



BULLY PULPIT INTERACTIVE

ALGIresearch

Consumers for
Quality Care

NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE POLL ON HEALTH CARE QUALITY, ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY

Key Findings

AUGUST 2021

consumers4qualitycare.org

INTRODUCTION

Before the pandemic, Consumers for Quality Care (CQC) research showed that Americans were more concerned with health care costs than costs related to retirement, housing, childcare and higher education. The pandemic put even more stress on our nation's health care infrastructure and exposed serious flaws in the system for patients; at the center of the issue is how much Americans are paying for care.

Recent research conducted by ALG Research and Bully Pulpit Interactive, conducted on behalf of Consumers for Quality Care, shows voters in New Jersey and across the U.S. want elected officials to get those costs down, so that they can feel confident that they have access to the quality health care they want, when they need it.



SURVEY RESULTS

Voters in ALG Research and Bully Pulpit Interactive's recent New Jersey poll see affordability as a major issue in the state's health care system. While voters generally believe the health care system is meeting their needs and are wary of making fundamental changes to it, especially as we continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, it's clear out-of-pocket costs are having a serious impact. As a result, voters – even those with insurance – are struggling to afford quality care and are racking up medical debt as costs continue to climb.

NEW JERSEY VOTERS' BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH HEALTH CARE: IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE

In an open-ended question about what word most describes health care in New Jersey, the quality of the system is evident as the word “good” is the second-most mentioned. However, “expensive” is the word that dominates their associations with the health care system.



MULTIPLE NUMBERS THROUGHOUT THIS DATA POINT TO WHY COST HAS BECOME SUCH AN ISSUE FOR VOTERS:

- Over three-quarters of New Jersey voters (78%) agree that the amount they pay for health care seems to be going up every year.
- Seven-in-ten (71%) voters say that the cost of health care is going up faster than their income. Among voters who are already struggling financially, this number climbs to 80%.
- Over half of voters (52%) agree that at some point they have struggled to pay a medical bill even while they had health insurance.
- Nearly one-quarter (23%) actively have unpaid or overdue medical bills that they are having difficulty paying off. Among voters struggling financially, this number climbs to 43%.

VOTERS WANT ELECTED OFFICIALS TO GET THOSE COSTS DOWN, BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF ACCESS TO QUALITY CARE.

Voters cite cost (54%) as the thing they want their leaders to work on most—more than three times as many choose cost compared to those who choose improving quality (15%), access (13%), or ease-of-navigation (13%). However, in an open-ended question, access to good health care providers (33%) received nearly as many mentions as affordable care (42%) when it comes to how they would define “good” health care.

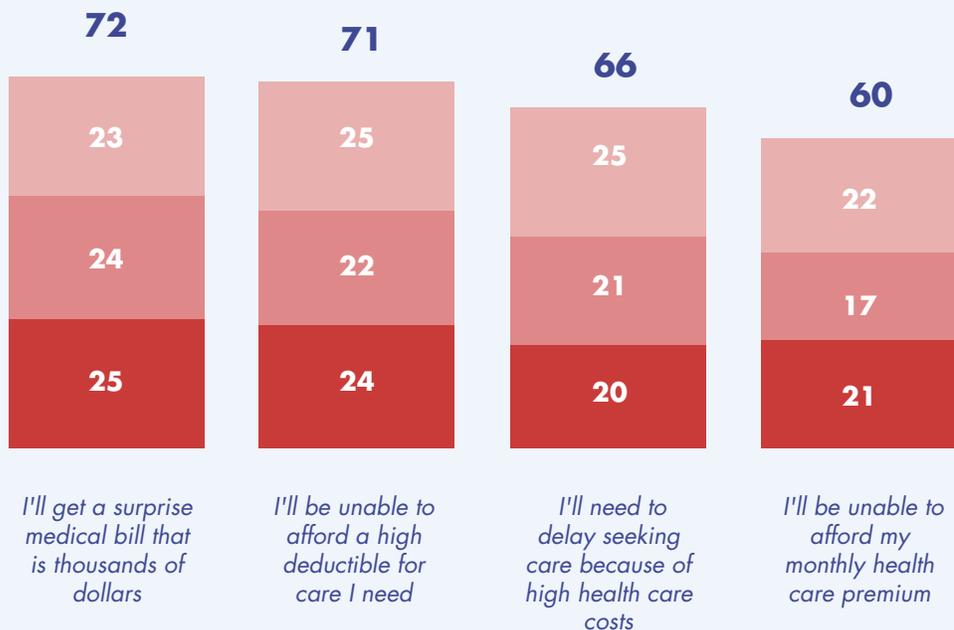
THE OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS THAT BOTHER PEOPLE MOST: SURPRISE BILLS, HIGH DEDUCTIBLES, AND MONTHLY PREMIUMS.

Majorities are concerned about getting a surprise bill (72% concerned), being unable to afford a high deductible (71%), or being unable to afford the monthly premium (60%). When it comes to reducing the costs of health care specifically, New Jersey voters would most like to see lower premiums (27%).



HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING?

