



Health Care National Survey Research

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The Winston Group
101 Constitution Ave. NW, Suite 710 East
Washington, DC 20001
www.winstongroup.net

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Key Findings

1. While outlook on health care (31-50 right direction-wrong track) is slightly less negative than outlook on the country overall (30-61), it is still not positive. Voters disapprove of the job President Biden is doing in handling health care (42-47 approve-disapprove), with independents disapproving 2:1 (26-56).
2. In terms of how to fix the health care system the preference is for a major overhaul (49%) over targeted fixes (43%). If there was to be a major overhaul, the preference is for a step-by-step approach (37%) rather than a major overhaul done quickly (25%).
3. While there was some level of consensus that the federal government has the most power and responsibility to fix the health care system, there is a major gap between the federal government's perceived power and responsibility and the level of trust voters have in it to make those fixes.
4. Voters tend to prefer national standards for consistency rather than local standards to account for specific circumstances or assess what works when it comes to health care. While the margins are smaller among Republicans, even they prefer national standards over local laws.
5. There is a high level of agreement that getting good health care requires having good health insurance (79-17 agree-disagree) and that patients with insurance are treated better by health care providers than those without insurance (68-23).
6. Overall, there is some level of belief that everyone who can afford health insurance should be required to purchase it (59-33 agree-disagree). There is more consensus on the idea that if a person who can afford insurance but chooses not to purchase it gets sick or injured, they should be 100% responsible for the cost of treatment (68-23).
7. Voters tended to agree that they wanted more choice when it came to health insurance (63-30 agree-disagree) and treatment options (63-30). However, relative to other priorities for improving the health care system or determining whether it is working, having more choices was less of a priority.
8. Voters agreed with the idea that those who receive Medicaid benefits have a particular responsibility to maintain a healthy lifestyle to keep expenses low (73-19 agree-disagree). There was also majority agreement with the idea of Medicaid work requirements (68-24) and with having a time limit (60-29) for receiving Medicaid benefits. However, it is important to note that these concepts were tested as standalone statements — voters might weigh trade-offs differently if presented multiple options and arguments — and that Medicaid recipients were less likely to agree with any of these, particularly the latter two.
9. In terms of ways to judge whether the health care system is working, the top indicator was *equal treatment and respect given to patients* (mean 7.30 for voters overall), followed by *early detection of diseases* (7.28) and *effectiveness of treatments and quality of doctors and nurses* (7.26).
10. In terms of ways to improve the health care system, priority areas for improvement included *patients told upfront how much treatment will cost and do not receive surprise bills after receiving care* (mean 6.98 for voters overall), followed by health insurance being unable to deny coverage for treatment recommended by an in-network doctor (6.93); and larger insurance provider networks with more doctors and hospitals covered (6.89).

Environment for Health Care

Direction of Health Care

The direction of health care (31-50 right direction-wrong track) is slightly less negative than the direction of the country (30-61), but still not good. By party, Democrats are mildly positive (51-32) while Republicans (21-63) and independents (18-58) are very negative about where health care is headed. Those who are insured (33-48) have a slightly better outlook than those who are not insured (21-64).

By age cohort, Gen X is the most negative (29-56) with Millennials/Gen Z being least negative (39-42). Baby Boomers and older are unfavorable in their outlook by about 2:1 (27-51). This indicates that the older people are and engage with the system, the more negative they are in their outlook of the direction of health care.

| Direction of health care | Overall | Millen/ Gen Z | Gen X | Baby Boom+ |
|--------------------------|---------|------------------|-------|---------------|
| Right direction | 31 | 39 | 29 | 27 |
| Wrong track | 50 | 42 | 56 | 51 |

Biden Health Care Job Approval

President Biden's job approval in handling health care is negative (42-47 approve-disapprove) but better than his job approval in handling other issues like the economy and inflation. His health care job approval comes mostly from Democrats (75-13) rather than independents who disapprove 2:1 (26-56). Seniors disapprove 37-53.

Fixing the System

Overall there is a preference for a major overhaul (49%) over targeted fixes (43%) for fixing the health care system. But, this preference comes mostly from Republicans (54-42 major overhaul-target fixes) and independents (54-34), while Democrats tend to prefer targeted fixes (42-51).

If there were going to be a major overhaul, there is a preference for a step-by-step approach (37%) rather than a major overhaul done quickly (25%). This preference, while not a majority, is shared across party (37-26 over time-quickly among Republicans; 38-25 among independents; 37-24 among Democrats).

The federal government is viewed as having the most power (43%) and responsibility (37%) to make improvements to the health care system but with a significant gap on being trusted to make improvements (20%).

