



**For Immediate Release**

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**2021 Consumers for Quality Care Polling: Coloradans Expectations Around Health Care Cost and Quality Coming Out of COVID Pandemic**

**COLORADO** – A new survey from ALG Research and Keating Research on behalf of Consumers for Quality Care (CQC) reveals that voters see affordability as a major issue in the state’s health care system and are seeking relief from rising out-of-pocket costs. Read more about the survey [here](#).

“This research confirms what many Coloradans have been feeling: the out-of-pocket costs for quality health care are too high,” said the Hon. Donna Christensen, a founding board member of CQC and the first female physician elected to Congress. “With about 18% of Americans with medical debt in collections, it is no wonder why consumers are stressed about the cost of going to the hospital or seeing a doctor. Out-of-pocket costs shouldn’t be so high and unpredictable that they discourage people from seeking care, and insurance should act like insurance and be there for patients when they need it.”

The primary issue that Coloradans have with their health care is that it’s too expensive – majorities are concerned about being able to afford high deductibles (73% concerned) or being able to afford their monthly premium (60%). Across the board, cost has become a top-of-mind issue for Colorado voters:

- Nearly three-quarters of Colorado voters (73%) agree that the amount they pay for health care seems to be going up every year.
- Nearly 2-in-3 voters (61%) agree that at some point they have struggled to pay a medical bill even while they had health insurance.
- One-quarter (25%) actively have unpaid or overdue medical bills that they are having difficulty paying off. Among both Hispanics and voters who are already struggling financially, this number climbs to 47%.

"There's no doubt about it, health care is expensive and Coloradans are feeling the strain," said Chris Keating at Keating Research. "These poll results should be a wake-up call to our policymakers to reduce the out-of-pocket costs of care. Health care is a human right, and Coloradans need to be able to pay for their medical expenses without having to worry about astronomical or unexpected bills."

Though cost continues to be a priority that Coloradans want elected officials to address (54% cite cost as the thing they want their leaders to work on most), coming out of the pandemic,



voters are seeking targeted, careful fixes to the health care system. Most agree we should be cautious making changes as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic (65% agree), and they are looking to Congress for targeted fixes that build on the current system (54%) rather than fundamentally transforming it (35%).

Coloradans are largely supportive of the steps their state and federal policymakers are taking to address health care costs and quality.

- A majority (62%) support the Colorado Standard Health Benefit Plan Act that was recently passed by the State Legislature, with both Democrats (80% support) and Republicans (55% support) showing strong support for the plan.
- By more than a 5-to-1 margin (42% more likely / 8% less likely), Senator Michael Bennet's proposed legislation that allows the FDA to accelerate approval of breakthrough therapies makes voters more likely to vote for him.

*This new ALG/Keating Research poll was conducted from July 16-21, 2021. The online survey sampled 603 registered voters in Colorado. Overall results were weighted to reflect the composition of registered voters in the state.*

*More information can be found at <http://consumers4qualitycare.org/colorado>.*

#### **ABOUT CONSUMERS FOR QUALITY CARE (CQC)**

Consumers for Quality Care (CQC) is a coalition of advocates and former policymakers working to provide a voice for patients in the health care debate as they demand better care. CQC is led by a board of directors that includes the Honorable Donna Christensen, physician and former Member of Congress; Jim Manley, former senior advisor to Senators Edward Kennedy and Harry Reid; and Jason Resendez, community advocate, and health care strategist.

To learn more about Consumers for Quality Care and the issues consumers are experiencing, visit <http://www.consumers4qualitycare.org/>.