warning of the risk of hostility and suicidal tendencies	47	21	26	52	22	30	1
i. The nomination of FDA Commissioner Mark McClellan as Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medical Services	16	4	12	82	23	59	2
j. A decision by McDonald's Corporation to discontinue its "supersize" soft drinks and French fries	41	15	26	58	24	34	1
k. A report by the Medicare trustees on the financial condition of the Medicare program	44	16	28	55	26	29	1

Q.7 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 heard news recently about a report on the financial condition of the Medicare program by the Medicare trustees. From what you've seen or heard in the news, did the report find that the Medicare hospital trust fund will run out of money sooner than was previously thought, later than was previously thought, or at about the same time as had been previously thought?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
48	50	Sooner
3	4	Later
10	17	About the same time
39	30	Don't know/Refused

Q.8 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?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
7	14	Very well
27	31	Somewhat well
37	32	Not too well
27	21	Not well at all
2	1	Don't know/Refused

Q.9 Given what you know about it, in general, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of this new Medicare law?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
28	24	Favorable
39	47	Unfavorable
10	8	Neither/Neutral (VOL)
23	21	Don't know/Refused

Q.10 As far as you know, does the new Medicare law include a prescription drug discount card for seniors that will be available this year, is this not something that's included in the law, or don't you know enough to say?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
25	38	Drug discount card will be available this year
4	7	Drug discount card is not included in the law
70	54	Don't know enough to say
1	1	Refused

Q.11 And as far as you know, does the new Medicare law include a financial subsidy that will be available this year for low-income seniors to help them with their drug costs, is this not something that's included in the law, or don't you know enough to say?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
14	18	Financial subsidy will be available this year
7	5	Financial subsidy is not included in the law
78	76	Don't know enough to say
1	1	Refused

Q.12 You may also have heard news about the Bush Administration's new cost estimates of the Medicare prescription drug law that was passed in December 2003. From what you've seen or heard in the news, were these new cost estimates higher or lower than previously released estimates?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
41	42	Higher
8	11	Lower
1	1	About the same (VOL)
51	46	Don't know/Refused

Q.13a. Candidates in the upcoming election are debating whether to change the new Medicare law to allow Americans to buy less expensive prescription drugs from pharmacies in Canada. Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

Based on Form A Respondents (n=627)

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
64	65	The new Medicare law should be changed to allow Americans to buy prescription drugs from Canada because this would make medicines more affordable for seniors without sacrificing safety or quality
26	24	The new Medicare law should NOT be changed to allow Americans to buy prescription drugs from Canada because this would expose Americans to unsafe foreign medicines and may cause U.S. drug companies to do less research and development
3	4	Neither/Neutral (VOL)
6	7	Don't know/Refused

Q.13b. Candidates in the upcoming election are debating whether to change the new Medicare law so that the federal government could negotiate with drug companies to try to get a lower price for prescription drugs. Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

Based on Form B Respondents (n=574)

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
61	62	The new Medicare law should be changed to allow the federal government to use its buying power to negotiate with drug companies because this would make medicines more affordable for seniors, and the federal government already negotiates lower prices for the Defense Department and Veterans Administration
26	19	The new Medicare law should NOT be changed to allow the federal government to use its buying power to negotiate with drug companies because it would mean government price controls on drugs and may cause U.S. drug companies to do less research and development
3	5	Neither/Neutral (VOL)
11	14	Don't know/Refused

Q.14 In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements about the new Medicare prescription drug program, or not?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
27	39	Yes, have seen television advertisements
71	57	No, have not seen television advertisements
2	3	Don't know/Refused

Q.15 Based on what you saw in the ads, was it your impression that their purpose was primarily (INSERT), or did the ads serve both these purposes equally?

Based on those who have seen TV ads (27% of the total public, 39% of seniors)

<u>Total</u>	<u>Seniors</u>	
18	14	To educate seniors about the new Medicare drug benefit,
36	38	To persuade the public that the new law is good for seniors,
38	37	Serve both these purposes equally
8	10	Don't know/Refused

Q.16 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?