■ *Extremely concerned*
 ■ *Very concerned*
 ■ *Somewhat concerned*



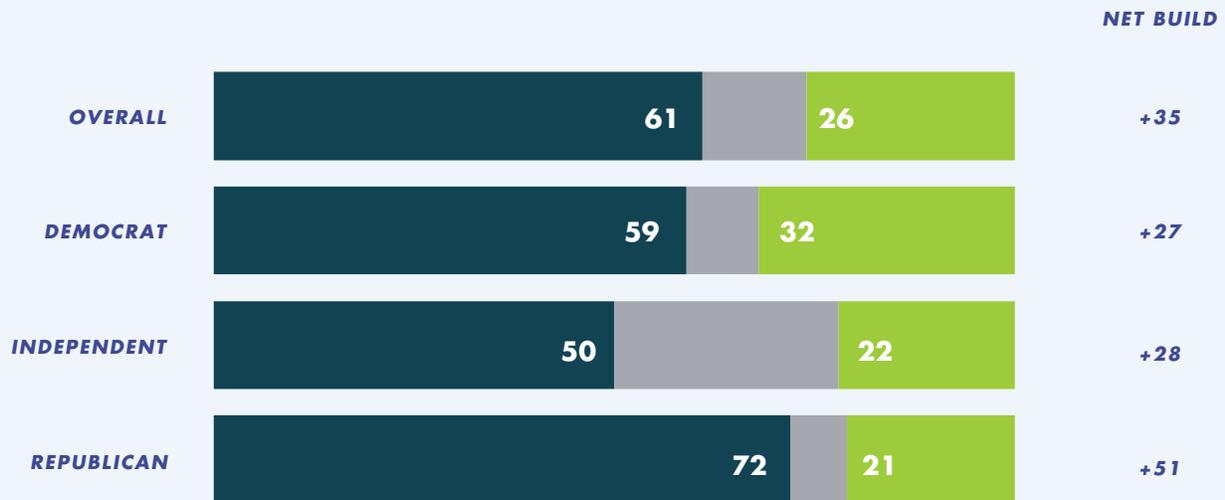
VOTERS WANT TARGETED, CAREFUL FIXES – ESPECIALLY COMING OUT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – NOT A GOVERNMENT-RUN SYSTEM.

Most agree we should be cautious making changes as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic (71% agree), and they are looking to Congress for targeted fixes that build on the current system (61%) rather than fundamentally transforming it (26%). A majority of voters (61%) want to see at least some government involvement in providing coverage, but just 16% of voters overall, including 27% of Democrats, want a fully government-run system.



THINKING ABOUT CHANGES CONGRESS COULD MAKE TO THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, WHICH IS CLOSER TO YOUR VIEW?

Congress should focus more on building upon the current system by making specific fixes, such as reducing out-of-pocket costs
 Don't know
 Congress should focus more on fundamentally transforming the health care system



INSTEAD, LEGISLATION THAT ALIGNS WITH THEIR PRIORITIES WOULD:

- Make sure insurance deductibles are low enough that they don't get in the way of getting quality care (93% agree with this).
- Prevent insurance companies from selling plans that cover so little that it isn't affordable to get care (89% agree with this).
- Permit non-physician health care providers to provide services currently administered by physicians (73% support this).
- Prevent insurance companies from limiting coverage or increasing premiums or copays for COVID survivors (58% support this).

DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Somewhat disagree



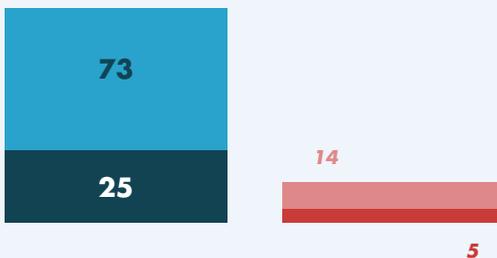
Insurance deductibles should be low enough that they don't get in the way of getting the health care you need.



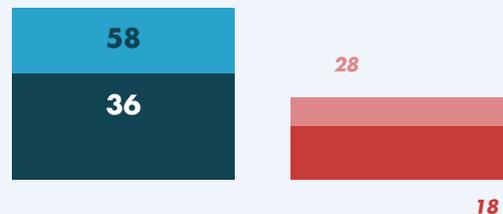
Insurance companies should not be allowed to sell plans that cover so little that going to the doctor isn't affordable.

WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE:

■ Strongly support
 ■ Somewhat support
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Somewhat oppose



Would you support or oppose a proposal to reduce health care costs by permitting non-physician health care providers, such as nurses and physician assistants, to provide some services currently provided by physicians?



Would you support or oppose a proposal to prevent insurance companies from limiting coverage or increasing premiums or copays for people who became infected with Covid 19 and survived?

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**

CONSUMERS4QUALITYCARE.ORG

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Key Findings

These findings are from an online survey, designed by ALG Research and Bully Pulpit Interactive and conducted by ALG Research July 19-25, 2021 among N=601 registered voters in New Jersey. Overall results were weighted to reflect the composition of registered voters in the state.

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Quality Care

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