

A decorative graphic is present on the page, featuring a large, thin, light-colored arc that starts near the top right and curves down towards the bottom right. A horizontal line and a vertical line intersect at the bottom right end of this arc, with a small yellow square at the intersection point. Another horizontal line and a vertical line intersect at the top left end of the arc, with a small yellow square at the intersection point. A solid green rectangular area is located in the top left corner of the page.

# **Fixing Health Care in New Mexico: An AARP Survey of New Mexico Residents Age 50+**

May 2008



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**Report prepared by:  
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## New Mexico Residents Age 50+ Are Strong Proponents of State Health Care Reform

Health care reform in New Mexico is at the forefront of many residents' minds. Concerns related to affordability of health care services dominate the issue. Additionally, New Mexicans age 50+ are concerned about the number of uninsured citizens and believe it is important to develop affordable, comprehensive health care for everyone. According to the United States Current Population Survey (CPS), fully 27 percent of New Mexico adult residents are without health care insurance,<sup>1</sup> which translates to more than 311,000 residents - more than four times the population of Las Cruces.

AARP New Mexico, in response to its commitment to help ensure health care for all state residents, commissioned this survey to explore the views of those New Mexico residents age 50 and older on the current state of health care in New Mexico, their specific concerns about health care – related matters, and their opinions on prospective state reform. This telephone survey of 801 randomly selected New Mexico residents was conducted between October and November of 2007. This survey finds:

- ✚ **Access to health care coverage, including coverage for those currently uninsured, is a priority for New Mexicans.** While 14 percent of respondents were uninsured, 89 percent *strongly* or *somewhat agree* that all residents should have access to health care coverage. To this end, 71 percent indicate that it is *extremely* or *very important* that New Mexico reduce the number of residents without health care coverage and 85 percent believe that it is *extremely* or *very important* that individuals are allowed to buy health care coverage regardless of age or health condition.
- ✚ **New Mexico residents are concerned about affordability of health care services and coverage.** Eight in ten older New Mexicans indicate that it is *extremely* or *very important* that New Mexico make health care coverage more affordable for all residents. Additionally, the most prevalent concerns related to health care are having to pay more for health care (40% *extremely* or *very worried*) and not being able to pay for health care in the event of a major illness or injury (37% *extremely* or *very worried*).
- ✚ **New Mexico's older adults recognize a need for health care reform, shared by all citizens.** More than four in 10 respondents (41%) are *strongly* or *somewhat opposed* to maintaining the current health care system in the state. Additionally, between 70 and 80 percent of older New Mexicans believe that responsibility for accessible and affordable health care coverage should be shared by employers, workers, individuals, the government, insurance companies, and health care providers.

AARP recommends that New Mexico policymakers carefully consider the findings in this study. Most survey respondents age 50+ are concerned about access to and cost of health care services and providers and would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports these issues. Additionally, survey respondents indicate that affordability and expansion of health care coverage should be priorities of both the Governor and state legislature.

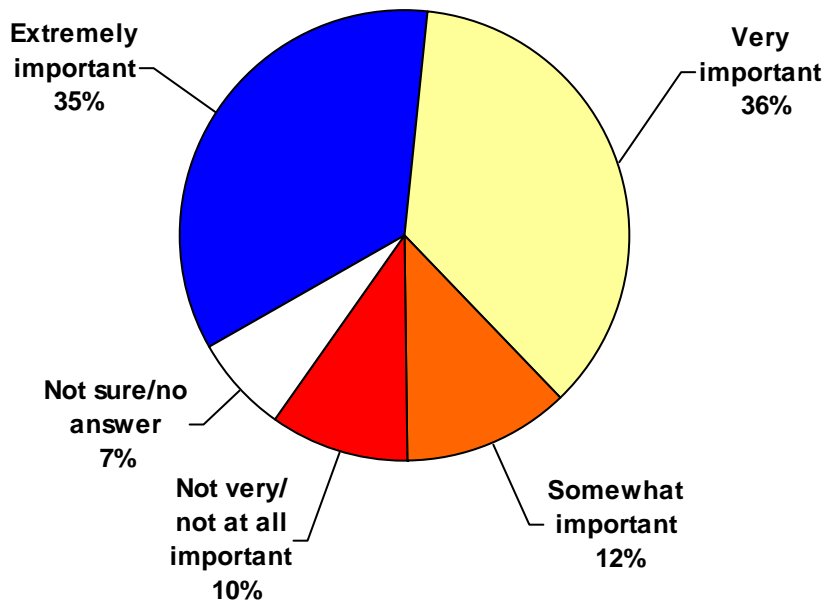
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<sup>1</sup> Unites State Census Bureau Current Population Survey. March 2006-2007.

