

White Paper



American Patients Hold Different Views About Healthcare Depending on Their Type of Condition

Mental Health Patients Most Likely to Be Uninsured and Have Poor Opinion of Pharma Industry;

High Cholesterol, Diabetes and Obesity Sufferers Most Hit by Out-of-Pocket Cost Increases



Ipsos Public Affairs

The Social Research and Corporate Reputation Specialists

It has been documented that Americans' attitudes about key issues raised in the healthcare reform debate vary depending on their income level, their political leaning, whether or not they are insured, and whether they suffer from a serious condition or not. However, a recent Ipsos Public Affairs study has uncovered that attitudes about healthcare and the issues and solutions being debated differ notably depending on the **type of condition** that Americans may suffer from.

Ipsos Public Affairs recently conducted an online study among 1,004 members of the general public which, in addition to the standard demographics (age, gender, education, employment status, etc.), asked respondents if they suffered from any chronic or serious conditions, allowing us to compare the perceptions of those suffering from a variety of ailments. Not only does this provide interesting information from a social research perspective, but also helps those in the health sector who specialize in various therapeutic areas (e.g., pharmaceutical brand managers) to better understand where sufferers of various conditions stand in the healthcare debate in order to communicate more effectively with them.

Main Findings

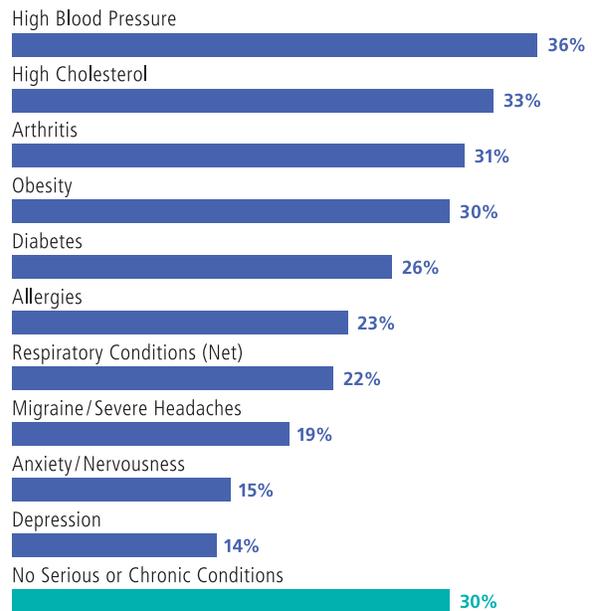
The study shows that:

- **Favorability towards the pharmaceutical industry** is far lower among sufferers of certain types of conditions, especially mental-health related conditions such as **depression** and **anxiety/nervousness**, than it is among sufferers of say, high cholesterol or high blood pressure.
- One quarter of **depression and anxiety** sufferers are **uninsured** compared with only 10% of high cholesterol sufferers; depression and anxiety sufferers are also those most likely to deem their coverage as being insufficient to receive the appropriate care they need to treat their condition.
- At least one in ten **depression, anxiety** and **allergy** sufferers have **lost their insurance coverage** in the past year.
- One third of **migraine** sufferers have **incurred premium or payroll deduction increases** and similar proportions of **obesity, high cholesterol** and diabetes sufferers have seen **increased out-of-pocket costs** in the past year.
- Sufferers of **every major type of condition** are more likely to **support a mandate requiring employers to provide health insurance** than are those who do not suffer from any serious or chronic condition.

Favorability toward Pharmaceutical Industry Varies by Conditions Suffered

The study found that favorability levels toward the pharmaceutical industry differ among sufferers with various conditions. While at least one in three of those suffering from high blood pressure, high cholesterol, arthritis and obesity have a favorable opinion toward the pharmaceutical industry, less than one in six of those suffering from depression or anxiety/nervousness have a favorable opinion. (See Figure 1).

Figure 1:
Favorability Toward Pharmaceutical Industry Depending on Condition Suffered (Very/Mainly Favorable)



Healthcare Coverage Varies Depending on Medical Conditions Suffered

The study also found that insurance coverage varies among sufferers of different ailments; larger proportions of those suffering from anxiety/nervousness and depression do not have health insurance than sufferers of other conditions or the public at large. These results are largely representative of the demographic characteristics of sufferers from these conditions, including the proportion eligible for Medicare; 17% of high cholesterol patients and diabetes patients surveyed are over the age of 65, while just 5% of depression and anxiety/nervousness sufferers are Medicare-age eligible.

Similarly, those who do not suffer from any serious or chronic conditions are also less likely to have health insurance; particularly government provided plans such as Medicare and Medicaid. It is likely that this is also a function of age, as many of the leading types of conditions are much more prevalent among older adults. (See Figure 2).

Figure 2:
Currently, what type of health insurance coverage do you personally have?

	Employer provided	Government	Privately purchased	Other type	Do not have health insurance
Depression	37%	30%	10%	10%	24%
Anxiety/Nervousness	39%	28%	13%	12%	24%
Respiratory Conditions – Net	43%	34%	6%	8%	20%
Allergies	52%	20%	6%	9%	20%
Obesity	41%	32%	12%	9%	19%
High blood pressure	46%	37%	10%	8%	16%
Arthritis	35%	45%	17%	10%	15%
Migraine/ Severe Headaches	62%	21%	6%	6%	14%
Diabetes	39%	47%	11%	12%	13%
High cholesterol	48%	40%	10%	9%	10%
No Serious or Chronic Conditions	51%	10%	8%	5%	26%

Sufferers from some ailments are particularly likely to have seen certain changes in their healthcare coverage over the past 12 months than others. For instance, one in eight depression and allergy sufferers (12%, respectively) as well as one in ten anxiety/nervousness, obesity and asthma sufferers (10%, respectively) said they have lost their health insurance coverage in the past year.

