



Toplines

***November/December 2004 Health Poll Report
Survey***

January 2005

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 December 2 and December 5, 2004, among a nationally representative random sample of 1,203 adults ages 18 and older, including 237 adults ages 65 and older and 953 adults ages 18 to 64.

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 7 percentage points; and for respondents ages 18 to 64 it is plus or minus 4 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.

Q1a. 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 One-Half Of Respondents (n=603) (Total Net Responses)

- 31 Economy (NET)
- 31 War (NET)
- 26 Health care (NET)
- 15 Terrorism/National Security (NET)
- 16 Miscellaneous Social Issues (NET)
- 6 Other Government Issues (NET)
- 6 Education (NET)
- 9 Taxes/Budget (NET)
- 4 Crime (NET)
- 6 Other
- 11 Don't know/Refused

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

Q1b. 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?

Based on One-Half Of Respondents (n=600)

- 46 Costs (NET)**
 - 21 Cost of health care
 - 19 Cost of prescription medicines
 - 13 Cost of insurance
 - 1 Cost - other
- 25 Access (NET)**
 - 14 Universal coverage
 - 6 Availability/Access
- 16 Senior Issues (NET)**
 - 8 Senior Issues (including Social Security)
 - 5 Medicare
 - 4 Coverage of prescription drugs (for Seniors)
- 12 Medical conditions/procedures (NET)**
- 6 Insurance company concerns (NET)**
 - 5 Health insurance (General)
 - 2 HMO/Managed care concerns
- 7 Other policy (NET)**
 - 2 Quality of care - other
 - 2 Children's care
 - 1 Other policy/social issues (e.g. abortion, drug abuse)
- 16 Other issue**
- 11 Don't know/Refused**

*Note: adds to more than 100% because of multiple responses
"Don't know" and responses mentioned by less than 5 percent are not shown*

Q2. Now I'm going to read you some different health care issues. As I read each one, please tell me how important you think it is for the President and Congress to deal with this issue—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important. (First,) How important is this issue... **(INSERT ITEM, READ & RANDOMIZE)?**

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

	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Increasing the number of Americans covered by health insurance	79	13	3	3	2
b. Lowering the cost of medical malpractice insurance for physicians	54	31	7	5	3
c. Lowering the cost of prescription drugs	82	14	1	2	1
d. Lowering the cost of health insurance	83	12	2	2	1
e. Reducing medical errors or mistakes	73	20	4	2	1

Q2.1 Which of the following issues you say are very important do you think is MOST important?

- 29 Increasing the number of Americans covered by health insurance
- 25 Lowering the cost of health insurance
- 14 Lowering the cost of prescription drugs
- 13 Reducing medical errors or mistakes
- 8 Lowering the cost of medical malpractice insurance for physicians
- * Other issue is most important **(VOL.)**
- 7 All the same/equally important **(VOL.)**
- 1 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused
- 2 None very important

D2. What is your age? **(RECORD EXACT AGE AS TWO-DIGIT CODE.)**

- 18 18-29
- 40 30-49
- 24 50-64
- 17 65 and older
- 1 Refused

Q3. 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>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
13	11	21	Very well
24	24	22	Somewhat well
25	25	22	Not too well
37	38	33	Not well at all
2	2	2	Don't know/Refused

Q4. Do you feel you have enough information about the new Medicare law to understand how it will impact you personally, or not?