By party, there was some level of consensus that the federal government had the most power and responsibility to improve the American health care system. Some 43% of Republicans, 42% of independents, and 44% of Democrats all identified the federal government as having the most power. Another 34% of Republicans, 39% of independents, and 39% of Democrats identified it as having the most responsibility. But on trust, only 13% of Republicans and 17% of independents said they had the most trust in the federal government to make these improvements, compared to 28% of Democrats.

A similar pattern played out by age. Some 38% of Millennials/Gen Z and 45% each of Gen X and Baby Boomers/older said the federal government had the most power to make improvements. Another 33%, 42%, and 37% of Millennials/Gen Z, Gen X, and Baby Boomers/older — respectively — said the federal government had the most responsibility. As for trust, Millennials/Gen Z put slightly more trust in state and local governments (21%) over the federal government (18%), while Baby Boomers/older put slightly more trust in doctors (21%) than the federal government (19%). Gen X put the most trust in the federal government (21%) but there was still a gap compared to the power and responsibility they assigned it.

| Entity that could make improvements to America's health care system | Most Power | Most Responsible | Most Trust |
|---|------------|------------------|------------|
| The federal government | 43 | 37 | 20 |
| State and local government | 13 | 14 | 12 |
| Insurance companies | 12 | 13 | 6 |
| Doctors | 5 | 9 | 18 |
| Drug companies | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Patients | 4 | 5 | 10 |
| Hospitals | 4 | 6 | 8 |

National vs. Local Standards

Voters tend to prefer national-level standards for consistency. Some 55% prefer national standards over local laws and regulations that “account for specific local circumstances and values” (35%). Another 54% prefer national standards over local regulations allowing for experimentation (36%).

| Which of the following positions most represents your view? | Overall | Which of the following positions most represents your view? | Overall |
|--|---------|--|---------|
| When it comes to health care, I prefer laws and regulations set at the national level to provide consistency and standards across the country. | 55 | When it comes to health care, I prefer laws and regulations set at the national level to provide consistency and standards across the country. | 54 |
| When it comes to health care, I prefer laws and regulations set at the local level to account for specific local circumstances and values. | 35 | When it comes to health care, I prefer laws and regulations set at the local level to allow for experimentation that identifies what works and what doesn't. | 36 |

Not surprisingly, the margins are much closer among Republicans, who have larger margins preferring to defer to the local level. But even among Republicans, there is a preference for national standards. Republicans prefer national standards to standards accounting for specific local circumstances 50-42. They prefer national standards over local laws allowing for experimentation 49-43. On the other hand, independents prefer national standards over local laws accounting for specific circumstances and values 52-33. In this contrast, Democrats prefer national standards 63-29. Independents prefer national standards over locals laws to allow for experimentation 50-33, with Democrats preferring national standards 60-31 in this context.

Role of Insurance

Beliefs About Insurance

There is a high level of agreement that getting good health care requires having good health insurance (79-17 agree-disagree, with 44% strongly agreeing). There is also a belief that patients with insurance are treated better by health care providers than those without insurance (68-23 agree-disagree). Those with health insurance are about as likely as the overall electorate to agree that getting good health care requires having good health insurance (80-16) and that health care providers treat those with insurance better than those without (68-23).

By age, Millennials/Gen Z (80-17 agree-disagree), Gen X (83-14) and Baby Boomers/older (76-20) agree that getting good health care requires having good health insurance. Nearly one in two strongly agree among both Millennials/Gen Z (47%) and Gen X (48%). Each age cohort also agrees that patients with insurance are treated better by health care providers than those without, but with Baby Boomers and older (61-26) agreeing less strongly than Gen X (72-21) or Millennials/Gen Z (73-22).

| Agree-disagree | Overall | Insured | Millen/ Gen Z | Gen X | Baby Boom+ |
|--|---------|---------|------------------|-------|---------------|
| Getting good health care requires having good health insurance. | 79-17 | 80-16 | 80-17 | 83-14 | 76-20 |
| Patients with health insurance are treated better by health care providers than those without insurance. | 68-23 | 68-23 | 73-22 | 72-21 | 61-26 |

Financial Responsibility

In terms of financial responsibility, there is some agreement that everyone who can afford health insurance should be required to purchase it (59-33 agree-disagree). Agreement with this concept is higher among Democrats (71-23) than Republicans (56-39) or independents (48-40). However, there is more consensus by party on the idea that if a person who can afford insurance but chooses not to purchase it gets sick or injured, they should be 100% responsible for the cost of treatment (68-23). Republicans agree 71-22, while independents agree 64-24 and Democrats agree 69-23.

