

**Toplines**

*The Kaiser Family Foundation*

*National Survey of the Public's Views About  
Medicaid*

**June 2005**

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## **Methodology**

The Kaiser Family Foundation *National Survey of the Public's Views About Medicaid* was designed and analyzed by researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone by Princeton Survey Research Associates between April 1 and May 1, 2005, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,201 respondents 18 years of age and older. Results have been weighted to be representative of the U.S. population by sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region.

The margin of sampling error for the survey is plus or minus 3 percentage points for total respondents. For results based on subsets of respondents the margin of 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.

- 1a. To begin... I'm going to read you a list of federal government programs and for each one, please tell me how important you think this program is. Is it very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important? What about... **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)?**

**READ AS NECESSARY:** Is this very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not very Important</u>	<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
<i>Asked of all respondents</i>					
a. Medicaid	74	20	2	2	2
<i>Items a-d based on half-sample A</i>					
b. Medicare	83	14	1	1	2
c. Defense and military spending	57	31	6	4	2
d. Loans for college students	65	28	4	2	1
<i>Items e-h based on half-sample B</i>					
e. Social Security	88	9	2	1	1
f. Foreign aid	20	47	15	12	5
g. Federal aid to public schools	74	19	3	3	2

- 3a. Do you think that it is the government's responsibility to help pay for healthcare for people who cannot afford to pay for it themselves because they are too sick or too poor or is this not the government's responsibility?

***Based on half-sample A***

82 Yes  
 12 No, not government's responsibility  
 7 Don't know/Refused

- 3b. Do you think that it is the government's responsibility to help pay for health and long term care services for people with disabilities and chronic health conditions who cannot afford to pay for it themselves, or is this not the government's responsibility?

***Based on half-sample B***

80 Yes  
 14 No, not government's responsibility  
 6 Don't know/Refused

4. Do you think the government is doing enough, not doing enough, or is doing too much to help each of the following get and pay for health care services? (First/Next), what about...**(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)**.

**(READ AS NECESSARY:** Is the government doing enough, not doing enough, or doing too much to help this group get and pay for health care services?)

	<u>Doing enough</u>	<u>Not doing enough</u>	<u>Doing too much</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
<b>Items a-c based on half-sample A</b>				
a. Working families with low incomes	22	64	6	9
b. People with chronic illness or disabilities	29	59	1	11
c. Seniors	28	64	3	5
<b>Items d-f based on half-sample B</b>				
d. Poor people	27	59	9	5
e. People in nursing homes	30	55	3	13
f. Children	29	61	3	7

- 5a. In general, do you think your state government spends too much money, too little money, or about the right amount of money on **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)?**

**Based on half-sample A**

	<u>Too much</u>	<u>Too little</u>	<u>Right amount</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
a. Medicaid	8	48	28	17
b. Public education	8	61	27	4
c. The environment	12	46	33	10
d. Prison Systems	37	21	27	15

- 5b. In general, do you think the federal government spends too much money, too little money, or about the right amount of money on **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)?**

**Based on half-sample B**

	<u>Too much</u>	<u>Too little</u>	<u>Right amount</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
a. Medicaid	10	48	32	9
b. Medicare	6	54	34	6
c. Defense and military spending	44	20	30	6
d. Social Security	6	54	32	7
e. Education	6	62	28	3

**READ TO ALL:** To the best of your knowledge...

6. Which of the following government programs is the primary source of health insurance for people over 65 regardless of their income... Medicare, Medicaid, or some other program?
- 59 Medicare
  - 21 Medicaid
  - 8 Some other program
  - 11 Don't know/Refused
7. Which of the following government programs is the primary source of health insurance for many low-income families regardless of their age... Medicare, Medicaid, or some other program?
- 20 Medicare
  - 47 Medicaid
  - 20 Some other program
  - 13 Don't know/Refused
8. Which of the following government programs is the primary source of health insurance for low-income people who need nursing home care or home care over a long period of time...Medicare, Medicaid or some other program? (Correct answer – Medicaid)
- 32 Medicare
  - 38 Medicaid
  - 14 Some other program
  - 17 Don't know/Refused

**THERE IS NO Q9**

10. Who currently funds the Medicaid program—the federal government, state governments, or both federal and state governments?
- 21 Federal government
  - 10 State government
  - 53 Both federal and state government
  - 15 Don't know/Refused

- 11.1 As far as you know, who is eligible to qualify for the Medicaid program? Are **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)** eligible, or not? And what about **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)**?