## Detailed Findings

Seven in ten New Mexico residents age 50+ believe it is extremely or very important for New Mexico to reduce the number of residents without health care coverage.

### How Important is It for New Mexico to Reduce the Number of Residents Without Health Care Coverage? (N=801)

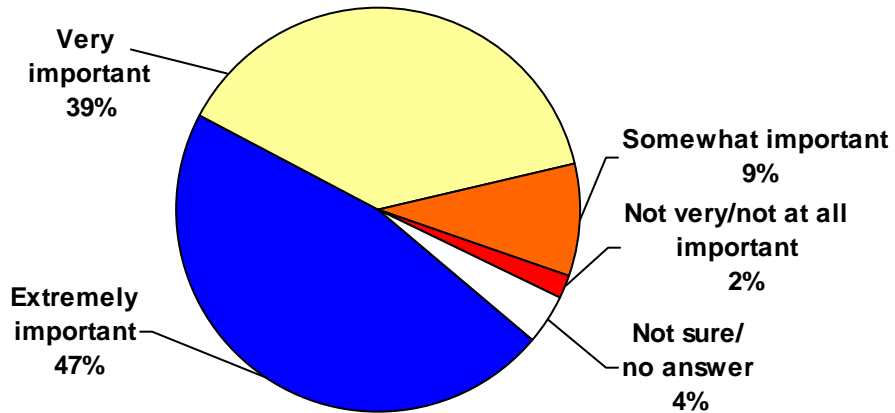


\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects.

- Female survey respondents are significantly more likely to answer that insuring all New Mexicans is somewhat or extremely important. Specifically, 77 percent of females, compared to 64 percent of males believe expanding insurance coverage is extremely or somewhat important.
- Younger survey respondents are more likely than their older counterparts to say that reducing the number of uninsured residents is important (50-64: 76%; 65+: 65%).

Older New Mexico residents indicate that it is very important that all residents are allowed to purchase health care coverage, regardless of age or other pre-existing conditions. More than eight in ten (85%) indicate that it is extremely or very important that purchase of health care coverage be open to all residents.

**How Important is It That Individuals Are Allowed to Buy Health Care Coverage Regardless of Age or Health Condition?**  
(N=801)

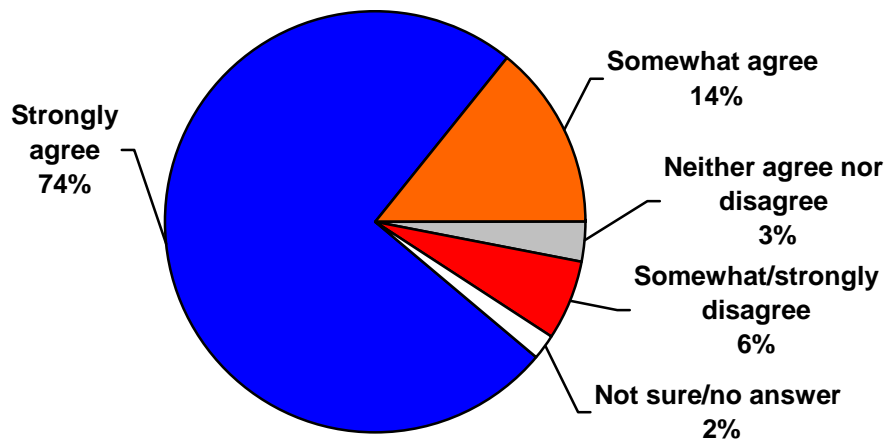


\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects.