| Agree-disagree | Overall | Rep | Indep | Dem |
|---|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| Everyone who can afford health insurance should be required to purchase it. | 59-33 | 56-39 | 48-40 | 71-23 |
| If a person who can afford health insurance but chooses not to purchase it gets sick or injured, they should be 100% responsible for the cost of treatment. | 68-23 | 71-22 | 64-24 | 69-23 |

Defining “Affordable Health Care”

Voters split 44-44 as to whether they define “affordable health care” as people paying what they can afford for insurance and treatment or as everyone paying the same, low prices for insurance and treatment. Voters were also split by party, with Republicans splitting 44-43 pay what they can afford-same low prices, independents splitting 40-43, and Democrats splitting 47-46. Those with insurance were also split (43-45).

The distinctions were somewhat greater by age. Millennials/Gen Z (50-43) and Gen X (49-39) defined affordable as everyone paying what they can afford, while Baby Boomers and older said affordable meant everyone would pay the same low price (35-49). Those without insurance also had a majority defining affordable as people paying what they can (53-34).

| Which of the following comes the closest to your idea of what “affordable health care” means? | Overall | Millen/ Gen Z | Gen X | Baby Boom+ | Not Insured |
|---|---------|------------------|-------|---------------|----------------|
| People pay what they can afford for insurance premiums and treatment | 44 | 50 | 49 | 35 | 53 |
| Everyone pays the same low prices for insurance premiums and treatment | 44 | 43 | 39 | 49 | 34 |

Paying Cash

Voters did not agree with the idea of paying cash for health services and only having health insurance for emergencies (39-53 agree-disagree), with consensus disagreement among Republicans and independents (39-56 among Republicans, 31-57 among independents) while Democrats were split 45-47.

| It would be better to pay cash for most health care services and only have health insurance for emergencies. | Overall | Rep | Indep | Dem |
|--|---------|-----|-------|-----|
| Agree | 39 | 39 | 31 | 45 |
| Disagree | 53 | 56 | 57 | 47 |

Health Care Choices

Voters generally agreed with the statements *I wish I had more health insurance choices* (63-30 agree-disagree) and *I wish I had more health care treatment choices* (63-30). These views were shared across party. Some 64% of Republicans (64-30), 60% of independents (60-32), and 65% of Democrats (65-28) agree they wish they had more health insurance choices. Another 62% of Republicans (62-29), 61% of independents (61-30) and 64% of Democrats (64-30) agree they wish they had more health care treatment choices. Those with insurance agree to wishing they had more insurance choices 62-31, and agree to wishing they had more treatment choices 62-30.

| Agree-disagree | Overall | Rep | Indep | Dem | Insured |
|--|---------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| I wish I had more health insurance choices. | 63-30 | 64-30 | 60-32 | 65-28 | 62-31 |
| I wish I had more health care treatment choices. | 63-30 | 62-29 | 61-30 | 64-30 | 62-30 |

There were some distinctions by age. On having more insurance choices, both Millennials/Gen Z (74-20) and Gen X (74-18) agree they had more. Millennials/Gen Z (74-19) and Gen X (73-20) also agree they wish they had more treatment choices. Baby Boomers and older were split on both statements (46-46 *I wish I had more health insurance choices*; 45-46 *I wish I had more health care treatment choices*).

| Agree-disagree | Overall | Millen/ Gen Z | Gen X | Baby Boom+ |
|--|---------|------------------|-------|---------------|
| I wish I had more health insurance choices. | 63-30 | 74-20 | 74-18 | 46-46 |
| I wish I had more health care treatment choices. | 63-30 | 74-19 | 73-20 | 45-46 |

Outside of older voters, people were positive about the idea of having more choices in health care. However, as will be noted later in this report, having more choices was less important relative to other priorities for improving the health care system or determining whether it is working. In the 1-9 section in which voters were asked to prioritize indicators that the American health system is working, the number of insurance options fell more than a standard deviation below the mean for all the potential indicators.

Health Care Responsibilities

In terms of personal responsibility for health, there was a high level of agreement that we have a responsibility to ourselves to live a healthy lifestyle to reduce the amount we have to spend personally on health care (83-11 agree-disagree, with 41% strongly agreeing.) There was also a high level of agreement that we have a responsibility to fellow Americans to live a healthy lifestyle to lower health care spending and premiums (75-17). However, comparing these two questions, the agreement with the responsibility to ourselves was slightly higher than the agreement with our responsibility to others.

