

Thomson Reuters Survey: Americans Skeptical That Healthcare Reform Will Improve Quality or Affordability

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Data Shows Deep Division Along Party Lines; Majority of Americans Willing to Shoulder Higher Taxes

ANN ARBOR, Mich., Sept. 30 /PRNewswire/ -- Americans lack confidence that healthcare reform will deliver more affordable or better quality medical care, according to a survey released today by Thomson Reuters.

Forty-one percent of survey respondents said they believed reform will make healthcare more affordable. When sorted by political affiliation, however, the results of the survey show sharp divisions along party lines: 72 percent of Democrats said they believe reform will lower healthcare costs versus 12 percent of Republicans.

The results are from a telephone survey of 3,003 households conducted from Sept 8-17 -- a segment of the Thomson Reuters PULSE Healthcare Survey, the biggest, longest-running survey of its kind. Each year, PULSE polls more than 100,000 U.S. households about healthcare behaviors, attitudes and utilization.

Here are the key findings:

- Lack of Faith That Reform Will Improve Cost or Quality: A minority of survey respondents (41 percent) believes healthcare reform will improve the cost of care. Even fewer (35 percent) believe it will improve the quality of care.
- Sharp Political Division: 72 percent of Democrats believe reform will lower healthcare costs compared with 35 percent of Independents and 12 percent of Republicans. The sharp division also was apparent when respondents were asked about the impact of reform on the quality of care: 66 percent of Democrats, 29 percent of Independents, and 8 percent of Republicans said they believed reform would improve quality.
- Majority of All Americans Willing to Pay Higher Taxes for Healthcare: 63 percent of survey respondents said they were willing to pay additional taxes to fund healthcare reform. That includes 78 percent of Democrats, 64 percent of Independents, and 48 percent of Republicans.
- Most Believe Americans Should Get the Best Care, But Don't: 76 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that Americans are "entitled to the best healthcare available." However, fewer than half (43 percent) believe the United States has the best healthcare system.
- Majority Satisfied with Status Quo: The survey asked respondents to rate their satisfaction with their healthcare providers, costs, and insurance coverage. Seventy-seven percent said they were satisfied with their doctor, 68 percent were satisfied with their health insurance coverage, and 53 percent were satisfied with the amount they pay out-of-pocket for healthcare.

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