*Based on half-sample A*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. All poor people	42	40	18
b. People without health insurance	48	36	15
c. People who need long term care	62	19	19
d. People with disabilities	76	10	14
e. Low income seniors on Medicare	66	18	16

- 11.2 As far as you know, who among the **LOW INCOME** population is eligible to qualify for the Medicaid program? Are **LOW INCOME .....**(**INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE**) eligible, or not? And what about **LOW INCOME (INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)**?

*Based on half-sample B*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Children	80	10	10
b. Parents	73	18	10
c. Adults without children	55	30	15
d. Legal Immigrants	68	19	12
e. Undocumented or illegal immigrants	27	56	17

**READ TO ALL:**

Next, I have a few general questions about the Medicaid program. First, I would like to read you a definition of Medicaid that I will read to everyone who is taking our survey. Medicaid is a government program for low-income people whose costs are shared by both the federal government and state government. It provides health insurance and long term care assistance to eligible children and their parents, elderly, and people with disabilities.

12. During the past year, how much, if anything, have you personally seen, heard, or read about the issue of Medicaid? A lot, some, only a little, or nothing at all?

- 21 A lot
- 30 Some
- 34 Only a little
- 14 Nothing at all
- 2 Don't know/Refused

- 13a. Which of the following four statements comes closest to your own view of the Medicaid program—the program is in a crisis, the program has major problems but is not in a crisis, the program has minor problems, or the program has no problems?

***Based on half-sample A***

- 20 In Crisis
- 45 Major problems, but not in crisis
- 23 Minor problems
- 4 No problems
- 8 Don't know/Refused

- 13b. Which of the following four statements comes closest to your own view of the Medicaid program—the program is in a financial crisis, the program has major problems but is not in a financial crisis, the program has minor problems, or the program has no problems?

***Based on half-sample B***

- 22 Financial crisis
- 39 Major problems, but not in crisis
- 27 Minor problems
- 3 No problems
- 9 Don't know/Refused

14. To the best of your knowledge, which program covers more people—Medicaid or Medicare?

- 45 Medicaid
- 44 Medicare
- 11 Don't know/Refused

15. For each of the following, please tell me if you think this is a main reason why people have health insurance through the Medicaid program. How about (**INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE**)?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. They are poor and can't afford to purchase health insurance on their own	87	10	3
b. They have very high medical expenses	61	33	7
c. They need long-term care	68	25	6

17. I'd like to know what income level you think makes someone low income. Would you consider a family of four who makes **(INSERT 1st AMOUNT)** a year to be low income? **(IF NO)** How about **(INSERT NEXT AMOUNT – UNTIL THE RESPONDENT SAYS YES)?**

- 23 \$60,000
- 12 \$50,000
- 22 \$40,000
- 26 \$30,000
- 13 \$20,000
- 3 \$10,000
- \* Don't know/Refused

Thinking about all people on Medicaid...

**Questions 18a and 18b were rotated**

18a. Which group makes up most of the people enrolled in Medicaid? Group 1. Low-income children and their parents or Group 2. Low-income elderly and people with disabilities

- 46 Group 1: Low income children and parents
- 47 Group 2: Low income elderly and people with disabilities
- 7 Don't know/Refused

18b. Which group does the Medicaid program spend the most money on? Group 1. Low-income children and their parents or Group 2. Low-income elderly and people with disabilities

- 38 Group 1: Low income children and parents
- 54 Group 2: Low income elderly and people with disabilities
- 9 Don't know/Refused



19. Next, I would like to ask you about the services offered through the Medicaid program. Do you think it is essential that health insurance offered through Medicaid include coverage for **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)**, or is this something people should pay for on their own?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
<i>Items a, c, e, g, and h based on half-sample A</i>			
<i>Items b, d, f, i and j based on half-sample B</i>			
a. Prescription Drugs	87	10	2
b. Doctor Visits	81	16	3
c. Nursing Home care	82	15	4
d. Hospital Stays	87	11	2
e. Emergency Room visits	82	15	3
f. Physical Therapy	81	15	3
g. Mental Health Services	83	13	4
h. Chiropractor Visits	43	52	5
i. Travel to and from Doctor visits	38	57	5
j. Medical equipment like wheelchairs and artificial limbs	85	13	2

20. In order to receive federal funding for the Medicaid program, should all states be required to offer the same set of core health care benefits, or should states be able to decide what benefits they want to offer in their own states?

