



PENNSYLVANIA 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 Hart Research, conducted on behalf of Consumers for Quality Care, shows voters in Pennsylvania 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 Hart Research's recent Pennsylvania 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.

PENNSYLVANIANS' BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH HEALTH CARE: IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE.

. In an open ended question about what word most describes health care in Pennsylvania, 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:

- Three-in-four voters (75%) agree that the amount they pay for health care seems to be going up every year.
- A majority (58%) agree that at some point they have struggled to pay a medical bill even while they had health insurance.
- Nearly a quarter (23%) actively have unpaid or overdue medical bills that they are having difficulty paying off. Among voters who are already struggling financially, this number climbs to 44%.

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

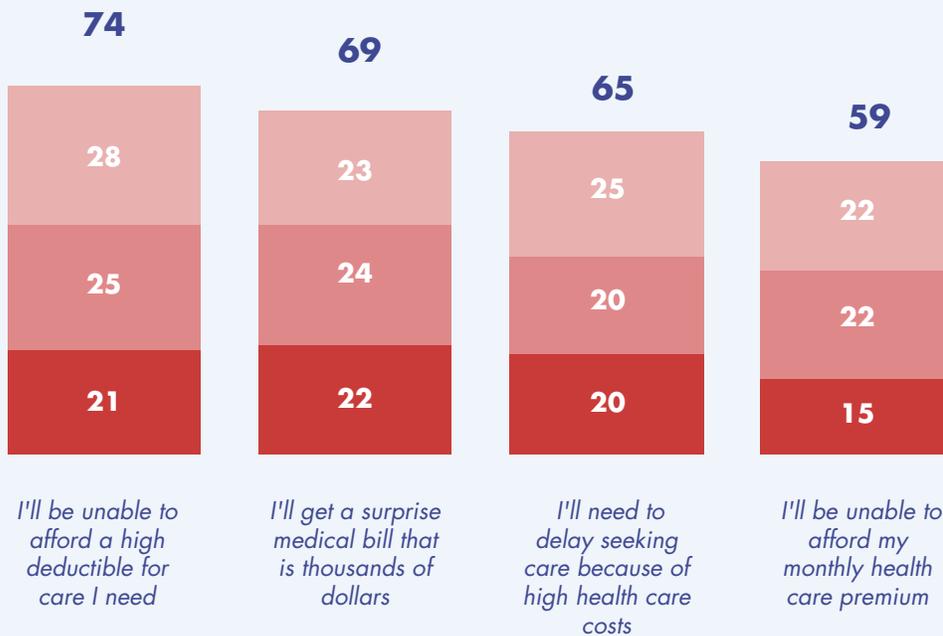
Voters cite cost (50%) as the thing they want their leaders to work on most—roughly three times as many choose cost compared to those who choose improving access (18%), quality (17%), or ease-of-navigation (13%). However, in an open-ended question, the same amount of respondents said “good health care” would mean access to good health care providers (39%) as said it would mean more affordable care (39%).

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

Majorities are concerned about being able to afford high deductibles (74% concerned), being able to afford getting a surprise medical bill (69%), delaying care because of high health care costs (65%), or being able to afford their monthly premium (59%). When it comes to reducing the costs of health care, Pennsylvania voters would most like to see lower premiums (24%), ensuring pre-existing conditions are covered (20%), and lower prescription medication costs (15%).

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING?