By age category, Millennials/Gen Z were slightly less likely to agree that we have a responsibility to ourselves to lead a healthy lifestyle (79-15) compared to Gen X (82-12) or Baby Boomers/older (87-8), but this is still a high level of agreement across age group. For each cohort, the share agreeing we have a responsibility to ourselves was slightly larger than the share agreeing we have a responsibility to others. Millennials/Gen Z agreed with having a responsibility to others 74-21, Gen X 71-17 and Baby Boomers/older 79-15.

| Agree-disagree | Overall | Millen/ Gen Z | Gen X | Baby Boom+ |
|---|---------|------------------|-------|---------------|
| We have a responsibility to OURSELVES to live a healthy lifestyle to reduce the amount we have to spend personally on our health care. | 83-11 | 79-15 | 82-12 | 87-8 |
| We have a responsibility to OUR FELLOW AMERICANS to life a healthy lifestyle to lower overall health care spending, which will lower health insurance premiums. | 75-17 | 74-21 | 71-17 | 79-15 |

Changes in Medicaid

Voters agree with the idea of able-bodied adults receiving taxpayer-funded Medicaid benefits having a special responsibility to maintain a healthy lifestyle to keep expenses low (73-19). Those receiving insurance through Medicaid agreed with this at a lower level by comparison but still with a majority agreeing (62-30). By party, Republicans agreed with this the most (80-13), with independents agreeing 63-26 and Democrats at 74-19.

However it is important to note that this and the other proposals in this section were tested as standalone concepts rather than up against an opposing argument. Voters may weigh the trade-offs of such a policy differently if they are presented with both this option and an alternative. Additionally, a different policy tested as a standalone may have had a higher or lower level of acceptance relative to these proposals.

On the concept of Medicaid work requirements, there was majority agreement (68-24) with Republicans having the highest level of agreement (74-19), and even independents (62-27) and

Democrats (66-26) agreeing with this as a standalone concept. Among Medicaid recipients, agreement was much lower (48-41).

Six in ten agreed there should be a time limit for able-bodied adults to receive Medicaid benefits (60-29 agree-disagree). Republicans (69-23), independents (53-34) and Democrats (58-32) agreed with this concept. Medicaid recipients split 46-45 on this question.

| Agree-disagree | Overall | Rep | Indep | Dem | Medicaid |
|---|---------|-------|-------|-------|----------|
| Able-bodied adults receiving taxpayer funded Medicaid benefits have a special responsibility to maintain a healthy lifestyle to keep their health expenses low. | 73-19 | 80-13 | 63-26 | 74-19 | 62-30 |
| Able-bodied adults receiving taxpayer funded Medicaid benefits should be required to work, be actively looking for work, or go to school to qualify. | 68-24 | 74-19 | 62-27 | 66-26 | 48-41 |
| There should be a time limit to able-bodied adults receiving taxpayer funded Medicaid benefits. | 60-29 | 69-23 | 53-34 | 58-32 | 46-45 |

Ways to Judge If the Health Care System Is Working

Voters do not believe that health care in America is working. One in two disagreed with the statement “*The American health care is working*” (46-50 agree-disagree). When the statement is posed as a negative — “*the American health care system is not working*” — nearly two-thirds agree (65-30).

Voters were presented with a list of potential ways to judge whether the American health care system is working and asked to rate each on a scale of 1-9 based on how important they found them, with 1 being not important at all, 5 being important, and 9 being extremely important.

The mean ratings of the potential indicators from most to least important for each subgroup are given in the table below. The color coding represents significant differences in how each group defined the level of importance they had about each potential indicator relative to others. Green represents indicators whose means were more than one standard deviation higher than the mean for all potential indicators in that group, and therefore the items that were seen as especially important in that group. Red represents indicators that are more than one standard deviation lower.

In general, each item was rated above a 5, meaning voters found it important to some extent. Many items were rated at or above a 7, meaning voters found them very important; among voters overall, 11 of the 19 items were rated at least a 7. For the overall electorate, the most important item was *equal treatment and respect given to patients* (mean 7.30), followed closely by *early detection of diseases* (7.28) and *effectiveness of treatments and quality of doctors and nurses* (7.26).

Equal treatment and respect for all was also the top item for Gen X (7.60), suburban women (7.64), and those with health insurance (7.33). It was tied for the top spot among Republicans (7.35) with *effectiveness of treatments and quality of doctors and nurses* (7.35); among Millennials/Gen Z (7.11) with *early detection of diseases* (7.11); and among white voters (7.38), also with the *effectiveness of treatments and quality of doctors/nurses* (7.38).

Effectiveness of treatments and quality of doctors/nurses was also the top item for Trump voters (7.26), while early detection of diseases was the top item for independents (7.23), Baby Boomers/older (7.40), and likely voters (7.41).

