



Debating Health: Election 2008 Americans' Views on Socialized Medicine

This survey is part of the series, *Debating Health: Election 2008*. The series focuses on current health issues in the presidential campaign. The survey design team includes Professor Robert Blendon, Tami Buhr, John Benson and Kathleen Weldon of the Harvard School of Public Health; Humphrey Taylor, Scott Hawkins and Justin Greeves of Harris Interactive.

This survey was conducted by telephone within the United States among a nationwide cross section of adults aged 18 and over. The questions were asked on two separate surveys. The first survey was conducted January 23 to 27, 2008 among a representative sample of 1008 respondents. The second survey was conducted February 6 to 10, 2008 among a representative sample of 1030 respondents. The results for Questions 3 and 6 come from the January poll. The results for Questions 1, 2, 4, and 5 come from the February poll. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region, number of adults in the household, size of place (urbanicity) and number of phone lines in the household were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

All sample surveys and polls are subject to multiple sources of error including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. The sampling error for both polls is +/- 3.0% in 95 out of 100 cases for results based on the entire sample. For results based on a smaller subset the sampling error is somewhat larger.

To begin...

Q1 Politicians sometimes talk about "socialized medicine". How well do you understand what this phrase means? Would you say [READ LIST]?

67%	VERY/SOMEWHAT WELL (NET)
34%	Very well
33%	Somewhat well
31%	NOT VERY/NOT AT ALL WELL (NET)
15%	Not very well
15%	Not at all
2%	Don't know/Refused

(Asked of those who understand what socialized medicine means "very well", "somewhat well" or "not very well"; n=886)

Q2. So far as you understand the phrase, do you think that if we had socialized medicine in this country that the health care system would be better or worse than what we have now?

45%	Better
39%	Worse
4%	About the same (volunteer)
12%	Don't know/Refused

(Asked of those who understand what socialized medicine means “very well”, “somewhat well” or “not very well”; n=889)

Q3. Which of the following do you understand by the words 'Socialized Medicine'? Do you think it means a system where ...?

SUMMARY TABLE OF YES

- 79% B. The government makes sure everyone has health insurance
- 73% C. The government pays most of the cost of health care
- 32% A. The government tells doctors what to do

(Asked of those who understand what socialized medicine means “very well”, “somewhat well” or “not very well”; n=886)

Q4. Do you think of the following as being systems of socialized medicine or not? [INSERT A-C]

SUMMARY TABLE OF YES

- 60% B. Medicare - the system for seniors and people with disabilities
- 47% C. The veterans health care system
- 30% A. Managed care plans such as HMOs

(Asked of those who understand what socialized medicine means “very well”, “somewhat well” or “not very well”; n=886)

Q5. If elected, do you think [INSERT A-E] would propose changes which would create a socialized medical care system in the United States? [REPEAT FOR EACH CANDIDATE BELOW]

A. Hillary Clinton

- 69% Yes
- 21% No
- 10% Don't know/Refused

B. Barack Obama

- 57% Yes
- 26% No
- 18% Don't know/Refused

C. Mitt Romney

- 13% Yes
- 59% No
- 28% Don't know/Refused

D. Mike Huckabee

- 19% Yes
- 52% No
- 29% Don't know/Refused

E. John McCain

- 15% Yes
- 62% No
- 22% Don't know/Refused

SUMMARY TABLE OF YES

69% A. Hillary Clinton
57% B. Barack Obama
19% D. Mike Huckabee
15% E. John McCain
13% C. Mitt Romney

SUMMARY TABLE OF NO

62% E. John McCain
59% C. Mitt Romney
52% D. Mike Huckabee
26% B. Barack Obama
21% A. Hillary Clinton

Q6. Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan? This would include any private insurance plan through your employer or that you purchase yourself, as well as a government program like Medicare or Medicaid.

83%	Yes
15%	No
2%	Don't know/Refused