- 9 Self-employed
- 43 Full-time for an employer
- 10 Part-time for an employer
- 19 Retired
- 11 Not employed
- 1 Homemaker (VOL.)
- 2 Student (VOL.)
- 4 Disabled (VOL.)
- 1 Don't know/Refused

Q.17 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)?

- 86 Yes, insured
- 14 No, not insured
- * Don't know/Refused

Q.18 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...?
 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	30	9	13	1
b. Not being able to afford the health care services you think you need	39	25	14	21	1
c. The quality of health care services you receive getting worse	31	28	18	21	1
d. Not being able to afford the prescription drugs you need	37	21	16	25	1
e. Being the victim of a violent crime	17	25	26	31	1
f. Being the victim of a terrorist attack	20	29	23	27	1
g. Your income not keeping up with rising prices	44	27	12	16	1
h. Losing your savings in the stock market	18	16	14	50	2
i. Not being able to pay your rent or mortgage	28	15	17	39	*
j. Losing your job <i>based on those who are employed (n=713)</i>	23	15	18	44	*
k. Having to stay in your current job instead of taking a new job for fear of losing health benefits <i>based on those who are employed and insured (n=624)</i>	16	14	18	49	2
l. Losing your health insurance coverage <i>based on those who are insured (n=1,068)</i>	33	19	17	30	1
m. Your HEALTH PLAN being more concerned about saving money for the plan than about what is the best treatment for you <i>based on those who are insured (n=1,068)</i>	37	29	14	17	3

Q.19 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=1,068)

- 31 Gone up a lot
- 35 Gone up a little
- 23 Stayed the same
- 2 Gone down
- 9 Don't know/Refused

Q.20 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=736)

- 28 Major problem
- 39 Minor problem
- 33 Not a problem
- * Don't know/Refused

Q.21 Next, I'd like to ask you to think about uninsured Americans – that is, people with no health insurance at all. Would you say that more of them are...

- 40 Employed people and people from families in which someone is employed
- 49 Unemployed people and people from families in which no one is employed
- 11 Don't know/Refused

Q.22 Do you think Americans with NO health insurance are more likely, less likely, or about the same as those WITH health insurance to... (INSERT)?

	<u>More Likely</u>	<u>Less Likely</u>	<u>About the Same</u>	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
a. Have a regular source where they get medical care	20	58	14	8
b. Put off or postpone seeking care	73	10	13	4
c. Have hospital or emergency room visits that could have been avoided	50	22	21	7

DEMOGRAPHICS:

D1. SEX

48 Male
52 Female

V1. Finally, I have just a few questions we will use to describe the people who took part in our survey...

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

80 Yes, registered to vote
19 No, not registered to vote
0 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?

67 Yes, voted
32 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?

70 Absolutely certain
12 Probably will vote
16 50-50 or less
1 Don't know/Refused

D2. In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

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

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

- 3 None, or grade 1-8
- 12 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 4-year degree (includes associate degree)
- 17 College graduate (B.S., B.A. or other 4-year degree)
- 9 Post-graduate or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a Master's degree or Ph.D; law or medical school)
- 0 Don't Know
- * Refused

D4. What is your age?

- 22 18-29
- 38 30-49
- 22 50-64
- 16 65+
- 2 Undesignated

D5. 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.

- 9 Less than \$10,000
- 11 \$10,000 to under \$20,000
- 13 \$20,000 to under \$30,000
- 18 \$30,000 to under \$50,000
- 15 \$50,000 to under \$75,000
- 10 \$75,000 to under \$100,000
- 7 \$100,000 to under \$200,000
- 3 \$200,000 or more
- 5 Don't know
- 8 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**

- 72 White, Non Hispanic
- 26 Total Non-White
 - 11 Black or African-American
 - 11 Hispanic
 - 2 Asian
 - 1 Native American
 - 2 Other or mixed race
- 2 Undesignated



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