

**THE COMMONWEALTH FUND
HEALTH CARE OPINION LEADERS SURVEY**

July 2005

TABLE 1
Overall Success of Medicare
“Overall, how successful do you think the Medicare program has been?”

Base: 230 Respondents

	Total	Academic/ Research Institution	Health Care Delivery	Business/ Insurance/ Other Health Care Industry	Government/ Labor/ Consumer Advocacy
	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely/very successful/successful	86	86	88	80	93
Extremely successful	23	25	26	17	27
Very successful	43	46	41	39	40
Successful	19	16	21	23	27
Somewhat/not at all successful	14	14	12	19	7
Somewhat successful	14	14	12	19	7
Not at all successful	—	—	—	—	—
Not sure/No answer	*	—	—	1	—

* Fewer than 1 percent of respondents gave this answer.

TABLE 2
Specific Components of Medicare
“How successful has Medicare been in accomplishing each of the following?”

Base: 230 Respondents

	Total	Academic/ Research Institution	Health Care Delivery	Business/ Insurance/ Other Health Care Industry	Government/ Labor/ Consumer Advocacy
	%	%	%	%	%
Providing beneficiaries with stable, predictable coverage over time and guaranteed access to basic medical care for seniors and qualifying disabled	92	90	84	91	97
Extremely/very successful/successful					
Extremely successful	37	36	38	32	53
Very successful	32	34	26	29	20
Successful	24	19	21	30	23
Somewhat/not at all successful	7	9	16	7	3
Somewhat successful	7	9	16	7	3
Not at all successful	—	—	—	—	—
Not sure/No answer	*	1	—	1	—

* Fewer than 1 percent of respondents gave this answer.

TABLE 2
Specific Components of Medicare (continued)

Base: 230 Respondents

		Total	Academic/ Research Institution	Health Care Delivery	Business/ Insurance/ Other Health Care Industry	Government/ Labor/ Consumer Advocacy
		%	%	%	%	%
Providing support for medical education and training programs	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	80	82	81	75	87
	Extremely successful	19	25	17	12	20
	Very successful	34	37	31	32	37
	Successful	27	20	33	32	30
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	14	14	16	19	3
	Somewhat successful	10	10	12	14	3
	Not at all successful	3	4	3	4	—
	Not sure/No answer	6	3	3	6	10
Providing financial protection for those vulnerable due to low-income and/or poor health	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	71	72	71	62	73
	Extremely successful	15	11	26	16	17
	Very successful	32	35	28	22	27
	Successful	24	26	17	25	30
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	28	28	29	36	27
	Somewhat successful	24	23	21	32	23
	Not at all successful	4	5	9	4	3
	Not sure/No answer	*	—	—	1	—
Improving health status of beneficiaries, functional impairment, and/or reduced mortality	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	67	71	64	57	73
	Extremely successful	12	14	12	7	13
	Very successful	28	34	22	23	20
	Successful	27	23	29	26	40
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	31	26	36	41	27
	Somewhat successful	27	25	34	33	23
	Not at all successful	3	2	2	7	3
	Not sure/No answer	2	3	—	3	—
Stimulating and supporting spread of new medical technology and treatment methods	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	64	73	55	54	63
	Extremely successful	13	18	9	7	13
	Very successful	27	31	24	23	27
	Successful	24	24	22	23	23
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	33	25	40	41	37
	Somewhat successful	25	23	28	25	37
	Not at all successful	7	3	12	16	—
	Not sure/No answer	3	2	5	6	—

* Fewer than 1 percent of respondents gave this answer.

TABLE 2
Specific Components of Medicare (continued)

