



Survey of Americans on Health Policy

Kaiser Family Foundation, Harvard University, Princeton
Survey Research Associates, Health Policy Survey

Questionnaire and National Toplines
July 30, 1996

Final Topline

July 30, 1996

Methodology

The Kaiser/Harvard/PSRA survey was a national random sample conducted by telephone with 1,011 adults between June 20 and July 9, 1996. The margin of error is plus or minus 3 percent.

1. Looking ahead to the presidential election in November, what issue will be most important to you in deciding who to vote for?

(Record verbatim response for up to two mentions. Probe once, if necessary, for a 2nd mention)

Is there another issue that will be almost as important to you?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
14%	13%	17%	14%	Economy/Jobs
11%	17%	9%	10%	Candidate characteristics
				Health care (excluding Medicare)
10%	6%	15%	9%	
8%	10%	7%	7%	Deficit/Government spending
8%	10%	6%	8%	Taxes
6%	8%	5%	6%	Abortion
5%	3%	6%	6%	Crime/Guns/Violence
5%	2%	6%	3%	Medicare
4%	4%	6%	4%	Education
4%	6%	3%	4%	Welfare
4%	2%	5%	5%	Social Security
4%	5%	4%	4%	Other issues
6%	5%	7%	5%	None
				Don't know/Don't plan to vote
32%	26%	29%	36%	

Note: Adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

2. Now thinking only about issues relating to health care (excluding Medicare), what specific issue, if any, will be of most concern to you in deciding who to vote for?

(Record verbatim response for up to two mentions. Probe once, if necessary, for an additional mention)

Is there any other specific health care problem that will matter almost as much in your voting decision?

Total mentions of those saying "Health Care in Q1"

Of Those Saying "Health Care" in	
Total	Q1
27%	25% Medicare
15%	18% Health care cost/Health insurance cost
14%	17% Health care availability/Access/Universal coverage
2%	7% Health care for children
	Government interference in choosing health care
4%	6% coverage (doctors)
12%	20% Other specific issues
3%	3% Health care in general
8%	4% None
26%	17% Don't know/Don't plan to vote

3. Do you think the health care system in this country is getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
12%	15%	9%	15% Better
49	42	54	50 Worse
34	39	33	31 Same
4	3	4	3 Don't know
100			

4. Now, on another subject... I'm going to read you a list of concerns some people have. As I read each one, please tell me how much, if at all, it concerns you. (First/next), how concerned are you about...

(insert--read and rotate)

very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Not Too Concerned	Not At All Concerned	DK/ Refused
a. Being unable to save enough money to put a child through college	48%	18%	10%	22%	2% =100
b. Losing your job or taking a cut in pay	39%	16%	15%	28%	2% =100
c. Being unable to afford mental health care if you or a family member needs help	43%	28%	16%	13%	* =100
d. Becoming a victim of crime	41%	32%	19%	7%	1% =100
e. Your taxes getting too high	65%	25%	7%	2%	1% =100
f. Being unable to afford necessary health care when a family member gets sick	61%	18%	13%	8%	* =100
g. Life for our children not being better than it has been for us	71%	20%	5%	3%	1% =100

h. Being unable to take care of your parents, grandparents, or spouse if they need long-term care	59%	21%	7%	10%	3% =100
i. You or your spouse losing your health insurance coverage	53%	16%	15%	13%	3% =100
j. Government interfering too much in your life	46%	29%	18%	6%	1% =100
k. Being unable to get adequate health insurance if you change jobs	56%	15%	11%	12%	6% =100
l. Your family's income not keeping up with the cost of living	58%	25%	11%	5%	1% =100

5. Next, I'm going to read you some words and phrases and ask you to describe your overall feelings toward each one. If I name something you're not familiar with, please say so. (First,) how would describe your overall feelings toward ...
(insert--read and rotate) :

very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative? Next, how about...

	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Neutral	Somewhat Negative	Very Negative	Not Familiar With Term	DK/Refused	
a. Health care reform	26%	21%	21%	20%	8%	2%	2%	=100
b. Medicaid	20%	22%	26%	16%	9%	5%	2%	=100
c. Welfare	11%	13%	17%	32%	25%	0%	2%	=100
d. A balanced budget for the federal government	30%	17%	19%	16%	14%	1%	3%	=100
e. Medicare	29%	21%	26%	15%	7%	1%	1%	=100
f. Managed care	8%	16%	26%	14%	7%	25%	4%	=100
g. Medical savings account	14%	17%	20%	6%	6%	35%	2%	=100
h. For-profit health care	8%	16%	26%	15%	8%	24%	3%	=100
i. Universal health care coverage	18%	24%	19%	14%	7%	16%	2%	=100
j. Health Maintenance Organization or H-M-O	12%	25%	23%	19%	9%	9%	3%	=100