<u>Ages 65+</u>	
43	Yes
53	No
4	Don't know/Refused

Q5. 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>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
29	30	25	Favorable
36	34	42	Unfavorable
16	16	15	Neither/Neutral (VOL)
19	19	18	Don't know/Refused

Q6. How helpful do you think the new Medicare law will be for the following people? (First/Next), how helpful do you think the law will be for **(READ ITEM)**? Will it be very helpful, somewhat helpful, not too helpful, or not at all helpful? **(READ AND RANDOMIZE ITEMS, ALWAYS READ ITEM “e” LAST)**

		<u>Very helpful</u>	<u>Somewhat helpful</u>	<u>Not too helpful.</u>	<u>Not at all helpful</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. A typical person on Medicare	Total:	16	41	14	9	20
	Ages 18-64:	15	42	14	9	20
	Ages 65+:	20	35	16	10	20
b. Low-income people on Medicare	Total:	28	31	11	11	20
	Ages 18-64:	26	32	11	11	20
	Ages 65+:	40	27	8	10	14
c. People on Medicare with very high prescription drug costs	Total:	28	32	12	10	18
	Ages 18-64:	27	32	11	10	19
	Ages 65+:	34	31	13	10	11
d. People on Medicare who currently have no drug coverage	Total:	28	32	9	12	18
	Ages 18-64:	27	32	9	12	20
	Ages 65+:	35	33	10	12	11
e. You personally	Ages 65+:	15	19	11	38	18

Q7. As you may know, under the new law, Medicare began offering prescription drug discount cards to people on Medicare in June of this year. Were you aware of this Medicare-approved drug discount card program, or not?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
59	53	86	Yes
40	45	12	No
1	1	2	Don't know/Refused

Q8. As you may also know, under the new law, Medicare also began offering a \$600 subsidy on the cost of prescription drugs to people with very low incomes. Were you aware of this \$600 subsidy, or not?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
34	27	67	Yes
65	73	30	No
1	1	3	Don't know/Refused

Q9. As you may know, under the new Medicare law, there will be a new prescription drug benefit that will give all people on Medicare the option of enrolling in a Medicare drug plan beginning in 2006. Thinking ahead to 2006 – when the new Medicare drug benefit becomes available – do you think you will enroll in a Medicare drug plan, you will not enroll in a Medicare drug plan, or have you not yet heard enough to decide?

Ages 65+

- 19 Will enroll in a drug plan
- 37 Will not enroll in a plan
- 37 Haven't heard enough to decide
- 7 Don't know/Refused

Q10. I'm going to read you a list of places where people might turn to get help in deciding whether to enroll in a Medicare drug plan. For each, please tell me how likely you would be to turn to this source for help. (First/Next) How likely would you be to turn to **(INSERT, READ AND RANDOMIZE)** for help in deciding whether to enroll in a Medicare drug plan?

(READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN AS NECESSARY): Would you be very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?

		<u>Very likely</u>	<u>Somewhat likely</u>	<u>Not too likely</u>	<u>Not at all likely</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Friends or family members						
	Ages 65+:	23	24	13	36	3
b. Your doctor						
	Ages 65+:	38	20	9	29	4
c. Your pharmacist						
	Ages 65+:	30	25	9	31	5
d. A local seniors' group or community organization						
	Ages 65+:	14	31	16	34	5
e. An employer or union						
	Ages 65+:	7	8	6	67	13
f. A health insurance company						
	Ages 65+:	25	19	14	36	7
g. A Medicare office, website or phone number						
	Ages 65+:	31	27	13	23	5
h. A Social Security office, website, or phone number						
	Ages 65+:	21	28	15	33	3

Q11. In which of the following ways would you MOST like to get information about Medicare and the new drug benefit? **(READ AND RANDOMIZE ANSWER CATEGORIES)**

Ages 65+

- 37 Mailings sent to your home,
- 25 In-person from people at Medicare or Social Security offices or community organizations
- 18 Toll-free telephone hotlines that you can call for information,
- 8 The Internet or World Wide Web,
- 2 **(VOL.)** Some other way
- 5 **(VOL.)** None
- 6 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

Q12. Have you heard of a toll-free phone number set up by the government, 1-800-MEDICARE, that you can call to get information about Medicare?

Q13. Have you ever called 1-800-MEDICARE, or not?

Q14. How useful did you find the 1-800-MEDICARE hotline? Would you say it was very useful, somewhat useful, not too useful, or not at all useful?