Base: 230 Respondents

		Total	Academic/ Research Institution	Health Care Delivery	Business/ Insurance/ Other Health Care Industry	Government/ Labor/ Consumer Advocacy
		%	%	%	%	%
Helping decrease racial disparities through improved access to care for minority beneficiaries	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	61	72	59	48	60
	Extremely successful	7	10	2	4	10
	Very successful	26	30	29	17	27
	Successful	29	32	28	26	23
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	33	25	38	43	33
	Somewhat successful	27	19	29	36	27
	Not at all successful	7	6	9	7	7
Not sure/No answer	2	3	3	9	7	
Helping ensure the financial stability of health care providers and their ability to serve the poor and uninsured	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	60	67	43	48	80
	Extremely successful	8	10	3	7	20
	Very successful	26	33	22	17	20
	Successful	25	24	17	23	40
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	39	31	55	51	17
	Somewhat successful	30	24	36	43	13
	Not at all successful	9	8	19	7	3
Not sure/No answer	2	2	2	1	3	
By providing home care, allowing frail elderly and disabled to live independently at home or in the community	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	41	41	47	38	37
	Extremely successful	3	4	7	—	3
	Very successful	13	12	16	14	3
	Successful	24	25	24	23	30
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	56	58	48	58	63
	Somewhat successful	47	48	41	51	50
	Not at all successful	9	9	7	7	13
Not sure/No answer	3	2	5	4	—	
Using purchasing leverage to improve quality of care	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	21	19	17	28	17
	Extremely successful	1	2	2	1	3
	Very successful	4	4	2	6	3
	Successful	16	14	14	20	10
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	77	81	83	71	77
	Somewhat successful	38	36	52	29	57
	Not at all successful	39	45	31	42	20
Not sure/No answer	1	—	—	1	7	

TABLE 2
Specific Components of Medicare (continued)

Base: 230 Respondents

		Total	Academic/ Research Institution	Health Care Delivery	Business/ Insurance/ Other Health Care Industry	Government/ Labor/ Consumer Advocacy
		%	%	%	%	%
Encouraging healthier lifestyles and preventive care	Extremely/ very successful/ successful	12	10	16	14	7
	Extremely successful	*	1	2	—	—
	Very successful	2	3	—	1	—
	Successful	10	7	14	13	7
	Somewhat/ not at all successful	87	89	83	83	93
	Somewhat successful	44	44	50	30	53
	Not at all successful	43	45	33	52	40
Not sure/No answer	2	1	2	3	—	

* Fewer than 1 percent of respondents gave this answer.

TABLE 3
Medicare Advantage vs. Medicare FFS
“In general, do you think Medicare Advantage plans or
Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) buys more value for money spent?”

Base: 230 Respondents

	Total	Academic/ Research Institution	Health Care Delivery	Business/ Insurance/ Other Health Care Industry	Government/ Labor/ Consumer Advocacy
	%	%	%	%	%
Medicare Advantage buys more value for money spent	35	28	28	52	30
Medicare FFS buys more value for money spent	27	31	22	14	30
Both buy equal value for money spent	8	8	12	9	7
Not sure	30	33	38	25	33

TABLE 4
The Future of Medicare

“Health policy experts have suggested various changes to the Medicare program.
Do you favor or oppose changing Medicare in the following ways?”

Base: 230 Respondents

		Total	Academic/ Research Institution	Health Care Delivery	Business/ Insurance/ Other Health Care Industry	Government/ Labor/ Consumer Advocacy
		%	%	%	%	%
Using Medicare leverage to accelerate adoption of electronic medical records and health information technology	Favor	89	86	84	91	93
	Oppose	3	1	2	6	—
	Not sure/ No answer	8	14	14	3	7
Using Medicare’s leverage to reward providers for performance on quality and efficiency	Favor	87	86	83	90	90
	Oppose	4	5	5	4	—
	Not sure/ No answer	8	9	12	6	10
Having Medicare beneficiaries designate a primary care “medical home” and reward providers for coordinating care and ensuring receipt of preventive care	Favor	84	85	86	80	90
	Oppose	6	8	5	7	3
	Not sure	10	8	9	13	7
Having higher-income Medicare beneficiaries pay higher premiums	Favor	68	71	76	71	67
	Oppose	22	20	17	20	23
	Not sure	9	8	7	9	10
Allowing those under age 65 to contribute to a Medicare savings account to be used when covered by Medicare for premiums and out-of-pocket costs for acute and long-term care	Favor	67	58	74	72	57
	Oppose	17	25	14	7	20
	Not sure	16	16	12	20	23
Raising taxes to ensure Medicare’s long-term solvency	Favor	67	71	64	48	83
	Oppose	23	19	21	38	7
	Not sure	10	9	16	13	10
Having Medicare offer its own comprehensive benefit package as an alternative to Medigap or Medicare Advantage, including hospital, physician, prescription drug, and other services with modest cost-sharing	Favor	67	71	76	48	70
	Oppose	17	12	14	32	3
	Not sure	16	17	10	20	27
Eliminating the two-year waiting period for coverage of the disabled	Favor	67	68	72	58	77
	Oppose	16	14	10	23	3
	Not sure	18	18	17	19	20