58 Same set of core benefits  
 39 States should decide  
 3 Don't know/Refused

22. Next, I would like your opinion about how the Medicaid program compares with employer-sponsored health insurance programs. (First/Next), would you say the Medicaid Program is better, worse or about the same as employer-sponsored health insurance programs in **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)**?

**READ AS NECESSARY** Is the Medicaid Program better, worse or about the same as employer-sponsored health insurance programs?

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>About the same</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Providing quality healthcare for individuals	14	30	43	13
b. Providing healthcare at a reasonable cost for individuals	28	20	36	15
c. The range of services it pays for	21	32	30	17
d. Providing access to physicians	17	31	37	15

23. To the best of your knowledge, do most people who have health insurance through the Medicaid program get health services through private doctors and hospitals or through government clinics?

44 Private doctors and hospitals  
 42 Government clinics  
 14 Don't know/Refused

**READ TO ALL:** Now I would like to ask you a few questions about the budget in your state.

24. Which of the following four statements comes closest to your own view of the budget in your state -- the budget is in crisis, the budget has major problems but is not in a crisis, the budget has minor problems, or the state budget has no problems?

26 In Crisis  
 38 Major problem, but not in crisis  
 25 Minor problems  
 5 No problems  
 6 Don't know/Refused

25. For each of the following, please tell me if you think this is a major reason, minor reason, or not a reason your state is facing problems with its budget. (First/Next), how about **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)**?

**READ AS NECESSARY:** Is this a major reason, minor reason, or not a reason for the budget problems in your state?

*Based on those who say that their state has budget problems (n=1073)*

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Medicaid costs	38	36	16	10
b. Spending for education	34	32	32	3
c. State revenues are not growing fast enough	44	28	20	8
d. Tax cuts have hurt state revenue	33	29	29	8

**THERE IS NO Q26**

27. As you may know, many states are thinking about cutting back their Medicaid program in order to help balance their state budget. Would you support or oppose making some cuts to the Medicaid program in your state?

**(IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE:** Is that strongly support/oppose or somewhat support/oppose?)

*Based on half-sample A*

- 5 Strongly support
- 17 Somewhat support
- 22 Somewhat oppose
- 52 Strongly oppose
- 4 Don't know/Refused

28. (If your state did have budget problems...)  
In your opinion, which ONE of the following is the best way for your state to reduce its budget problems? **(READ. RANDOMIZE ANSWER CATEGORIES)**

*Based on half-sample B*

- 24 The state should cut funding for programs other than Medicaid such as education, the prison system, and transportation
- 21 The state should raise taxes
- 21 The state should cut funding for the Medicaid program
- 15 **(VOL.)** Some other way
- 8 **(VOL.)** None
- 11 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

29. (If your state did have budget problems.../Given state budget problems ...) do you think the federal government should put more money into the Medicaid program, or do you think the federal government can NOT afford to do this right now given its own budget problems?

***Based on half-sample A***

- 50 Should put more money into Medicaid program
- 43 Cannot afford to do this right now
- 7 Don't know/Refused

30. In the federal government, the House of Representatives has proposed cutting the amount of federal funding for Medicaid, while the Senate has not proposed cuts. Which approach would you prefer? Cutting federal spending for the Medicaid program, maintaining current levels of spending, or increasing federal spending?

***Based on half-sample B***

- 12 Cutting federal spending
- 44 Maintaining Current levels
- 36 Increasing federal spending
- 7 Don't know/Refused

31. If states were forced to cut Medicaid spending to balance their budgets, do you think each of the following would be likely or not? (First/Next) ... **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)**

**READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN AS NECESSARY:** Do you think this would be likely, or not likely.

