

Commonwealth Fund Survey of Public Views of the U.S. Health Care System, 2006

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Datasheet Questionnaire  
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**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q1** Which of the following statements comes closest to expressing your overall view of the health care system in this country?  
(READ LIST)

[RANDOMIZE]

- |   |  |    |
|---|--|----|
| 1 | On the whole, the system works pretty well and only minor changes are necessary to make it work better.          | 20 |
| 2 | There are some good things in our health care system, but fundamental changes are needed to make it work better. | 46 |
| 3 | Our health care system has so much wrong with it that we need to completely rebuild it.                          | 30 |
| 8 | Not sure (V)   | 4  |
| 9 | Decline to answer (V)  | 1  |

**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q2** In general, how would you describe your own health? (READ LIST)

- |   |                       |    |
|---|-----------------------|----|
| 1 | Excellent             | 23 |
| 2 | Very good             | 34 |
| 3 | Good                  | 28 |
| 4 | Fair                  | 12 |
| 5 | Poor                  | 3  |
| 8 | Not sure (V)          | *  |
| 9 | Decline to answer (V) | *  |

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**Q3** Thinking about the future, how worried are you that you or your family (READ EACH ITEM):

**Q4**

[RANDOMIZE]

|  |            | 1              | 2              |            | 3              | 4              | 8           | 9                |
|--|------------|----------------|----------------|------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|
|  | NET        | Very           | Some-          | Net        | Not            | Not            | Not         | Decline          |
|  | <u>1/2</u> | <u>Worried</u> | <u>what</u>    | <u>3/4</u> | <u>Very</u>    | <u>At All</u>  | <u>Sure</u> | <u>to Answer</u> |
|  |            |                | <u>Worried</u> |            | <u>Worried</u> | <u>Worried</u> | <u>(V)</u>  | <u>(V)</u>       |
| 1 Will not get high quality care when you need it  | 47         | 19             | 28             | 53         | 33             | 20             | *           | *                |
| 2 Will not be able to pay your medical bills in the event of serious illness   | 48         | 23             | 25             | 51         | 29             | 22             | 1           | -                |
| 3 Will experience a medical error or mistake, such as a wrong drug or dose of medicine, incorrect lab test results, or a medical or surgical error | 47         | 16             | 31             | 52         | 34             | 18             | 1           | -                |

**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q5** When you need medical care, how important do you think it is that (READ EACH ITEM) – Is it very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

**Q6**

[RANDOMIZE]

|  |            | 1                | 2                |            | 3                | 4                | 8           | 9                |
|--|------------|------------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
|  | NET        | Very-            | Somewhat         | Net        | Not              | Not              | Not         | Decline          |
|  | <u>1/2</u> | <u>Important</u> | <u>Important</u> | <u>3/4</u> | <u>Very</u>      | <u>At All</u>    | <u>Sure</u> | <u>to Answer</u> |
|  |            |                  |                  |            | <u>Important</u> | <u>Important</u> | <u>(V)</u>  | <u>(V)</u>       |
| 1 You have ONE place to go to that is responsible for seeing you when you are sick or need routine care, knowing you and your medical history, and coordinating the care you need. | 92         | 75               | 17               | 7          | 5                | 2                | 1           | *                |
| 2 Doctors you see, with your permission, have access to ALL your medical records, including primary care and specialist reports, test results, and medications.                    | 93         | 77               | 16               | 6          | 4                | 1                | 1           | *                |
| 3 You have easy access to all The information in your own medical record.  | 94         | 79               | 15               | 5          | 4                | 1                | *           | *                |

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**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q7** Thinking about the way the health care system currently works, how important is it that (READ EACH ITEM)  
– Is it very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