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

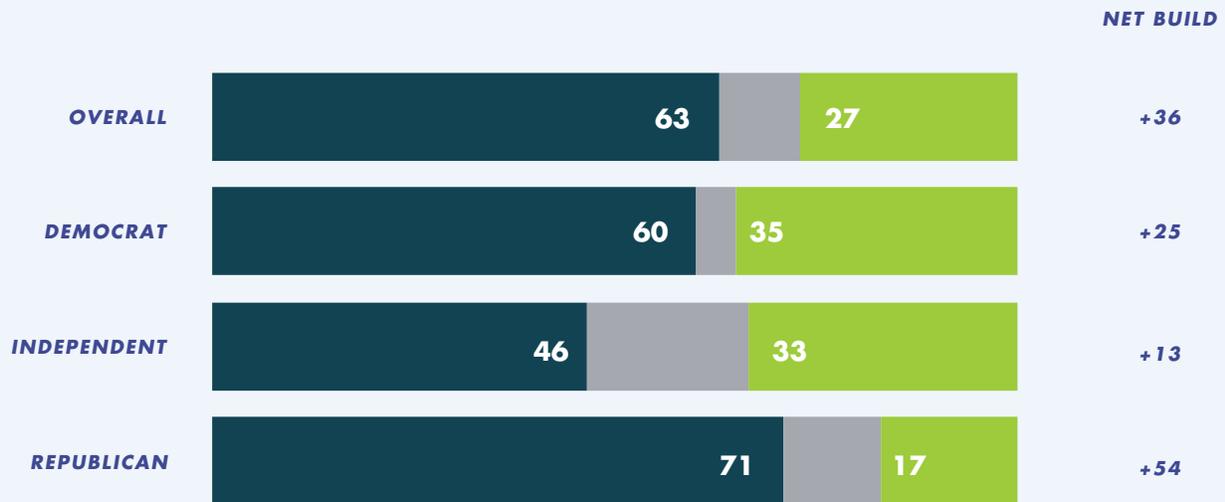


VOTERS WANT TARGETED, CAREFUL FIXES – ESPECIALLY COMING OUT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – NOT A GOVERNMENT-RUN SYSTEM.

Most agree we should be cautious making changes as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic (72% agree), and they are looking to Congress for targeted fixes that build on the current system (63%) rather than fundamentally transforming it (27%). A majority of voters (56%) want to see at least some government involvement in providing coverage, but just 14% of voters overall, including 21% 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

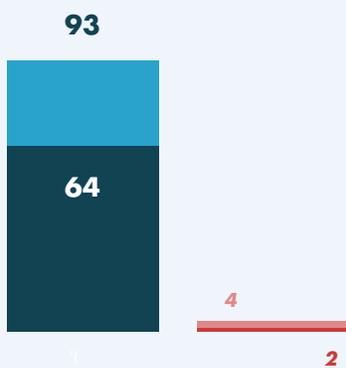


INSTEAD, LEGISLATION THAT ALIGNS WITH THEIR PRIORITIES WOULD:

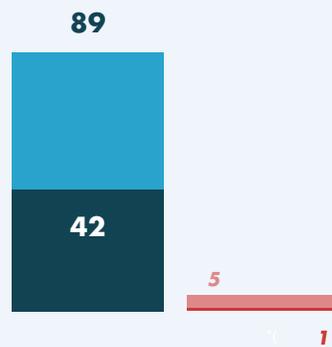
- Make sure insurance deductibles are low enough that they don't get in the way of getting quality care (93% agree with this).
- Improving home or community based care for the elderly and those with disabilities, which includes caregivers at a patients' home (89% agree with this).
- Prevent insurance companies from selling plans that cover so little that it isn't affordable to get care (87% agree with this).

DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?

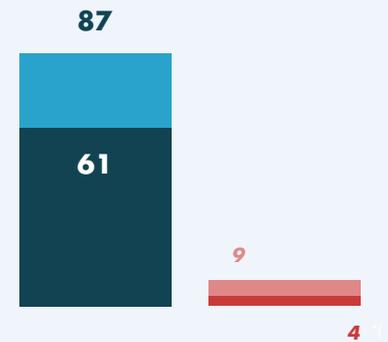
■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Somewhat disagree



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



Improving home or community based care for the elderly and those with disabilities, which includes caregivers at a patients' home, should be a high priority for ANY improvements to the health care system



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

OVERALL, 65% OF PENNSYLVANIANS ARE CONCERNED THAT COVID-19 SURVIVORS WHO DEVELOP SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEMS MAY HAVE TO PAY A GREATER SHARE OF THEIR HEALTH CARE COSTS OR MAY NOT BE COVERED AT ALL BECAUSE THEY CONTRACTED COVID. AMONG THE NEARLY 1-IN-6 PENNSYLVANIA HOUSEHOLDS WHERE SOMEONE CONTRACTED COVID-19, 77% ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THIS POSSIBILITY, AND REAFFIRMING THE BROAD SCOPE OF THIS ISSUE, HALF OF REPUBLICANS (51%) ALSO EXPRESS CONCERN.

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](https://consumers4qualitycare.org)

AUGUST 2021

PENNSYLVANIA STATEWIDE POLL

ON HEALTH CARE QUALITY,
ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY

Key Findings

These findings are from an online survey, designed by ALG Research and Hart Research and conducted by ALG Research July 15-19, 2021 among N=600 registered voters in Pennsylvania. Overall results were weighted to reflect the composition of registered voters in the state.

ALGresearch

Consumers for
Quality Care

HART RESEARCH
ASSOCIATES