6. You said that the following issues...

(read items rated as most important above)

should be among the most important health care issues for the next President and Congress to address. Which one of these do you think should be most important?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
10%	11%	9%	10%	Health care costs
5%	3%	7%	6%	Long-term care for elderly people
3%	2%	4	3	Prescription drugs for the elderly under Medicare
9%	6%	12%	9%	Americans losing their health insurance
9%	5%	13%	8%	Health insurance for those who can't afford it
4%	3%	5%	4%	Medicare
2%	1%	2%	1%	Medicaid
12%	11%	12%	12%	Health care for children
17%	26%	10%	16%	Waste, fraud, and abuse in government health care programs
1%	1%	2%	1%	Malpractice costs
1%	1%	1%	1%	Mental health benefits in insurance policies
25%	29%	22%	26%	No item rated most important
2%	1%	1%	3%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused
100%	100%	100%	100%	

7. How familiar are you with the term "managed care plan?"

Do you know what this term means or have you heard of it, but are not sure what it means, or have you never heard the term "managed care plan" before this interview?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
27%	32%	23%	26%	Know what it means
36%	33%	38%	39%	Heard of, not sure what it means
37%	35%	39%	35%	Never heard of a managed care plan
0%	0%	0%	0%	Refused

8. If in the future you and your family received your health care through a managed care plan, do you think that would be a good thing, a bad thing, or would not make much difference either way?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
11%	8%	12%	9%	Good thing
19%	21%	17%	20%	Bad thing
20%	25%	17%	21%	Not much difference
37%	35%	39%	36%	Never heard of managed care plan
13%	11%	15%	14%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

Of Those Who Have Heard of Managed Care

17%	Good thing
30%	Bad thing
32%	Not much difference
21%	Don't know
*	Refused

9. What is the main reason you feel this way? Is it your own experience with a managed care plan; what you've learned from friends and family; or what you've seen, heard, or read on television, in newspapers or other media?

Based on those who think managed care would be a bad thing.

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
33%	23%	34%	42%	Own experience
25%	28%	17%	27%	From friends and family
36%	43%	39%	28%	TV, newspapers and other media
5%	4%	9%	3%	Other (specify)
1%	2%	1%	*	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

(n=211)

10. I'm going to read you five different approaches to health care the next President might take. After I read you all five, tell me which ONE you would most like to see taken by whoever is elected President next November. The first one is . . .
(read list, do not rotate)

a. A comprehensive health reform plan similar to the one President Clinton introduced a few years ago OR...

b. A new bill that would guarantee health insurance coverage for all Americans, and would require less government intervention than the earlier Clinton plan OR...

c. A new bill that would be the first step in addressing the problems of the health care system and guarantee health insurance for some -- but not all -- Americans OR...

d. A new bill that would make private insurance more available and affordable through insurance reforms without any government guarantees OR...

e. Do nothing on health care?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
9%	5%	15%	6%	Option A - (Clinton Plan)
44%	30%	55%	45%	Option B - (Coverage for all with less government)
11%	14%	11%	9%	Option C - (Coverage for some, but not all)
31%	48%	16%	35%	Option D - (Insurance reforms)
2%	2%	2%	2%	Option E - (Do nothing)
1%	*	*	2%	Other (VOL.)
2%	1%	4%	1%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

11. Which one of the following three things do think the government should do...
(read)

a. Take some action to ensure that all Americans have health

insurance coverage OR...

b. Make a start by helping some groups get health insurance
OR...

c. Leave things the way they are now?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
60%	43%	76%	57%	Option A - (Coverage for all)
24	31	16	30	Option B - (Help some groups)
13	24	4	12	Option C - (Leave as is)
*	1	*	1	Other (VOL.)
2	*	4	*	Don't know
1	1	*	*	Refused

12. Medicare is the government program that provides health insurance primarily to people who are 65 and older. Do you think the recent debate about reducing future Medicare spending was mainly about...

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
31%	39%	29%	26%	Preventing the Medicare program from going bankrupt
34%	32%	37%	34%	Balancing the federal budget?
20%	15%	24%	23%	Paying for a tax cut?
3%	2%	1%	3%	None of these/other (VOL.)
12%	12%	9%	14%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

13. Do you think Congress should or should not make major reductions in future spending on Medicare to balance the federal budget?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
19%	31%	10%	16%	Should
77%	65%	87%	80%	Should not
4%	4%	3%	4%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

14. Do you think Congress should or should not make major reductions in future spending on Medicare to prevent the Medicare program from going bankrupt?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
37%	52%	32%	33%	Should
54%	41%	60%	56%	Should not
9%	7%	7%	10%	Don't know
*	*	1%	1%	Refused

15. Now I'm going to read you two statements about the future of the Medicare program. After I read both statements, please tell me which one comes closer to your own view. The first one is...