**Q8**

[RANDOMIZE]

|  | <b>NET<br/>1/2</b> | <b>1<br/>Very-<br/>Important</b> | <b>2<br/>Somewhat<br/>Important</b> | <b>Net<br/>3/4</b> | <b>3<br/>Not<br/>Very<br/>Important</b> | <b>4<br/>Not<br/>At All<br/>Important</b> | <b>8<br/>Not<br/>Sure<br/>(V)</b> | <b>9<br/>Decline<br/>to Answer<br/>(V)</b> |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 You have information about the quality of care provided by different doctors or hospitals                                  | <b>95</b>          | <b>77</b>                        | <b>18</b>                           | <b>4</b>           | <b>2</b>                                | <b>1</b>                                  | <b>1</b>                          | <b>*</b>                                   |
| 2 You have information about the costs of care to you before you actually get the care                                       | <b>91</b>          | <b>69</b>                        | <b>22</b>                           | <b>8</b>           | <b>5</b>                                | <b>3</b>                                  | <b>*</b>                          | <b>*</b>                                   |
| 3 Insurance companies identify and reward doctors and hospitals who achieve excellence in the quality and efficiency of care | <b>87</b>          | <b>62</b>                        | <b>25</b>                           | <b>10</b>          | <b>6</b>                                | <b>4</b>                                  | <b>3</b>                          | <b>*</b>                                   |
| 4 Care from different doctors and other health care professionals be well coordinated  | <b>96</b>          | <b>79</b>                        | <b>17</b>                           | <b>3</b>           | <b>3</b>                                | <b>1</b>                                  | <b>1</b>                          | <b>*</b>                                   |

**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q9** Based on your and your family’s medical care experiences in the past two years, how serious a problem has been each of the following (READ EACH ITEM) – was it a very serious a problem, somewhat serious problem, not very serious problem, or no at all a problem?

**Q10**

[RANDOMIZE]

|   | <b>NET<br/>1/2</b> | <b>1<br/>Very<br/>Serious<br/>Problem</b> | <b>2<br/>Somewhat<br/>Serious<br/>Problem</b> | <b>Net<br/>3/4</b> | <b>3<br/>Not Very<br/>Serious<br/>Problem</b> | <b>4<br/>Not<br/>At All<br/>a Problem</b> | <b>8<br/>Not<br/>Sure<br/>(V)</b> | <b>9<br/>Decline<br/>to Answer<br/>(V)</b> |
|---|--------------------|---|---|--------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 Getting an appointment with a doctor quickly when you or your family are sick or have a medical problem without going to the emergency room | <b>39</b>          | <b>21</b>                                 | <b>19</b>                                     | <b>60</b>          | <b>21</b>                                     | <b>39</b>                                 | <b>*</b>                          | <b>*</b>                                   |
| 2 Finding out how to get help for caring for an aging parent or seriously ill family member   | <b>36</b>          | <b>20</b>                                 | <b>16</b>                                     | <b>57</b>          | <b>16</b>                                     | <b>41</b>                                 | <b>5</b>                          | <b>1</b>                                   |
| 3 Paying your or your family’s medical bills  | <b>38</b>          | <b>19</b>                                 | <b>19</b>                                     | <b>62</b>          | <b>22</b>                                     | <b>40</b>                                 | <b>*</b>                          | <b>*</b>                                   |
| 4 Paying for your and family’s health insurance   | <b>38</b>          | <b>21</b>                                 | <b>17</b>                                     | <b>60</b>          | <b>21</b>                                     | <b>39</b>                                 | <b>1</b>                          | <b>1</b>                                   |
| 5 Having to spend time on paperwork or disputes related to medical bills and health insurance   | <b>39</b>          | <b>16</b>                                 | <b>23</b>                                     | <b>60</b>          | <b>24</b>                                     | <b>36</b>                                 | <b>1</b>                          | <b>*</b>                                   |

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**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q11** In the past 2 years, when getting care for a medical problem, was there ever a time when you or your family member felt that doctors, hospitals, or other health care professionals (READ EACH ITEM)?