- ✚ Younger respondents were more likely to say that allowing individuals to buy health care coverage, regardless of age or health status is extremely or very important (Ages 50-64: 91%; Age 65+: 78%).

Almost three-fourths of older New Mexico residents age 50+ strongly agree that all residents should have access to health care coverage. Together with those who somewhat agree, almost nine in ten (89%) believe in wider access to coverage.

**How Strongly Do You Agree or Disagree that All Residents Should Have Access to Health Care Coverage?**  
(N=801)



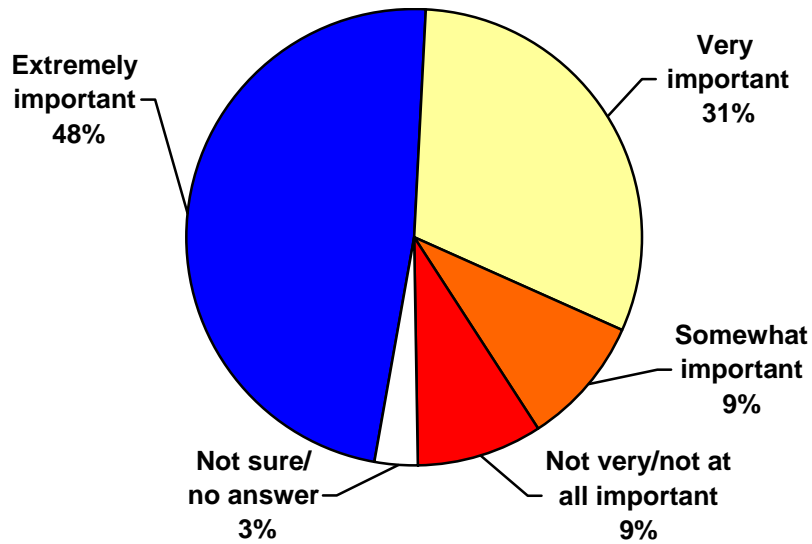
\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects.

- ✚ Those respondents who self-identify as conservative in their political views are less likely to agree than moderate and liberal respondents (Conservative: 81%; Moderate: 93%; Liberal: 96%).

Almost half of New Mexico residents age 50+ believes that it is extremely important for the state to make health care coverage more affordable for all residents. An additional 31 percent believe it is very important to do so.

**How Important is It for New Mexico to Make Health Care Coverage More Affordable for All Residents?**

(N=801)