(read)

a. Medicare should remain as it is today, with a defined set of benefits for people over 65 and the government providing them with a single insurance card OR...

b. Medicare should be changed so that people over 65 would receive a check or voucher from the government each year for a fixed amount they can use to shop for their own private health insurance policy

Total	65 years+	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
64%	86%	50%	72%	70%	Option A - (should remain as it is today)
32%	12%	48%	26%	26%	Option B - (should be changed)
3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	Don't know
1%	*	*	*	1%	Refused

16. What about the idea of giving people over 65 the voluntary choice of receiving a check for a fixed amount each year instead of current Medicare benefits? Would you prefer this change over keeping Medicare as it is today, or not?

Total	65 years+	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
13%	7%	8%	15%	16%	Prefer voluntary voucher
32%	12%	48%	26%	26%	Prefer voucher system in Q23
49%	76%	41%	54%	53%	Keep Medicare as is
5%	5%	2%	5%	4%	Don't know
1%	*	1%	*	1%	Refused

17. Would you still feel this way if you knew that it might increase costs for those who chose to stay in traditional Medicare?

Total	65 years+	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
21%	13%	32%	16%	20%	Favor change despite cost issue
19%	3%	20%	18%	18%	Would no longer favor
49%	76%	41%	54%	53%	Do not favor charge
10%	8%	7%	11%	9%	Don't know
1%	*	*	1%	*	Refused

18. Currently, the federal and state governments share the responsibility for Medicaid, the program which provides health and nursing home benefits for the poor, low-income elderly, and disabled. In general, do you favor or oppose proposals to turn over the responsibility for Medicaid to the states?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
47%	63%	34%	47%	Favor
43%	30%	55%	41%	Oppose
10%	7%	11%	12%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

19. Would you still feel this way if you knew that each state would be given only a fixed amount of federal dollars along with the flexibility to decide how to spend it?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
29%	48%	16%	30%	Yes, would still favor
14%	12%	15%	13%	No, would change my mind
				Don't favor state run
43%	30%	55%	41%	Medicaid
14%	10%	14%	16%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

20. Would you be willing to see the federal government spend more to provide long-term care for the elderly, even if it means you would have to pay more in taxes?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
68%	54%	77%	70%	Yes, willing
28%	42%	19%	27%	No, not willing
4%	4%	4%	3%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

21. Would you be willing to pay more through higher health insurance premiums in order to improve mental health coverage for all Americans, or not?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
38%	29%	46%	40%	Yes, willing
57%	67%	49%	55%	No, not willing
5%	4%	5%	5%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

22. Compared to five years ago, do you think the cost of health care for families is a bigger problem, less of a problem, or about the same?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
73%	65%	79%	75%	Bigger
1%	2%	1%	*	Less
24%	31%	18%	23%	Same
2%	2%	2%	2%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

23. Compared to five years ago, do you think the problem of Americans not having health insurance is a bigger problem, less of a problem, or about the same?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
70%	57%	75%	74%	Bigger
2%	2%	3%	2%	Less
26%	38%	20%	22%	Same
2%	3%	2%	2%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

24. 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...
(read and rotate)

a. Employed people and people from families in which someone is employed? OR, that more of them are...

b. Unemployed people and people from families in which no one is employed?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
42%	41%	44%	41%	Option A - (employed)
50%	52%	46%	52%	Option B - (unemployed)
8%	7%	10%	7%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

25. Is it your impression that people in your community without health insurance are unable to get medical treatment, or that those uninsured people are still able to get the medical care they need from doctors and hospitals?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
30%	18%	35%	33%	Unable to get care
62%	76%	56%	60%	Still able to get care
7%	6%	9%	7%	Don't know
1%	*	*	*	Refused

26. For which one of the following groups, if any, do you think we should try to provide health insurance coverage first?
(read and rotate items 1-4)

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
48%	53%	45%	46%	Children
22%	21%	22%	23%	Working people who are currently uninsured
15%	13%	16%	15%	All low-income people
10%	9%	10%	11%	People who need long-term care
4%	2%	6%	4%	Don't know
1%	1%	1%	1%	Other (VOL.)
*	1%	*	*	None (VOL.)
*	*	*	*	Refused

27. Would you be willing to pay more--either in higher health insurance premiums or higher taxes--in order to guarantee health insurance coverage for all Americans, or not?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
60%	46%	72%	63%	Yes, willing
36%	49%	26%	35%	No, not willing
3%	5%	2%	1%	Don't know
1%	*	*	1%	Refused

28. Some members of Congress have proposed legislation that would require health insurers to offer coverage to people who lose or change jobs -- without regard to pre-existing medical conditions -- as long as they pay their insurance premiums. Before this interview, had you heard or read about this proposal, or not?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
43%	47%	40%	44%	Yes, heard of
56%	52%	59%	56%	No, not heard
1%	1%	1%	*	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

29.