**Q12**

[RANDOMIZE]

|  | <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b><br>Not<br>Applicable | <b>8</b><br>Not<br>Sure | <b>9</b><br>Decline To<br>Answer |
|--|------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
|  | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> | <u>(V)</u>                    | <u>(V)</u>              | <u>(V)</u>                       |
| 1 Ordered a test you felt was unnecessary because it had already been done   | 17         | 79        | 2                             | 1                       | *                                |
| 2 Recommended treatment, medications or medical tests that you thought were unnecessary, with little health benefit                                    | 25         | 72        | 2                             | 1                       | -                                |
| 3 Made a medical error or mistake, including giving you the wrong drug or dose of medicine, incorrect lab test results, or a medical or surgical error | 17         | 81        | 2                             | *                       | *                                |
| 4 Failed to provide important information about your medical history or test results to doctors, nurses or others you think should have had it         | 19         | 77        | 2                             | 2                       | *                                |

**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q13** How effective do you think each of the following changes would be in improving care for patients (READ EACH ITEM) – would you say very effective, somewhat effective, not very effective, or not at all effective?

**Q14**

[RANDOMIZE]

|  | <b>NET</b><br><u>1/2</u> | <b>1</b><br>Very-<br>Effective | <b>2</b><br>Somewhat<br>Effective | <b>Net</b><br><u>3/4</u> | <b>3</b><br>Not<br>Very<br>Effective | <b>4</b><br>Not<br>At All<br>Effective | <b>8</b><br>Not<br>Sure<br>(V) | <b>9</b><br>Decline<br>to Answer<br>(V) |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 Doctors using computerized medical records so that all your information was readily available when you came for an appointment | 92                       | 71                             | 22                                | 6                        | 4                                    | 2                                      | 1                              | *                                       |
| 2 Doctors practicing with other doctors in groups, rather than practicing on his or her own                                      | 81                       | 47                             | 34                                | 14                       | 10                                   | 4                                      | 4                              | *                                       |
| 3 Doctors and nurses working closely as teams, with an expanded role for nurse   | 90                       | 63                             | 27                                | 7                        | 5                                    | 2                                      | 2                              | *                                       |
| 4 Having doctors send you reminders to schedule visits for preventive care, including checkups and screening tests               | 88                       | 63                             | 26                                | 10                       | 6                                    | 4                                      | 1                              | *                                       |

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**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q15** Now I'm going to read you some different health care issues. As I read each one, please tell me how important you think it is for the President and Congress to deal with this issue. **(READ EACH ITEM)** - Is it very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

**Q16**

[RANDOMIZE]

|   |   | 1         | 2         |     | 3         | 4         | 8    | 9         |   |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|---|
|   | NET   | Very-     | Somewhat  | Net | Not       | Not       | Not  | Decline   |   |
|   | 1/2   | Important | Important | 3/4 | Very      | At All    | Sure | to Answer |   |
|   |   |           |           |     | Important | Important | (V)  | (V)       |   |
| 1 | Ensure that all Americans have adequate and reliable health insurance | 91        | 80        | 11  | 8         | 4         | 3    | 1         | 1 |
| 2 | Control the rising cost of medical care                               | 93        | 84        | 10  | 5         | 3         | 2    | 1         | 1 |
| 3 | Lower the costs of prescription drugs                                 | 93        | 78        | 14  | 6         | 4         | 3    | 1         | * |
| 4 | Improve the quality of nursing homes and long term care               | 93        | 75        | 18  | 5         | 3         | 2    | 1         | * |
| 5 | Reduce the complexity of insurance                                    | 92        | 71        | 21  | 6         | 4         | 2    | 2         | * |
| 6 | Ensure that Medicare remains financially sound long-term              | 95        | 84        | 11  | 4         | 2         | 2    | *         | * |
| 7 | Reform the medical malpractice system                                 | 87        | 65        | 22  | 9         | 6         | 2    | 3         | 1 |

**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q17** Which of the issues you just rated do you think is the MOST important?

**(READ LIST – SINGLE RESPONSE.)**

[RANDOMIZE]

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| 1 | Ensure that all Americans have adequate and reliable health insurance | 39 |
| 2 | Control the rising cost of medical care                               | 17 |
| 3 | Lower the costs of prescription drugs                                 | 10 |
| 4 | Improve the quality of nursing homes and long term care               | 5  |
| 5 | Reduce the complexity of insurance                                    | 5  |
| 6 | Ensure that Medicare remains financially sound long-term              | 12 |
| 7 | Reform the medical malpractice system                                 | 8  |
| 8 | Not sure (V)  | 2  |
| 9 | Decline to answer (V)   | 2  |

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**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q18** Which of the issues you just rated do you think is the SECOND MOST important?

