Public Opinion on Health Care Reform: 15 Minutes, 15 Slides

Claudia Deane
Assoc. Director, Public Opinion & Survey Research
Kaiser Family Foundation
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CHART 1
Yes, high levels of personal satisfaction in some areas

Among those with health care coverage, percent who...

- Are satisfied with quality of care
- Are satisfied with ability to get latest treatments
- Rate health insurance coverage "excellent" or "good"

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

But there's a flip side…. Actual problems with cost

- Half say they or a member of their household have put off some sort of health care because of the cost in the past year.
- Two in ten say they or a member of their household have had problems paying medical bills over the past year.
- That percentage doubles among certain groups, such as the uninsured, those in poor health and those with lower incomes.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)

Worry even more widespread

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Very worried</th>
<th>Somewhat worried</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having to pay more for your health care or health insurance</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not being able to afford the health care services you think you need</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality of health care services you receive getting worse</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not being able to afford the prescription drugs you need</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losing your health insurance coverage*</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Various items based on half samples. Item marked with an * asked only of those with coverage.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)
CHART 4

Majority support has persisted

Which comes closer to describing your own views? Given the serious economic problems facing the country...

![Graph showing support for health care reform]

Note: “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys

CHART 5

Stark partisan differences from the get go

- It is more important than ever to take on health care reform now
- We cannot afford to take on health care reform right now
- Don’t know/Refused

![Pie charts showing support by political affiliation]

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)
CHART 6

One to watch

Do you think (you and your family/the country as a whole) would be better off or worse off if the president and Congress passed health care reform, or don't you think it would make much difference?

- Better off
- It wouldn't make much difference
- Worse off
- It depends

...you and your family

39% 32% 21%

...the country as a whole

51% 16% 23%

Note: “Don't know/Refused” responses not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)

CHART 7

Impact on own family: Time trend

Do you think you and your family would be better off or worse off if the president and Congress passed health care reform, or don't you think it would make much difference?

Better off
Wouldn't make much difference
Worse off

Feb-09 Apr-09 Jun-09 Jul-09

38% 36% 36% 32%

11% 14% 16% 21%

Note: “Don't know/Refused” and “It depends (vol.)” responses not shown.
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys
CHART 8

Percent saying will be worse off up in all groups

% saying will be personally worse off if president and Congress pass health care reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Feb-09</th>
<th>Apr-09</th>
<th>Jun-09</th>
<th>Jul-09</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>+11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>+11</td>
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</table>

Note: “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown.
Sources: Kaiser Family Foundation surveys

CHART 9

Support remains for many ways of expanding coverage

Now I’m going to read you some different ways to increase the number of Americans covered by health insurance. Please tell me if you would favor or oppose each option.

- Expanding Medicare to those uninsured who are ages 55 to 64
  - Strongly favor: 44%
  - Somewhat favor: 33%

- Expanding state government programs such as Medicaid and SCHIP for low-income people
  - Strongly favor: 40%
  - Somewhat favor: 34%

- Offering tax credits to help people buy private health insurance
  - Strongly favor: 30%
  - Somewhat favor: 39%

- Requiring all Americans to have health insurance, with financial help for those who can’t afford it
  - Strongly favor: 37%
  - Somewhat favor: 30%

- Requiring employers to either offer health insurance or pay money into a government pool
  - Strongly favor: 29%
  - Somewhat favor: 35%

- Creating a government-administered public health insurance option similar to Medicare to compete with private insurance plans
  - Strongly favor: 26%
  - Somewhat favor: 33%

- Having a national health plan – or single-payer plan – in which all Americans would get their insurance from a single government plan*
  - Strongly favor: 24%
  - Somewhat favor: 27%

Note: Various items based on half samples. Items marked with an * asked of two separate half samples as a wording experiment.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)
### CHART 10

**Opinions on a range of topics malleable (ie, Public plan)**

**Would you favor or oppose creating a government-administered public health insurance option similar to Medicare to compete with private health insurance plans?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CON CHALLENGE:**
What if you heard that a public health insurance option could give the government an unfair advantage over private insurance companies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Still favor</th>
<th>Still oppose</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>72%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Follow up questions asked of those who initially opposed. Responses shown on all graphs are based on total; on bottom graphs, “favor” includes those who initially favored and those who favored after hearing the follow up. “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)

### CHART 11

**Partisans agree?! Pre-existing conditions stink**

**Do you favor or oppose the federal government requiring health insurance companies to cover anyone who applies, even if they have a prior illness?**

- **Democrats**
  - Strongly favor: 52%
  - Somewhat favor: 30%
  - Somewhat oppose: 8%
  - Strongly oppose: 6%

- **Independents**
  - Strongly favor: 51%
  - Somewhat favor: 25%
  - Somewhat oppose: 12%
  - Strongly oppose: 9%

- **Republicans**
  - Strongly favor: 35%
  - Somewhat favor: 36%
  - Somewhat oppose: 12%
  - Strongly oppose: 14%

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)
CHART 12
Partisans agree: major changes needed

Which one of the following comes closest to your view about the health care system in America today?

- Needs complete overhaul
- Needs major changes
- Needs minor changes
- Works fine as is
- Don’t know/Refused

57% 67% 82%

Republicans Independents Democrats


CHART 13
Willingness to pay

Would you be willing to pay more -- either in higher health insurance premiums or higher taxes -- in order to increase the number of Americans who have health insurance, or not?

Note: Asked of half sample in July 2009. “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown.
CHART 14

Changing tax treatment of employer health benefits

Right now, workers do not pay taxes on the money that their employer puts into their health insurance benefits. Some policymakers are proposing that workers with the most generous health care benefits should pay taxes on a share of the money the employer puts into that health insurance, with those taxes helping to pay for health care reform including covering more of the uninsured. Do you favor or oppose changing the law so that workers with the most generous health care benefits would pay taxes on the money their employer puts toward their coverage?

41% Favor
25% Somewhat favor
16% Strongly favor
6% Don’t know/Refused
18% Somewhat oppose
35% Strongly oppose
53% Oppose

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)

CHART 15

Other tax options

Please tell me if you would favor or oppose each of the following to help pay for health care reform and provide coverage for more of the uninsured.

- Increasing the cigarette tax: 43% Strongly favor, 21% Somewhat favor, 13% Somewhat oppose, 21% Strongly oppose
- Increasing income taxes for people from families making more than $250,000 a year: 40% Strongly favor, 24% Somewhat favor, 11% Somewhat oppose, 22% Strongly oppose
- Increase taxes on alcohol, wine and beer: 39% Strongly favor, 22% Somewhat favor, 13% Somewhat oppose, 24% Strongly oppose
- Increase taxes on unhealthy snack foods: 30% Strongly favor, 25% Somewhat favor, 18% Somewhat oppose, 24% Strongly oppose
- Increase taxes on soda and sugary soft drinks: 25% Strongly favor, 28% Somewhat favor, 18% Somewhat oppose, 27% Strongly oppose
- Limiting the amount of money higher income people can deduct from their taxes when they make contributions to charities: 22% Strongly favor, 28% Somewhat favor, 19% Somewhat oppose, 25% Strongly oppose
- Having a Value Added Tax, or VAT, which is like a national sales tax: 12% Strongly favor, 23% Somewhat favor, 19% Somewhat oppose, 41% Strongly oppose

Note: Asked of half sample. “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 7-14, 2009)