



Americans Losing Confidence in Their Ability to Access and Pay for Healthcare, According to Thomson Reuters Index

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ANN ARBOR, Mich., April 28, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ --Americans' confidence in their ability to access and pay for healthcare continued to decline last month, according to a new consumer sentiment index from Thomson Reuters.

"Strikingly, Americans expect the situation to worsen significantly in the next three months," said Gary Pickens, chief research officer at Thomson Reuters.

The *Consumer Healthcare Sentiment Index* found that confidence waned three points from a baseline index of 100 in December to 97 in March. The index is based on the Thomson Reuters PULSE(TM) Healthcare Survey.

The index has two parts. A retrospective component gauges respondents' experiences during the past three months. A prospective component gauges their expectations for the coming three months.

In February, when the index dipped to 98, a statistically significant number of people reported that they had delayed filling or failed to fill a prescription in the past three months and expected to delay or cancel a diagnostic test in the next three months.

In March, an increasing number of people said they lost or reduced their health insurance coverage in the past three months. At the same time, more people said they expected to delay or cancel an elective surgery, diagnostic test, doctor visit, or therapy in the next three months.

"The index was developed to gauge the current use of medical services and predict future healthcare utilization," Pickens said. "We believe this information will be an important indicator and guide for healthcare organizations."

The index will be updated monthly. A report on the March findings and other information is available here:

<http://healthcarescience.thomsonreuters.com/indexes/>

The Thomson Reuters PULSE Healthcare Survey surveys more than 100,000 U.S. households annually about healthcare behaviors, attitudes and utilization. It is representative of all U.S. adults and households. The *Consumer Healthcare Sentiment Index* is based on responses from a survey subset of 3,000 respondents each month.

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