

**Harvard School of Public Health/  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

**Health Priorities Survey 1  
THE MEDICAL SYSTEM AND THE UNINSURED**

**Overall Results**

**June 17-21, 2009**

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**Harvard School of Public Health/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Health Priorities Survey 2009-1  
The Medical System and the Uninsured**

*The study was conducted for Harvard School of Public Health/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation via telephone by ICR, an independent research company. Interviews were conducted from June 17-21, 2009, among a nationally representative sample of 1098 respondents 18 years of age or older. Of those, 116 are African American and 109 are Hispanic. The margin of error is +/-3.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.*

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the nation's system for providing medical care to Americans.

MC-1 How would you rate the nation's system for providing medical care to Americans? Would you say excellent, good, fair or poor?  
(ENTER ONE ONLY)

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refused</b>
6/21/09	8	20	34	35	2	*
3/30/08	7	22	30	39	2	*
4/18/07	8	25	31	32	4	*

MC-2 What do you think are the TOP TWO problems with the nation's MEDICAL CARE SYSTEM?

	6/21/09	3/30/08	4/18/07
Health Care Costs (NET)	54	46	43
Cost/High cost (unspec)	26	27	23
Cost of prescription drugs	6	6	7
High cost of health care/services	16	7	8
High cost of insurance	12	9	8
Other health care costs	1	1	1
Insurance (NET)	35	23	23
Lack of benefits/medical coverage (poor coverage)	10	8	6
People who don't have insurance	13	8	8
Insurance companies have too much control choosing drs./procedures, etc)	4	2	2
Medicare issues	3	1	2
Medicare/Medicaid	*	1	*
Should have national health care plan	2	2	1
Health insurance (non spec)	1	2	2
Other insurance	5	3	4
Accessibility (NET)	16	16	12
Accessibility to health care for all	13	12	9
Accessibility to health care for poor	2	3	3
Accessibility to health care for elderly	1	1	1
Other accessibility	*	*	--
Lack of Quality Health Care (NET)	13	13	16
Poor service from health care providers (too slow/rude, etc)	3	4	5
Lack of quality health care	6	5	9
Lack of medical professionals	3	4	2
Other lack of quality health care	1	1	1
Government Role in Health Care (NET)	4	4	5
Government (mismanagement/they should pay, etc)	1	*	*
Government shouldn't be in healthcare	3	1	2
Other government role in health care	1	3	3
Law suits	2	1	2
Organization of the system	1	2	1
Greed	3	2	2
Misallocated money/lack of funding	2	2	3
Prescription drug program	--	1	2
Illegal immigrants getting health care	2	2	3
Other	10	8	19
None	5	8	8
Don't know	6	10	10
Refused	--	1	--

MC-3 Which of these statements do you think best describes the U.S. health care system today—it is in a state of crisis, it has major problems, it has minor problems, or it does not have any problems?

	In a state of crisis	Has major problems	Has minor problems	It does not have any problems	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	18	52	24	4	2	*
3/30/08	18	51	26	4	2	*

MC-4 Do you favor or oppose national health insurance, which would be financed by tax money, paying for most forms of health care?

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	55	38	7	*
3/30/08	55	35	9	1
4/18/07	61	30	9	*

MC-5 Do you favor or oppose having a law that requires everyone to have health insurance that they buy themselves or get through an employer. This would be similar to the law that requires people who drive cars to have auto insurance. People who cannot afford to buy health insurance would get help from the government to pay their health insurance premiums.

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	58	38	4	*

MC-6 In the past 12 months, have you had problems paying medical bills, or not?

	Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	24	76	--	*
3/30/08	22	77	1	*
4/18/07	22	78	*	--

MC-7 Was there a time over the past 12 months when you or another family member living in your household needed medical care, but did not get it?

	Yes	No	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	18	82	*	*
3/30/08	17	82	1	*
4/18/07	17	83	*	*

(Asked of total respondents who needed or had a family member who needed medical care in the past 12 months but did not get it; n = 169)

MC-8 Was it mainly for financial reasons, or for some other reasons?