Additionally, one third of migraine sufferers (32%) have had their premiums or payroll deductions increased for the same coverage; and at least one third of obesity (30%), high cholesterol (31%) and diabetes sufferers (38%) now have higher out-of-pocket costs than they did a year ago.

At Least One In Five Sufferers Feel Their Health Coverage Is Not Adequate to Receive the Sufficient Care Required for their Condition

When it comes to sufferers perceptions as to whether or not their insurance coverage is sufficient to receive the appropriate care required for their condition, there are also major differences across various types of conditions. While close to three quarters of sufferers of high cholesterol and high blood pressure feel like their current coverage is sufficient, less than six in ten of those suffering from depression or anxiety/nervousness agree. In any case, at least two in ten sufferers of any leading condition say that their current coverage is not sufficient to receive the amount of care required for it. (See Figure 3).

Figure 3
Would you say that your current health insurance coverage is sufficient to receive the appropriate amount of care required for this/these conditions?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
High cholesterol	73%	22%	6%
High blood pressure	72%	21%	8%
Allergies	66%	25%	9%
Arthritis	66%	28%	6%
Respiratory conditions – Net	66%	27%	7%
Migraine/Severe headaches	65%	23%	12%
Diabetes	63%	30%	7%
Obesity	62%	31%	7%
Depression	59%	32%	9%
Anxiety/Nervousness	55%	37%	8%

Support for a Mandate Requiring All Employers to Offer Health Insurance to their Employees is More Likely to Be Supported by Sufferers than Non-Sufferers

Overall, those who suffer from chronic or serious conditions are more likely than those who do not to support requiring all employers offer health insurance to their employees and their families. Moreover, those who suffer from certain conditions are more likely to support this measure than others. Support for this mandate – requiring all employers to offer health insurance to their employees and their families – also varies based on respondents’ health insurance situation. Those who are currently covered are more likely to support this measure than those who are not covered. (See Figure 4).

Figure 4
Requiring that all employers offer health insurance to their employees and their families

	Support
Those who suffer from a serious or chronic condition (n=706)	70%
Those who Do Not suffer from a serious or chronic condition (n=298)	59%
Condition	
Depression	77%
High blood pressure	75%
Obesity	75%
Diabetes	74%
High cholesterol	72%
Anxiety/Nervousness	72%
Respiratory Conditions – Net	69%
Allergies	67%
Arthritis	66%
Migraine/Severe Headaches	65%
Coverage	
Government healthcare (n=221)	73%
Employer-provided health insurance (n=521)	68%
Do not have health Insurance (n=184)	62%

In Conclusion

While health care reform will likely impact all 300 million Americans, the way they will be affected differs based on many characteristics, including their income, age, family status, employment status and not least of all, their health status. However, it is important for all the parties involved in the reform debate to factor in that diverse attitudes and concerns of American patients may reflect the specific type of condition they suffer from.

Our study shows that, in particular, those with mental health conditions are most prone to be ill-disposed toward the pharmaceutical industry, to be uninsured or under-insured, and to favor an employer coverage mandate. Lack of insurance or insufficient coverage is also more common among sufferers of respiratory conditions and obesity.

These findings suggest that there may be a need for those specializing in various therapeutic areas to address issues related to the reform in light of the specific concerns expressed by sufferers of the conditions they help treat.

Most importantly, the research findings suggest that the therapeutic areas that may most benefit from extending health insurance coverage to all Americans will be those delving with conditions that present a large percentage of uninsured sufferers – particularly the treatment of mental health (e.g., depression or anxiety/nervousness), respiratory conditions and allergies. In contrast, the treatment of conditions whose sufferers tend to skew older such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol (many of whom are already covered by Medicare) may not see as steep a growth.

About the Study

Survey respondents were asked to identify the possible type of chronic or serious condition they may suffer from among a randomized list of 26 suggested conditions. An “other” write-in option was also offered. Ten condition categories or groupings were found to be sufficiently prevalent among the survey respondents (i.e., selected by a net total of nearly 100 respondents or more) to allow for comparisons. (See Figure 5).

Figure 5:
Which of the following types of chronic or serious medical conditions or disorders, if any, do you suffer from?

	%	n=
Allergies	30%	297
High blood pressure	23%	218
High cholesterol	22%	217
Depression	16%	150
Arthritis	15%	137
Obesity	14%	127
Anxiety/Nervousness	12%	121
Respiratory Conditions – Net	12%	123
Migraine/Severe Headaches	11%	113
Diabetes	10%	98
None of the Above	29%	298

Some of the attitudinal disparities observed through the study between sufferers of different conditions can be attributed, at least partially, to differences in certain demographic characteristics that are more prevalent for given ailments. For instance, one in five of all high blood pressure sufferers are over the age of 65, compared to just one in twenty of those suffering from depression (19% vs. 5%); therefore high blood pressure sufferers are more likely to be insured than those suffering from depression, as they are Medicare-age eligible. Similarly, 20% of those suffering from allergies have a household income exceeding \$100,000 compared to just 7% of those suffering from diabetes.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted July 9–14, 2009. For the survey, a national sample of 1,004 adults aged 18 and older from Ipsos’ U.S. online panel were interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample’s composition reflects that of the adult population according to U.S. Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of ±3.1 percentage points 19 times out of 20 of what the results would have been had the entire adult population of the United States had been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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