(read and rotate order of arguments a and b)

Argument A:

Supporters say this legislation would help protect some people

who change or lose their jobs from being denied the opportunity to continue their coverage and would make insurance available to more Americans. They also say that helping to solve this problem is the federal government's responsibility.

Argument B:

Opponents say this legislation would raise health insurance costs for many people and would result in more people dropping their coverage. They also say the federal government should not be telling insurance companies how to run their business.

After hearing these arguments, do you favor or oppose this proposed legislation, or don't you know enough about these issues to have an opinion?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
31%	31%	32%	30%	Favor
12%	10%	9%	11%	Oppose
57%	52%	58%	59%	Don't know enough
*	*	*	*	Refused

Of Those Who Are Aware of
Kassebaum/Kennedy

47%	Yes, willing
14%	No, not willing
38%	Don't know
1%	Refused

30. Some members of Congress have proposed legislation that would allow employers to offer their employees health insurance through a new arrangement called a Medical Savings Account. Before this interview, had you heard or read about this proposal, or not?

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
30%	37%	26%	31%	Yes, heard or read
69%	63%	73%	68%	No, not heard or read
1%	*	1%	1%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused

Introduction To Q.31:

I'm going to give you some information about how Medical Savings Accounts would work, and then ask your opinion of them... Medical Savings Accounts would allow employers to purchase plans with lower premiums that would only provide coverage after the employee pays about...

Form A: \$2,000 a year in medical bills.

Form B: \$5,000 a year in medical bills.

Any savings the employer gets by offering this less expensive plan could be put into the employee's tax-free medical savings account, which could be used to help pay the first (\$2,000/\$5,000) in medical bills or any additional medical expenses. If it is not spent, it could be withdrawn as additional taxable income or saved to spend on next year's medical bills.

31.

(read and rotate order of arguments a and b)

Argument A:

Supporters of Medical Savings Accounts say this will lower individuals' health care costs, because it would give individuals the incentive to spend their own money more carefully. They also say this would reduce hassle for people to go to a doctor of their own choice without getting the approval of the insurance company.

Argument B:

Opponents say that, because people would have to pay the first...

Form A: \$2,000

Form B: \$5,000

...for doctor and hospital visits at the time they receive care, Medical Savings Accounts would discourage people from getting needed services and preventive care. They also say that, because healthier people are more likely to sign up for Medical Savings Accounts, this would leave sicker people paying higher premiums.

After hearing these arguments, do you favor or oppose this proposed legislation to create Medical Savings Accounts, or don't you know enough about these issues to have an opinion?

Form A - \$2,000 (n=528)

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
28%	43%	18%	25%	Favor
36%	30%	43%	38%	Oppose
36%	26%	39%	37%	Don't know enough
*	1%	*	*	Refused

Form B - \$5,000 (n=483)

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
18%	25%	10%	22%	Favor
42%	35%	52%	39%	Oppose
40%	40%	38%	39%	Don't know enough
0%	0%	0%	0%	Refused

Of Those Who Follow the MSA Debate

\$2,000	\$5,000	
44%	33%	Favor
35%	42%	Oppose
21%	25%	Don't know enough
*	*	Refused

32. If you were given a choice, how likely would you be to choose the Medical Savings Accounts option for your health

insurance coverage?
(read)

Form A - \$2,000 (n=528)

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
21%	28%	15%	18%	Very likely
22%	22%	21%	23%	Somewhat likely
20%	25%	23%	14%	Not too likely
32%	24%	34%	40%	Not at all likely
4%	2%	5%	5%	Don't know
1%	*	2%	*	Refused

Form B - \$5,000 (n=483)

Total	Republicans	Democrats	Independents	
12%	19%	9%	11%	Very likely
25%	28%	22%	26%	Somewhat likely
22%	25%	25%	18%	Not too likely
37%	25%	42%	41%	Not at all likely
4%	3%	2%	4%	Don't know
*	*	*	*	Refused