TABLE 4
The Future of Medicare (continued)

Base: 230 Respondents

		Total	Academic/ Research Institution	Health Care Delivery	Business/ Insurance/ Other Health Care Industry	Government/ Labor/ Consumer Advocacy
		%	%	%	%	%
Permitting older adults ages 50–64 to purchase coverage under Medicare	Favor	65	69	74	52	77
	Oppose	23	19	22	33	13
	Not sure	12	12	3	14	10
Eliminating extra payments for private health plans	Favor	47	53	53	25	60
	Oppose	31	24	24	48	20
	Not sure	22	23	22	28	20
Capping federal spending per Medicare beneficiary through premium support or other means	Favor	18	19	16	17	7
	Oppose	66	64	69	61	80
	Not sure	16	17	16	22	13

TABLE 5
Place of Employment

“Which of the following best describes the type of place or institution for which you work?”

Base: 289 Respondents

	%
Academic and Research Institutions	
Medical, public health, nursing, or other health professional school	22
Think Tank/Health Care Institute/Policy Research Institution	18
University setting not in a medical, public health, nursing, or other health professional school	9
Foundation	7
Medical Publisher	1
Health Care Delivery and Professional, Trade, or Consumer Organizations	
Medical society or professional association or organization	10
Hospital	7
Physician practice/Other clinical practice (patient care)	3
Clinic	3
Hospital or related professional association or organization	5
Nursing home/Long-term care facility	1
Allied health society or professional association or organization	2
Other Industry/Business Settings	
Health care consulting firm	7
CEO, CFO, Benefits manager	4
Accrediting body and organization (non-governmental)	2
Polling organization	—
Financial service industry	*
Other	3
Labor Consumer Advocacy Groups and Health Care Improvement Organizations	
Labor/Consumer/Seniors' advocacy group	4
Health care improvement organization	3
Health Insurance and Professional Organization	
Health insurance/managed care industry	8
Health insurance and business association or organization	3
Government	
Non-elected federal executive branch official	3
Staff for a federal elected official or federal legislative committee	1
Non-elected state executive branch official	1
Staff for a state elected official or state legislative committee	*
Staff for non-elected federal executive branch official	1
Staff for non-elected state executive branch official	—
Pharmaceutical Industry and Professional Organization	
Drug manufacturer	5
Pharmaceutical/Medical device trade association organization	—
Biotech company	2
Device company	*

* Fewer than 1 percent of respondents gave this answer.

TABLE 6
Type of Employment

“How would you describe your current employment position?”

Base: 230 Respondents

	%
Teacher, researcher, professor	31
Policy analyst	27
CEO/President	22
Physician	19
Administration/Management	17
Consultant	13
Department head/Dean	7
Lobbyist	6
Policymaker or policy staff (federal)	5
Foundation officer	5
Consumer advocate	5
Health care purchaser	4
Other health care provider (not physician)	3
Policymaker or policy staff (state)	2
Investment analyst	—
Other	2
Retired	4

TABLE 7
Permission to Be Named as a Survey Participant

Base: 230 Respondents

	%
Yes	87
No	13
No answer	1

APPENDIX

METHODOLOGY

The online survey was conducted by Harris Interactive with 230 opinion leaders in health policy and innovators in health care delivery and finance between June 9th, 2005, and June 22nd, 2005.

The sample for this survey was developed by using a two-step process. Initially, The Commonwealth Fund and Harris Interactive jointly identified a number of experts across different industries and professional sectors with a range of perspectives, based on their affiliations and involvement in various organizations and institutions. Harris Interactive then conducted an online survey with these experts asking them to nominate others within and outside their own fields whom they consider to be leaders and innovators in health care. Based on the result of the survey and after careful review by Harris Interactive, The Commonwealth Fund, and a selected group of health care experts, the sample for this poll was created. The final list included 1,290 people.

Harris Interactive sent out individual e-mail invitations containing a password-protected link to the entire sample. Of the 1,290 e-mail invitations, one was returned as undeliverable. Steps were taken to attempt to correct the e-mail address and locate the individual, but these efforts were unsuccessful. Data collection took place between June 9th, 2005 and June 22nd, 2005. A total of three reminders were sent to anyone who had not responded. The response rate was 18 percent. Typically, samples of this size are associated with a sampling error of +/- 6.5%.