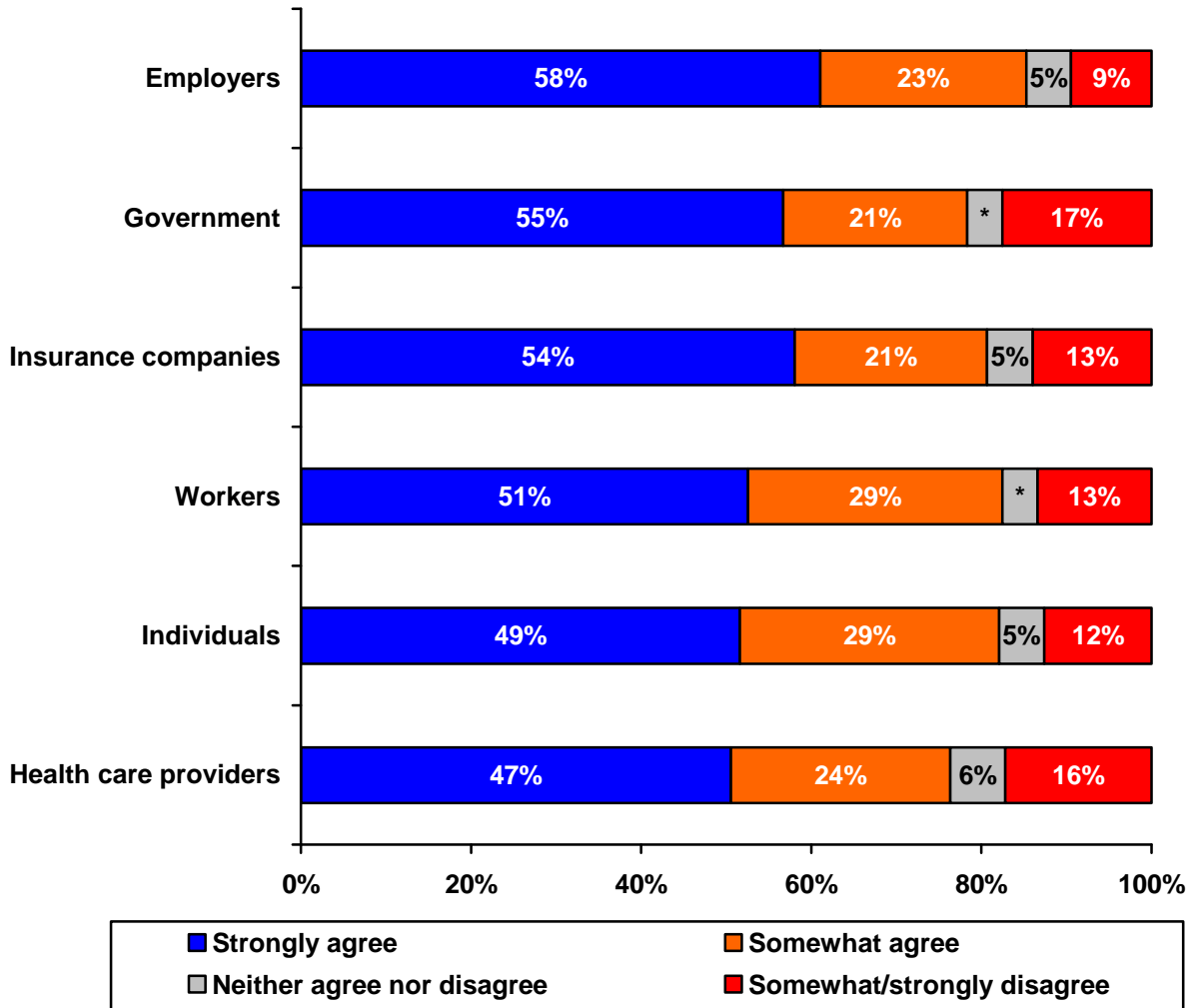


\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects.

- ✚ Males are less likely than females to indicate that it is extremely or very important for New Mexico to make health care coverage more affordable (Males: 73%; Females: 85%).
- ✚ Respondents who identify as Republican are far less likely to report that affordable health care coverage is important than those with Democrat or Independent party affiliation (Republican: 64%; Independent: 81%; Democrat: 90%).

New Mexico respondents indicate that health care coverage costs should be distributed across multiple sources. More than eight in 10 respondents (81%) strongly or somewhat agree that employers should contribute to affordable health care coverage. A similar proportion believes that workers, individuals, the government, and insurance companies should contribute.