Ages 65+

- 55 Yes, have heard of 1-800-MEDICARE
- 13 Yes, have called 1-800-MEDICARE
 - 6 Very useful
 - 3 Somewhat useful
 - 1 Not too useful
 - 2 Not at all useful
- 42 No, have not called 1-800-MEDICARE
- 43 No, have not heard of 1-800-MEDICARE
- 2 Don't know/Refused

Q15. 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			
Total:	66	34	*
Ages 18-64:	75	25	*
Ages 65+:	22	78	--
b. E-Mail			
Total:	63	37	*
Ages 18-64:	72	28	*
Ages 65+:	22	77	*

Q16. Please tell me if you have heard of the following web sites. The first is **(INSERT. ITEM. ROTATE ITEMS)**--is this a web site you have heard of? How about **(INSERT NEXT ITEM)**?

Based on those who go online (n=864 total; n=778 ages 18-64; n=78 ages 65+)

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Medicare.gov	Total who go online:	44	55	1
	Ages 18-64:	43	56	1
	Ages 65+:	52	48	--
b. A-A-R-P.org	Total who go online:	67	33	1
	Ages 18-64:	65	34	1
	Ages 65+:	90	10	--

Q17. Have you ever visited the Medicare.gov site on the Internet, or not?

Q18. How useful did you find the Medicare.gov web site? Would you say it was very useful, somewhat useful, not too useful, or not at all useful?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
70	80	27	Have ever gone online
30	34	14	Ever heard of Medicare.gov
6	7	3	Ever visited Medicare.gov
2	2	*	Very useful
3	3	1	Somewhat useful
1	1	1	Not too useful
1	1	1	Not at all useful
24	27	11	Never visited Medicare.gov
39	45	13	Never heard of Medicare.gov
30	20	73	Have never gone online

Q19. As far as you know, has a friend or family member ever visited an Internet web site on your behalf for information about Medicare, or not?

<u>Ages 65+</u>	
8	Yes
85	No
7	Don't know/Refused

Q20. Do you have any friends or family members who are covered by Medicare, or not?

<u>Ages 18-64</u>	
67	Yes
29	No
5	Don't know/Refused

Q21. Have you ever visited an Internet web site on behalf of that person for information about Medicare, or not?

Based on those who are 18 to 64 and know someone on Medicare (n=651)

<u>Ages 18-64</u>	
10	Yes
90	No
0	Don't know/Refused

Q20/Q21 Combination table

<u>Ages 18-64</u>	
67	Yes, have friends/family covered by Medicare
7	Yes, have visited web on behalf of that person
60	No, have not visited web on behalf of that person
29	No, do not have friends/family covered by Medicare
5	Don't know/Refused

Q22. Have you ever assisted that person in any other way in getting information about Medicare, or not?

Based on those who are 18 to 64 and know someone on Medicare (n=651)

<u>Ages 18-64</u>	
27	Yes
73	No
*	Don't know/Refused

Q20/Q22 Combination table

<u>Ages 18-64</u>	
67	Yes, have friends/family covered by Medicare
18	Yes, have assisted them in getting Medicare information
49	No, have not assisted them in getting Medicare information
29	No, do not have friends/family covered by Medicare
5	Don't know/Refused

Q23. Now thinking about your own health status. In general, would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
22	25	8	Excellent
32	32	30	Very good
24	23	31	Good
15	13	22	Fair
7	6	9	Poor
*	*	*	Don't know/Refused

Q24. Do you currently take any prescription medicine on a daily basis?

<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
50	42	84	Yes
50	57	16	No
*	*	--	Don't know/Refused

Q25. How many different prescription drugs do you take? Do you take between one and three different prescription drugs, or do you take four or more different drugs?

Based on those who take prescription meds daily (n=640; n=435 ages 18-64; n=199 ages 65+)

<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
64	71	49	Between one and three
34	29	50	Four or more
1	1	1	Don't know/Refused

Q26. In the past year, have you ever not filled a prescription because of the cost, cut pills in half, or skipped doses in order to make a medicine last longer, or not?