	Financial Reasons	Some other reasons	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	89	11	--	--
3/30/08	85	12	2	--
4/18/07	80	20	*	--

**MC-7/MC-8 Combination Table**

	NO MEDICAL CARE			Received Medical Care	Don't know	Refused
	NET	Financial Reasons	Some other reasons			
6/21/09	18	16	2	82	*	*
3/30/08	17	14	2	82	1	*
4/18/07	17	13	3	83	*	*

READ TO EVERYONE: Now I have some questions about the uninsured, that is, people without any health insurance at all.

MC-9 Compared to five years ago, do you think the problem of Americans not having health insurance is a bigger problem, less of a problem, or about the same?

	Bigger	Less	About the same	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	63	4	31	2	*
8/30/00	47	10	37	7	*

MC-10 Do you think most people in your community without health insurance are unable to get medical treatment, or that these uninsured people are still able to get medical care they need from doctors and hospitals?

	Unable to get medical treatment	Still able to get medical care	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	34	58	7	*
8/30/00	31	57	11	*

(Asked of total who think people in community who are uninsured are still able to get medical care; n = 661)

MC-11 Do you think it is very difficult, somewhat difficult, not very difficult, or not difficult at all for most people in your community who do not have health insurance to get the medical care they need?

	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all	Don't know	Refused
6/21/09	10	49	23	16	2	*
8/30/00	17	48	21	12	3	0

**MC-10/11.Combo Table**

	-----ABLE TO GET CARE-----					Unable to get care	Don't know	Refused
	NET	Very	Somewhat	Not too	Not at all			
6/21/09	58	6	28	13	9	34	7	*
8/30/00	57	9	27	12	7	31	11	*

**(Asked of total who think people in community who are uninsured are unable to get medical treatment; n = 332)**

MC-12 Do you think that MOST of those who are unable to get the medical care they need suffer serious health consequences, some health consequences, or do you think that it doesn't matter very much?

	<b>Serious health consequence</b>	<b>Some health consequence</b>	<b>Doesn't matter very much</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refused</b>
6/21/09	50	41	10	*	--
8/30/00	60	34	4	2	0

**MC-10/12.Combo Table**

	<b>Able to get care</b>	<b>-----UNABLE TO GET CARE-----</b>				<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refused</b>
		<b>NET</b>	<b>Serious</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Doesn't matter much</b>		
6/21/09	58	34	17	14	3	7	*
8/30/00	57	31	19	11	1	11	*

MC-13 Do you think that the care that most uninsured people in your community get is as good as the care that the average person with insurance would get, or do you think that their care would not be as good?

	<b>As good</b>	<b>Not as good</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refused</b>
6/21/09	31	64	5	--
12/9/03	28	65	7	1

**(Asked of total insured; n = 958)**

MC-15 Thinking about the next six months, how worried are you that you will lose your health insurance coverage? Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

	<b>Very</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Not too</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refused</b>
6/21/09	11	18	24	47	*	*
3/30/08	7	14	22	56	1	--
4/18/07	6	15	20	59	1	*

**(Asked of total worried will lose health insurance in the next 6 months; n = 258)**

MC-16 I'm going to read a list of reasons why someone might be worried about losing their health insurance coverage. For each one, please tell me if it is a reason you are worried.

	<b>Yes, reason</b>	<b>No, not reason</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refused</b>
a. You or someone in your family might lose their job	64	35	*	*
b. Your health insurance might become too expensive	68	30	1	--
c. You or someone in your family has a medical problem that could lead to losing coverage	31	67	2	--
d. Your employer or a family member's employer might drop your insurance	54	45	1	--

**(Asked of total who are worried might lose health care for more than 1 reason)**

MC-17 You said you were worried about losing your health insurance coverage because (READ THE ITEMS ANSWERED "YES" IN MC-16). Which of those is the MOST IMPORTANT reason you are worried?

**MC-16/17. Most Important Reason Summary**

**Base = total who are worried might lose health insurance in next 6 months; n = 258**

	<b>6/21/09</b>
You or someone in your family might lose their job	39
Your health insurance might become too expensive	32
You or someone in your family has a medical problem that could lead to losing coverage	6
Your employer or a family member's employer might drop your insurance	10
None of these are most important	13