Turning to some other key items, *mental health being taken as seriously as physical health*, which was the number one item for Democrats (7.46) and Black voters (7.20), was also seen as particularly important. Millennials/Gen Z (7.10), Gen X (7.47), and those with health insurance (7.29) also rated it highly. *Overall health of the American people* was the number one item for Hispanics (7.54) and a key item for Black voters (7.12) and Millennials/Gen Z (7.10). Suburban women added *cleanliness of air and water and availability of healthy food in every community* (7.43) to their list, while Trump voters added *amount of waste and fraud* (7.15).

| On a scale of 1-9 where 1 is not important at all, 3 is somewhat important, 5 is important, 7 is very important, and 9 is extremely important, how important are each of the following in judging if the American health care system is working? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|------|------|------|-----------|-------|--------|------|------|------|-----------|---------|--------|----------|
| | Over-all | Rep | Ind | Dem | Mil/Gen Z | Gen X | Bby Bm | Wh | Bl | Hisp | Trump Vtr | Sub Wom | Insrdr | Lkly vtr |
| Equal treatment and respect given to patients | 7.30 | 7.35 | 7.08 | 7.43 | 7.11 | 7.60 | 7.22 | 7.38 | 7.09 | 7.53 | 7.19 | 7.64 | 7.33 | 7.40 |
| Early detection of diseases | 7.28 | 7.30 | 7.23 | 7.31 | 7.11 | 7.31 | 7.40 | 7.35 | 6.99 | 7.51 | 7.23 | 7.40 | 7.33 | 7.41 |
| Effectiveness of treatments and quality of doctors and nurses | 7.26 | 7.35 | 7.12 | 7.29 | 7.05 | 7.33 | 7.37 | 7.38 | 7.11 | 7.24 | 7.26 | 7.29 | 7.32 | 7.40 |
| Affordability of monthly premiums and out of pocket costs | 7.20 | 7.19 | 6.98 | 7.39 | 7.01 | 7.40 | 7.19 | 7.29 | 7.03 | 7.34 | 7.03 | 7.37 | 7.26 | 7.35 |
| Mental health taken as seriously as physical health | 7.20 | 7.17 | 6.89 | 7.46 | 7.10 | 7.47 | 7.05 | 7.30 | 7.20 | 7.37 | 7.00 | 7.35 | 7.29 | 7.33 |
| Coverage for people with pre-existing conditions | 7.17 | 7.16 | 6.99 | 7.31 | 6.94 | 7.26 | 7.27 | 7.28 | 6.85 | 7.35 | 6.99 | 7.33 | 7.25 | 7.30 |
| Transparency of prices and quality | 7.15 | 7.08 | 7.05 | 7.29 | 7.09 | 7.20 | 7.15 | 7.21 | 7.01 | 7.30 | 6.95 | 7.24 | 7.20 | 7.30 |
| Overall health of the American people | 7.08 | 7.01 | 6.99 | 7.22 | 7.10 | 7.20 | 6.98 | 7.02 | 7.12 | 7.54 | 6.94 | 7.08 | 7.15 | 7.19 |
| Sustainability of Medicare, Medicaid, Veterans Administration, and other public health care program finances | 7.05 | 7.07 | 6.72 | 7.28 | 6.77 | 7.16 | 7.18 | 7.14 | 6.84 | 7.33 | 6.88 | 6.90 | 7.16 | 7.24 |
| Cleanliness of air and water and availability of healthy food in every community | 7.05 | 6.96 | 6.80 | 7.32 | 7.00 | 7.14 | 7.02 | 7.07 | 7.03 | 7.32 | 6.85 | 7.43 | 7.08 | 7.16 |
| Amount of waste and fraud | 7.02 | 7.16 | 6.85 | 7.00 | 6.61 | 7.10 | 7.27 | 7.10 | 6.74 | 7.09 | 7.15 | 7.06 | 7.07 | 7.18 |

On a scale of 1-9 where 1 is not important at all, 3 is somewhat important, 5 is important, 7 is very important, and 9 is extremely important, how important are each of the following in judging if the American health care system is working?