	<u>Likely</u>	<u>Not likely</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Local county or city governments would have to pay for most of the health care for low income people.	57	39	4
b. Non-profit and community organizations would have to pay for most of the health care for low income people	50	45	5
c. People who had Medicaid would no longer get all of the health care services they need	73	24	4
d. People would get care but doctors and hospitals would not get paid	44	51	5

32. A number of reasons have been suggested for why Medicaid spending has recently increased. For each of the following, please tell me if you think it is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why Medicaid spending has recently increased. (First/Next) how about...(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)?

**READ AS NECESSARY:** Is this a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why Medicaid spending has recently increased?

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
<i>Items a-c based on half-sample A</i>				
a. Prescription drug costs are rising	83	10	4	2
b. More people are enrolling in Medicaid	61	22	9	8
c. Poor management of the program	61	25	7	6
<i>Items d-e based on half-sample B</i>				
d. Fraud and abuse in the program	67	22	7	4
e. Long term care and nursing home costs are rising	73	18	5	4
f. Higher payments to doctors and hospitals	70	17	9	4

33. I am going to read you a list of some ways that have been suggested to deal with the financial problems of Medicaid. For each one, please tell me if you would favor or oppose such a proposal. (First/Next)....(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
<i>Items a-c based on half-sample A</i>			
a. Eliminating the ability of middle class elderly to transfer their assets to their children in order to qualify for Medicaid	37	55	8
b. Limiting which prescription drugs Medicaid will pay for	32	65	3
c. Lowering the amount Medicaid pays for doctor and hospital fees	41	54	5
<i>Items d-e based on half-sample B</i>			
d. Increasing the co-payments and deductibles that people on Medicaid have to pay for services such as doctor visits.	41	54	5
e. Lowering the amount Medicaid pays for prescription drugs	42	54	5
f. Reducing the number of people who qualify for Medicaid	44	49	6

**THERE IS NO Q34 OR Q35**

36. Many people who are in nursing homes rely on Medicaid to pay their nursing home bills. For each of the following, please tell me if you think this is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why people rely on the Medicaid program to pay for their nursing home bills. How about **(INSERT. READ AND RANDOMIZE)?**

**READ AS NECESSARY:** Is this a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why people rely on the Medicaid program to pay their nursing home bills?

	<u>Major reason</u>	<u>Minor reason</u>	<u>Not a reason</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
<i>Items a-c based on half-sample A</i>				
a. They have not planned ahead, so they do not have the money to pay for their own bills	65	23	10	2
b. Their other health insurance does not cover the cost of nursing homes	76	17	4	4
c. They do not have long term care insurance	79	12	6	3
<i>Items d-f based on half-sample B</i>				
d. They do not have family members who are willing or able to pay their nursing home bills	80	12	4	4
e. Because Medicare does not pay for long term health care costs	68	15	10	8
f. They planned on staying at home and not going into a nursing home	46	34	15	6

37. Which of the following do you think comes closest to what one year in a nursing home would cost-- \$20,000, \$40,000, \$60,000, \$80,000, or \$100,000?

- 6 \$20,000
- 26 \$40,000
- 26 \$60,000
- 18 \$80,000
- 16 \$100,000
- 7 Don't know/Refused

38. Thinking about individuals in nursing homes covered by Medicaid. Do you think they contribute none, some, most or all of their monthly income, including their Social Security check, to their care?

- 3 None
- 30 Some
- 32 Most
- 28 All
- 7 Don't know/Refused

39 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)

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

**THERE IS NO Q40**

41. Have you personally EVER (**INSERT. READ AND ROTATE**), or not?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Received health insurance through the Medicaid program	16	83	1
b. Been a resident in a nursing home	1	99	*

42. Was any of this paid for by the Medicaid program, or not?

*Based on those who have been a nursing home resident (n=12). Results based on sample too small to report.*

43. Are you currently receiving disability payments from the government, either through SSI or SSDI? (**READ ONLY IF RESPONDENT ASKS:** SSDI= Social Security Disability Insurance, SSI= Supplemental Security Income)

- 6 Yes
- 93 No
- 1 Don't know/Refused

44. Do you have either a mental or physical disability? (**READ IF NECESSARY:** Do you need help with daily activities such as getting around your home or community, bathing, making decisions, or communicating?)