**(READ LIST – SINGLE RESPONSE.)**

**[RANDOMIZE]**

|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
| 1 | Ensure that all Americans have adequate and reliable health insurance | <b>14</b> |
| 2 | Control the rising cost of medical care                               | <b>20</b> |
| 3 | Lower the costs of prescription drugs                                 | <b>21</b> |
| 4 | Improve the quality of nursing homes and long term care               | <b>9</b>  |
| 5 | Reduce the complexity of insurance                                    | <b>7</b>  |
| 6 | Ensure that Medicare remains financially sound long-term              | <b>18</b> |
| 7 | Reform the medical malpractice system                                 | <b>6</b>  |
| 8 | Not sure (V)  | <b>4</b>  |
| 9 | Decline to answer (V)   | <b>3</b>  |

**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

Summary of Q17 and Q18

| <b>Most Important Issue</b>   | <b>%</b>  |
|---|-----------|
| Ensure that all Americans have adequate and reliable health insurance | <b>52</b> |
| Control the rising cost of medical care                               | <b>37</b> |
| Lower the costs of prescription drugs                                 | <b>31</b> |
| Ensure that Medicare remains financially sound long-term              | <b>29</b> |
| Reform the medical malpractice system                                 | <b>14</b> |
| Improve the quality of nursing homes and long term care               | <b>14</b> |
| Reduce the complexity of insurance                                    | <b>12</b> |

**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q19** Now, I'd like to talk to you about the different kinds of health plans or health insurance people have, including those provided by the government. As I read each one, please tell me whether you are covered by it, or not.

**Q20**

**[RANDOMIZE]**

|  | <b>1</b>              | <b>2</b>                  | <b>8</b>                   | <b>9</b>                            |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|  | <b><u>Covered</u></b> | <b><u>Not Covered</u></b> | <b><u>Not Sure (v)</u></b> | <b><u>Decline to Answer (v)</u></b> |
| 1 Health insurance through your employer or union or a family member's employer or union.<br>[INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ASKED IF THIS COULD BE FROM A FORMER JOB, THE ANSWER IS YES.] | <b>66</b>             | <b>32</b>                 | <b>1</b>                   | <b>*</b>                            |
| 2 Health insurance that you bought directly  | <b>30</b>             | <b>68</b>                 | <b>1</b>                   | <b>*</b>                            |
| 3 Medicare, a government plan that pays health care bills for people aged 65 or older and for some disabled people   | <b>24</b>             | <b>74</b>                 | <b>1</b>                   | <b>*</b>                            |
| 4 Medicaid or any other a state medical assistance plan for those with lower incomes   | <b>15</b>             | <b>82</b>                 | <b>2</b>                   | <b>*</b>                            |
| 5 Health insurance from some other source [ANCHOR]   | <b>15</b>             | <b>83</b>                 | <b>2</b>                   | <b>*</b>                            |

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**BASE: INSURED RESPONDENTS (AT LEAST ONE YES TO Q11, 11A)**

**Q21** In the past year, was there ever a time when you did not have any health insurance coverage?

|   |                       |           |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Yes                   | <b>15</b> |
| 2 | No                    | <b>85</b> |
| 8 | Not sure (V)          | *         |
| 9 | Decline to answer (V) | *         |

**BASE: ALL ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS**

**Q22** When it comes to politics, do you generally consider yourself to be a...? (READ LIST)

[RANDOMIZE]

|   |                       |           |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Republican            | <b>24</b> |
| 2 | Democrat              | <b>36</b> |
| 3 | Independent           | <b>24</b> |
| 4 | Something else        | <b>11</b> |
| 8 | Not sure (v)          | <b>3</b>  |
| 9 | Decline to answer (v) | <b>2</b>  |