| | Over-all | Rep | Ind | Dem | Mil/Gen Z | Gen X | Bby Bm | Wh | Bl | Hisp | Tr-ump Vtr | Sub Wom | Insrdr | Lkly vtr |
|---|----------|------|------|------|-----------|-------|--------|------|------|------|------------|---------|--------|----------|
| Availability of appointments and number of doctor and provider options to choose from | 6.89 | 6.95 | 6.66 | 7.02 | 6.91 | 7.04 | 6.76 | 6.90 | 6.72 | 7.36 | 6.89 | 6.95 | 6.96 | 7.03 |
| Simplicity and ease of navigation for patients | 6.88 | 6.97 | 6.50 | 7.07 | 6.95 | 6.98 | 6.73 | 6.90 | 6.96 | 7.20 | 6.76 | 6.58 | 6.91 | 7.02 |
| Patients feeling like they are in control | 6.76 | 6.81 | 6.42 | 6.98 | 6.71 | 7.10 | 6.53 | 6.83 | 6.64 | 7.16 | 6.63 | 6.68 | 6.83 | 6.88 |
| Number of Americans without health care insurance or coverage | 6.74 | 6.55 | 6.49 | 7.11 | 6.84 | 6.95 | 6.50 | 6.71 | 6.86 | 7.01 | 6.48 | 6.82 | 6.80 | 6.88 |
| Price of health care and coverage compared to other countries | 6.69 | 6.46 | 6.48 | 7.06 | 6.85 | 7.06 | 6.26 | 6.62 | 6.93 | 7.07 | 6.31 | 6.79 | 6.68 | 6.81 |
| Amount paid in taxes to fund health care | 6.62 | 6.58 | 6.35 | 6.87 | 6.63 | 6.87 | 6.41 | 6.58 | 6.77 | 6.95 | 6.48 | 6.47 | 6.70 | 6.78 |
| Number of health insurance options to choose from | 6.60 | 6.61 | 6.31 | 6.82 | 6.63 | 6.88 | 6.36 | 6.54 | 6.95 | 7.14 | 6.51 | 6.45 | 6.66 | 6.70 |
| Number of Americans in medical debt | 6.58 | 6.30 | 6.37 | 7.00 | 6.87 | 6.68 | 6.27 | 6.50 | 6.92 | 7.07 | 6.21 | 6.54 | 6.64 | 6.71 |

Green represents concerns that are more than one standard deviation above the mean for that group. Red represents concerns that were more than one standard deviation lower.

Indicators that were less important tended to include the price of health care/coverage relative to other countries (6.69 for voters overall), the amount paid in taxes to fund health care (6.62 for voters overall), number of health insurance options (6.60 for voters overall) and number of Americans in medical debt (6.58 for voters overall). The amount paid in taxes to fund health care was the one indicator that was seen as less important by every key voter group included in this analysis.

Outside of these, *number of Americans without health care insurance or coverage* was a lesser priority for Republicans (6.55), Hispanic voters (7.01), and Trump voters (6.48). *Patients feeling like they are in control* was a lesser priority for independents (6.42), Democrats (6.98), Millennials/Gen Z (6.71), and Black voters (6.64). Simplicity and ease of navigation for patients was a lesser priority for suburban women (6.58), while availability of appointments and provider options was a lesser priority for Black voters (6.72). *Amount of waste and fraud* was a lesser priority for Millennials/Gen Z (6.61) and Black voters (6.74).

Ways to Improve the Health Care System

Voters were presented with another list and again asked to rate them on a 1-9 scale, this time based on how much they thought each change would improve the American health care system. Voters again used scale of 1-9, with 1 indicating not at all improve, 5 indicating somewhat improve, and 9 indicating greatly improve.

The mean ratings of the potential improvements from having the greatest to least effect for each subgroup are given in the table below. As on the previous table, the color coding represents significant differences in how each group defined the level of improvement they saw resulting from each potential change, with green indicating changes whose means were more than one standard deviation higher than the mean for all potential changes in that group and red representing changes that are more than one standard deviation lower.

The top-rated improvement for voters overall was *patients told upfront how much treatment will cost and do not receive surprise bills after receiving care* (mean 6.98). This was followed by *health insurance cannot deny coverage for treatment recommended by an in-network doctor* (6.93) and *more doctors and hospitals covered in health insurance provider networks* (6.89).

Patients being told the cost of treatment upfront was also a key improvement for many key voter groups, including Republicans (6.91), independents (6.75), Democrats (7.21), Gen X (6.92), Baby Boomers (7.05), white voters (7.01), Black voters (6.94), Hispanic voters (7.30), Trump voters (6.85), suburban women (6.87), those with health insurance (7.05) and likely voters (7.09).

Health insurance being unable to deny coverage for a treatment recommended by an in-network doctor was also a priority improvement for many key voter groups, including Republicans (6.85), independents (6.72), Democrats (7.18), Baby Boomers (6.97), white voters (6.98), suburban women (6.96), those with insurance (7.01), and likely voters (7.02).