*Based on those who do not receive SSI or SSDI (n=1118)*

- 8 Yes
- 92 No
- \* Don't know/Refused

45. To the best of your knowledge, have any of your family members or friends ever (**INSERT ITEMS**), or not?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
<i>Item a based on those who have never received health insurance through Medicaid (n=1029)</i>			
a. Received health insurance through the Medicaid program	44	51	5
b. Been a resident in a nursing home	49	50	*

46. Was any of this paid for by the Medicaid program, or not?

*Based on those whose friend or family member has been a nursing home resident (n=618)*

- 42 Yes
- 34 No
- 24 Don't know/Refused

***Q41/42/45/46 Combination Table Based on Total Respondents***

- 56 ANY personal or friend/family experience with Medicaid (NET)
- 16 Have personally received insurance or had nursing home care paid through Medicaid
- 40 Friend/family has received insurance or had nursing home care paid through Medicaid
- 40 No personal or friend/family experience with Medicaid
- 4 Don't know/Refused

47. If you needed health care and qualified would you enroll in the Medicaid program, or not?

- 78 Yes
- 17 No
- 6 Don't know/Refused

**Demographics:**

Now I have a few final questions so we can describe the people who took part in this survey...

48. In general, would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, only fair, or poor?

- 26 Excellent
- 29 Very good
- 28 Good
- 12 Only fair
- 5 Poor
- \* Don't know/Refused



D16. Record Respondent's Sex

48 Male  
52 Female

D1. Some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you currently registered to vote at your present address?

82 Yes  
18 No  
0 (VOL.) Don't need to register  
\* Don't know/Refused

D2. In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or something else?

29 Republican  
32 Democrat  
24 Independent  
11 Something else  
4 Don't know/Refused

D2a. Do you consider yourself closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

***Based on those who consider themselves an independent (n=283)***

28 Republican  
40 Democrat  
25 Neither  
8 Don't know/Refused

***D2/D2a Combination Table Based on Total Respondents***

35 Republican/Lean Republican  
42 Democrat/Lean Democratic  
17 Independent/Other/Neither  
6 Don't know/Refused

D3. Would you say your views in most political matters are liberal, moderate, conservative, something else, or haven't you given this much thought?

- 17 Liberal
- 25 Moderate
- 27 Conservative
- 4 Something else
- 25 Haven't given this much thought
- 2 Don't know/Refused

D4. Are you currently married, living with a partner, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never married?

- 55 Currently married
- 6 Living with a partner
- 8 Widowed
- 11 Divorced
- 2 Separated
- 18 Never been married
- 1 Don't know/Refused

D5. What is the last grade or class that you completed in school? **(DO NOT READ)**

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

D6. What is your age?

- 19 18-29
- 39 30-49
- 24 50-64
- 17 65+
- 1 Refused

D7 What is your current employment status? Are you NOW...(READ)

- 58 Employed
- 9 A homemaker
- 4 A student
- 17 Retired, OR
- 8 Unemployed?
- 3 (VOL.) Disabled
- 1 (VOL.) Other
- \* (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

**THERE IS NO D8 OR D9**

D10. Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Latin American background?

D10a. Are you White Hispanic or Black Hispanic?

D11. Do you consider yourself to be white, black or African-American, Asian-American, or some other race?

- 73 White, non-Hispanic
- 27 Total Non-White
  - 11 Black, non-Hispanic
  - 11 Hispanic
    - 9 White Hispanic
    - 2 Black Hispanic
    - 1 Mixed/Other
    - 1 Undesignated
  - 2 Asian, non-Hispanic
  - 2 Other, non-Hispanic
- 1 Undesignated

D12. Is your total annual household income from all sources, and before taxes:

D13-15. Would that be ....(**READ LIST**)?

- 31 Total less than \$30,000
  - 3 Less than \$5,000
  - 4 \$5,000 to under \$10,000
  - 11 \$10,000 to under \$20,000
  - 12 \$20,000 to under \$30,000
  - 2 Don't know/Refused
- 24 Total \$30,000 to under \$50,000
  - 13 \$30,000 to under \$40,000
  - 9 \$40,000 to under \$50,000
  - 1 Don't know/Refused
- 40 Total \$50,000 or more
  - 9 \$50,000 to under \$60,000
  - 10 \$60,000 to under \$75,000
  - 10 \$75,000 to under \$100,000
  - 6 \$100,000 to under \$150,000
  - 3 \$150,000 or more
  - 2 Don't know/Refused
- 5 Don't know/Refused



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