Based on those who take prescription meds daily (n=640; n=435 ages 18-64; n=199 ages 65+)

<u>Total</u>	<u>Ages 18-64</u>	<u>Ages 65+</u>	
34	39	21	Yes
66	60	79	No
*	*	--	Don't know/Refused

Q27. 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. Results of the 2004 U.S. presidential election	73	16	6	4	*
b. Military action and peace keeping efforts in Iraq	61	27	7	5	1
c. Efforts to manage the nationwide shortage of flu vaccine	43	32	15	10	*
d. Ongoing discussions about prescription drug safety following the recall of the drug Vioxx	34	32	16	18	1
e. Elizabeth Edwards' diagnosis of breast cancer	15	22	21	40	1
f. Reports of a vaccine that may protect women from cervical cancer	12	20	20	46	2
g. A new drug targeting African Americans that may decrease deaths from heart failure	12	20	19	46	3
h. World AIDS day	16	25	22	35	1

(READ) Now, on another topic...

Q28. 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
- 45 Full-time for an employer
- 8 Part-time for an employer
- 20 Retired
- 12 Not employed
- 1 Homemaker (VOL.)
- 1 Student (VOL.)
- 3 Disabled (VOL.)
- 1 Don't know/Refused

Q29. 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)

- 84 Yes, insured
- 16 No, not insured
- 1 Don't know/Refused

Q30. 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	29	10	14	*
b. Not being able to afford the health care services you think you need	37	27	15	20	1
c. The quality of health care services you receive getting worse	34	26	18	22	1
d. Not being able to afford the prescription drugs you need	35	22	17	26	*
e. Being the victim of a violent crime	21	24	27	28	1
f. Being the victim of a terrorist attack	22	26	23	29	1
g. Your income not keeping up with rising prices	41	30	13	16	1
h. Losing your savings in the stock market	17	15	17	49	2
i. Not being able to pay your rent or mortgage	26	16	17	40	1
Item J based on those who are employed (n=727)					
j. Losing your job	21	18	22	39	*
Item K based on those who are employed and insured (n=637)					
k. Having to stay in your current job instead of taking a new job for fear of losing health benefits	17	15	22	47	1
Items L-M based on those who are insured (n=1040)					
l. Losing your health insurance coverage	34	20	19	27	*
m. Your HEALTH PLAN being more concerned about saving money for the plan than about what treatment is best for you	37	29	14	17	2

- Q31. 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=1,040)

- 33 Gone up a lot
- 34 Gone up a little
- 23 Stayed the same
- 4 Gone down
- 6 Don't know/Refused

- Q32. 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=724)

- 26 Major problem
- 41 Minor problem
- 33 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...

D1. RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX

- 49 Male
- 51 Female

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

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

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

- 31 Republican
- 36 Democrat
- 25 Independent
- 3 No preference/Not interested in politics (**VOL.**)
- * Other party (**VOL.**)
- 2 Don't know
- 3 Refused

- D4. What is the LAST grade or class that you COMPLETED in school? **(DO NOT READ)**
- 2 None, or grade 1-8
 - 11 High school incomplete (grades 9-11)
 - 33 High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)
 - 3 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)
 - 1 Refused
- 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. **(READ)**
- 7 Less than \$10,000
 - 12 \$10,000 to under \$20,000
 - 13 \$20,000 to under \$30,000
 - 18 \$30,000 to under \$50,000
 - 16 \$50,000 to under \$75,000
 - 8 \$75,000 to under \$100,000
 - 6 \$100,000 to under \$200,000
 - 2 \$200,000 or more
 - 5 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know
 - 11 **(DO NOT READ)** 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? 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
 - 23 Total Non-White
 - 10 Black or African-American
 - 9 Hispanic
 - 2 Asian
 - 2 Other or mixed race
 - 4 Don't Know/Refused



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