As for more doctors and hospitals being covered in health insurance provider networks, this was also a key improvement for Republicans (6.81), Democrats (7.21), Baby Boomers (6.89), white voters (6.92), Hispanic voters (7.32, their top-rated item); those with insurance (7.01) and likely voters (7.01).

Other key improvements included states being able to import lower-priced drugs from Canada and health care plans specializing in care for patients with cancer, diabetes, etc. Independents (6.66), Gen X (6.91), and Millennials/Gen Z (7.01) all identified importing less expensive drugs from Canada as a priority item. This was the only improvement that fell above the standard deviation threshold for Millennials and Gen Z. As for the specialized health plans, this was a priority item for Gen X (6.95, their top-rated item) and Black voters (6.89).

| On a scale of 1-9 where 1 is not at all improve, 5 is somewhat improve, and 9 is greatly improve, how much do you think the following changes would improve the American health care system? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|------|------|------|-----------|-------|--------|------|------|------|-----------|---------|--------|----------|
| | Over-all | Rep | Ind | Dem | Mil/Gen Z | Gen X | Bby Bm | Wh | Bl | Hisp | Trump Vtr | Sub Wom | Insrdr | Lkly vtr |
| Patients told upfront how much treatment will cost and do not receive surprise bills after receiving care | 6.98 | 6.91 | 6.75 | 7.21 | 6.94 | 6.92 | 7.05 | 7.01 | 6.94 | 7.30 | 6.85 | 6.87 | 7.05 | 7.09 |

On a scale of 1-9 where 1 is not at all improve, 5 is somewhat improve, and 9 is greatly improve, how much do you think the following changes would improve the American health care system?

| | Over-all | Rep | Ind | Dem | Mil/Gen Z | Gen X | Bby Bm | Wh | Bl | Hisp | Trump Vtr | Sub Wom | Insrđ | Lkly vtr |
|---|----------|------|------|------|-----------|-------|--------|------|------|------|-----------|---------|-------|----------|
| Health insurance cannot deny coverage for treatment recommended by an in-network doctor | 6.93 | 6.85 | 6.72 | 7.18 | 6.95 | 6.86 | 6.97 | 6.98 | 6.80 | 7.21 | 6.71 | 6.96 | 7.01 | 7.02 |
| More doctors and hospitals covered in health insurance provider networks | 6.89 | 6.81 | 6.58 | 7.21 | 6.89 | 6.91 | 6.89 | 6.92 | 6.81 | 7.32 | 6.64 | 6.84 | 7.01 | 7.01 |
| States can import lower priced drugs from Canada | 6.83 | 6.64 | 6.66 | 7.15 | 7.01 | 6.91 | 6.64 | 6.81 | 6.80 | 7.23 | 6.70 | 6.71 | 6.85 | 6.99 |
| Health plans can specialize in care for patients with cancer, heart care, diabetes and other diseases | 6.81 | 6.78 | 6.44 | 7.12 | 6.96 | 6.95 | 6.59 | 6.81 | 6.89 | 7.11 | 6.62 | 6.80 | 6.89 | 6.93 |
| Patients own and control their medical records and can easily share it with caregivers or when they switch doctors | 6.72 | 6.52 | 6.61 | 7.00 | 6.87 | 6.85 | 6.50 | 6.71 | 6.87 | 6.92 | 6.44 | 6.43 | 6.77 | 6.81 |
| Americans can customize their health care coverage based on their personal health and financial needs | 6.69 | 6.51 | 6.57 | 6.95 | 6.97 | 6.71 | 6.47 | 6.63 | 6.77 | 7.24 | 6.55 | 6.59 | 6.72 | 6.78 |
| Health insurance follows you from job to job, in and out of the labor market | 6.57 | 6.30 | 6.29 | 7.04 | 6.84 | 6.62 | 6.33 | 6.50 | 6.64 | 7.22 | 6.13 | 6.49 | 6.64 | 6.68 |
| Continuous open enrollment for health insurance to allow patients to switch plans at any time | 6.55 | 6.36 | 6.22 | 6.99 | 6.89 | 6.69 | 6.18 | 6.49 | 6.74 | 6.96 | 6.31 | 6.59 | 6.56 | 6.63 |
| Drug prices based on what other countries pay | 6.50 | 6.12 | 6.26 | 7.05 | 6.83 | 6.43 | 6.30 | 6.41 | 6.86 | 7.05 | 6.09 | 6.25 | 6.56 | 6.59 |
| Streamlining the approval process for all new drugs and disease treatments based on the Operation Warp Speed model used for the COVID-19 vaccines | 6.45 | 6.22 | 6.23 | 6.84 | 6.47 | 6.51 | 6.40 | 6.44 | 6.65 | 6.67 | 6.16 | 6.23 | 6.53 | 6.56 |