**Who Should Contribute So that Everyone Can Have Access to Quality, Affordable Health Care Coverage?**  
(N=801)



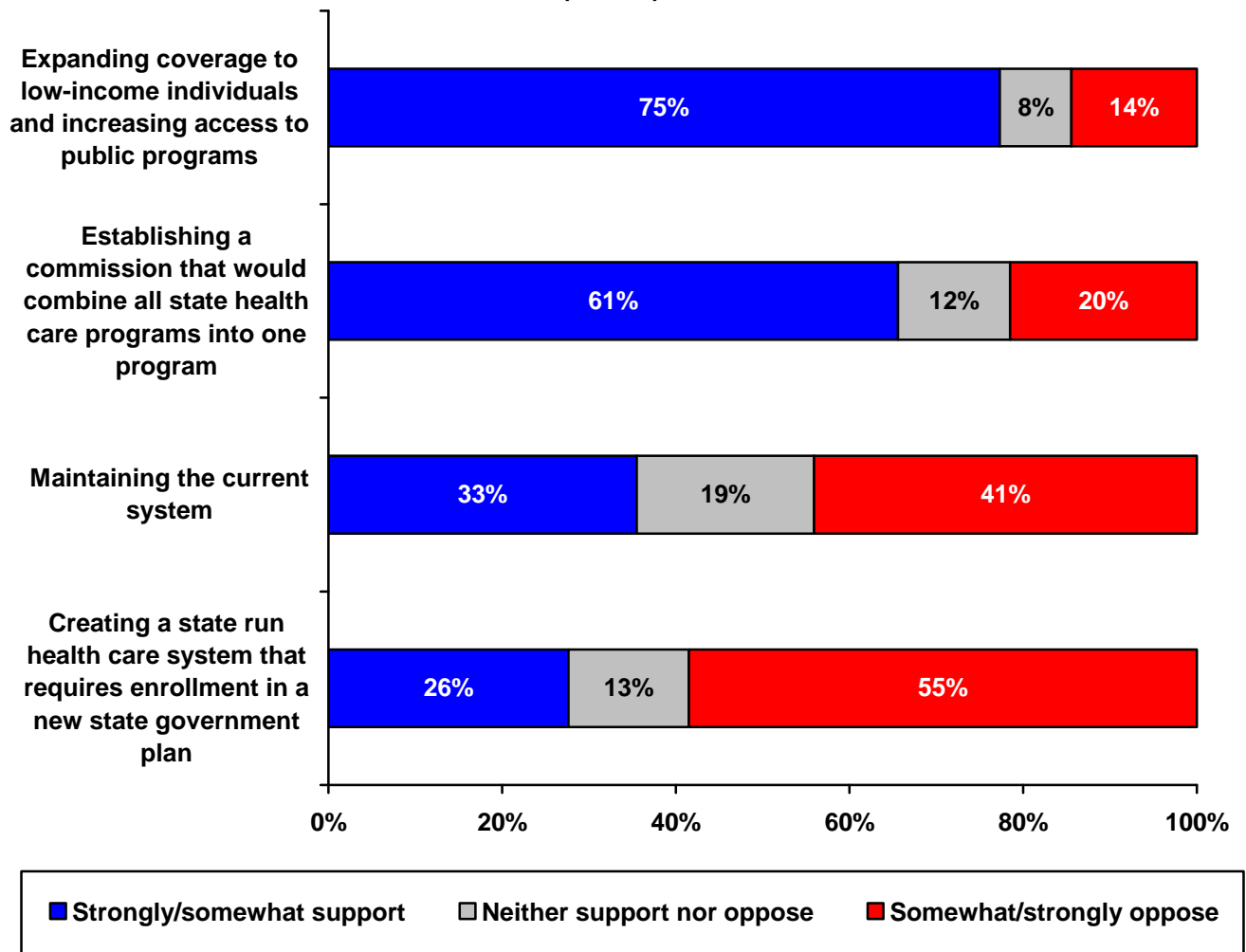
\*Responses equal less than 5%.

\*\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to the accounting of Missing/No Answer response.



Respondents were queried about possible health care reforms for the state. Simply expanding benefits under current programs to encompass more low-income individuals is by far the most popular option; three-quarters strongly or somewhat support this option. Six in ten New Mexicans age 50+ strongly or somewhat support the establishment of a commission that would streamline all state health care benefits and programs into one commission, followed by maintaining the current system, and developing what would in essence create state health care for all.