On a scale of 1-9 where 1 is not at all improve, 5 is somewhat improve, and 9 is greatly improve, how much do you think the following changes would improve the American health care system?

| | Over-all | Rep | Ind | Dem | Mil/Gen Z | Gen X | Bby Bm | Wh | Bl | Hisp | Tr-ump Vtr | Sub Wom | Insrdr | Lkly vtr |
|---|----------|------|------|------|-----------|-------|--------|------|------|------|------------|---------|--------|----------|
| Patients can easily track their vital signs like blood glucose or blood pressure and run common medical tests on their own using their smartphone | 6.43 | 6.25 | 6.20 | 6.78 | 6.91 | 6.42 | 6.07 | 6.28 | 6.74 | 7.03 | 6.21 | 6.61 | 6.47 | 6.53 |
| Virtual health care is fully utilized so many health appointments can be done at home | 6.29 | 6.05 | 6.07 | 6.69 | 6.86 | 6.37 | 5.79 | 6.12 | 6.65 | 7.14 | 6.02 | 6.06 | 6.35 | 6.39 |
| Every American has the same health care coverage | 6.11 | 5.44 | 6.04 | 6.80 | 6.67 | 6.27 | 5.55 | 5.89 | 6.73 | 6.61 | 5.42 | 5.82 | 6.12 | 6.16 |

Green represents concerns that are more than one standard deviation above the mean for that group. Red represents concerns that were more than one standard deviation lower.

Changes that were seen as having less of a positive impact on the American health care system included *every American has the same health care coverage* (mean 6.11 for voters overall and falling outside of the standard deviation threshold for every group included in this analysis except Black voters); and *virtual health care is fully utilized* (6.29 for voters overall and falling below the standard deviation threshold for every group except Republicans, Millennials/Gen Z, Hispanic voters, and Trump voters).

Outside of these two, streamlining the drug and treatment approval process based on Operation Warp Speed was seen as less likely to make improvements by Millennials/Gen Z (6.47), Black voters (6.65) and Hispanic voters (6.67). Black voters also saw health insurance following a person from job to job as less likely to improve the system (6.64), while Gen X saw *drug prices based on what other countries pay* as less likely to make any improvements (6.43). Patients easily tracking their vital signs on their smartphone was seen as less likely to improve the health care system by Democrats (6.78) and Gen X (6.42). That it and virtual health care were given a lower ratings among several groups shows there is a general disconnect between these measures and the early detection of diseases, which voters prioritized highly. It suggests that people do not make the connection between monitoring vital signs, virtual health care, and the ability to detect diseases early in their progression.

Conclusion

Voters are clearly dissatisfied with the direction of health care — to the point of thinking the system needs a major overhaul — and do not think the system is working. While they believe the federal government has the most power and responsibility to make changes in the health care system, the level of trust they have in the federal government to make changes does not match either of these beliefs. There is also an across-the-board preference for national standards rather than local ones when it comes to health care, even among Republicans.

In terms of insurance, voters believe that getting good care requires having good insurance, and that those who can afford insurance but choose not to purchase it should bear the full responsibility of the cost if they get sick or injured. There was little appetite for making insurance something to have only in case of emergencies and paying cash in other circumstances. There were high levels of agreement with the ideas of people having a responsibility to themselves and others to lead a healthy lifestyle of keep costs under control. This extended to agreement with the idea that Medicaid recipient have a responsibility to lead healthy lifestyles to keep health expenses low. While voters also agreed that there should be work requirements and time limits associated with receiving Medicaid, these were not presented with alternative proposals or opposing arguments, and voters may have weighed the trade-offs of these two proposals differently in those circumstances. Agreement was also much lower among Medicaid recipients.

Finally, voters prioritized items like the treatment and respect given to patients, early disease detection, and effectiveness of treatments when asked to identify how important a given indicator was in determining whether the health care system was working. For these three items, understanding how voters are evaluating whether they are in play would be very helpful. If early disease detection is a key indicator in determining whether the health care system is working, for example, how are voters making the determination that diseases are being detected early? In contrast, items related to increasing choice were less of a priority. In terms of making improvements to the health care system, voters placed the most emphasis on items that would make their insurance work better for them, including being told the cost of treatment up front and not receiving surprise bills after care, larger provider networks, and insurance being unable to deny coverage for treatment recommended by in-network doctors.

Methodology

This report is based on findings from a national survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted May 24-25, 2022.