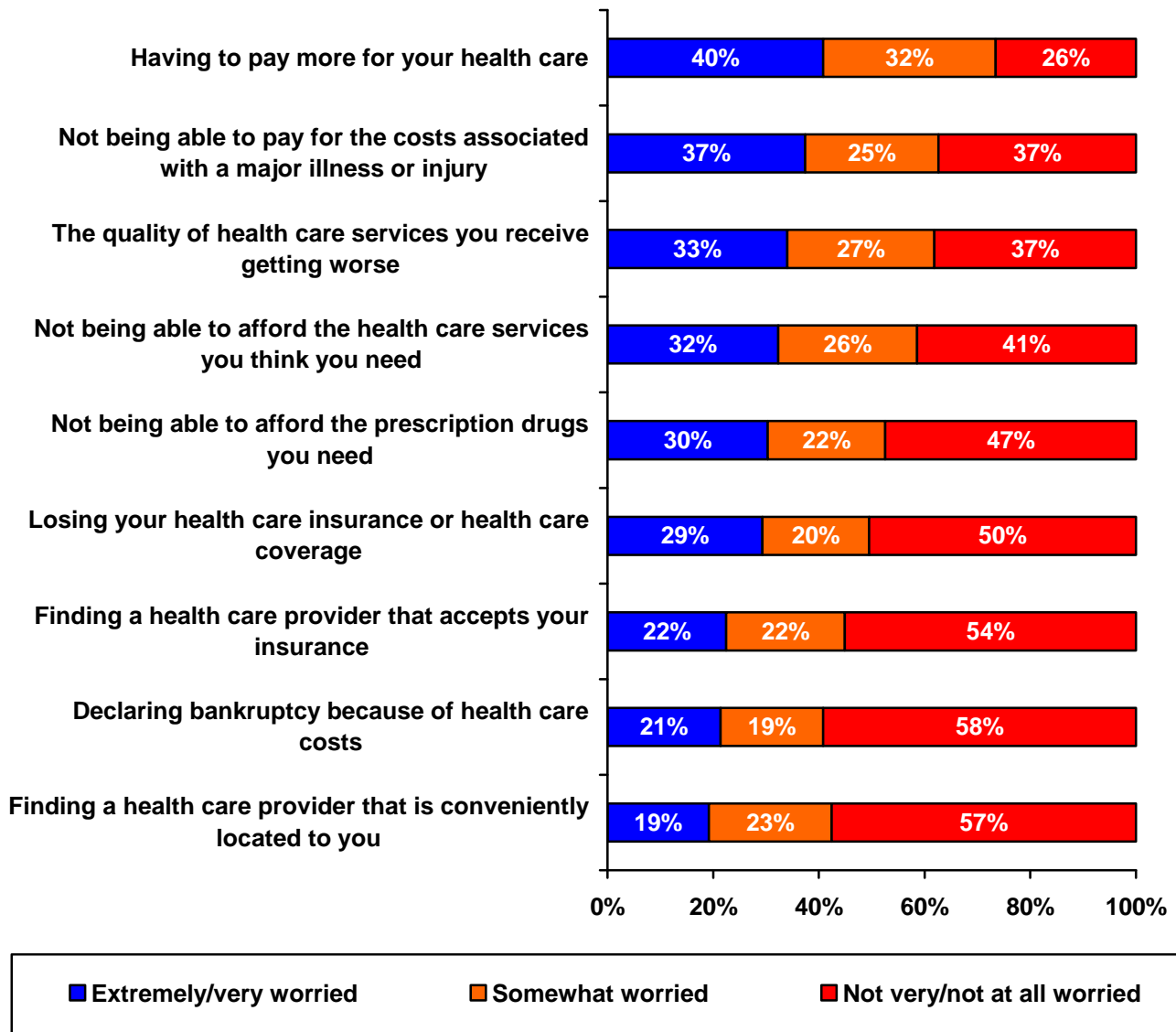
**How Strongly Do You Support or Oppose the Following Health Care Reform Options for New Mexico?**  
(N=801)



\*Responses equal less than 5%.

When asked about health care-related concerns, older New Mexico residents are most concerned about issues related to cost and affordability. The top two worries were: having to pay more for health care and not being able to pay for health care in the event of a major illness or injury. Respondents were less worried about finding a health care provider that is conveniently located or finding a provider that accepts their insurance.

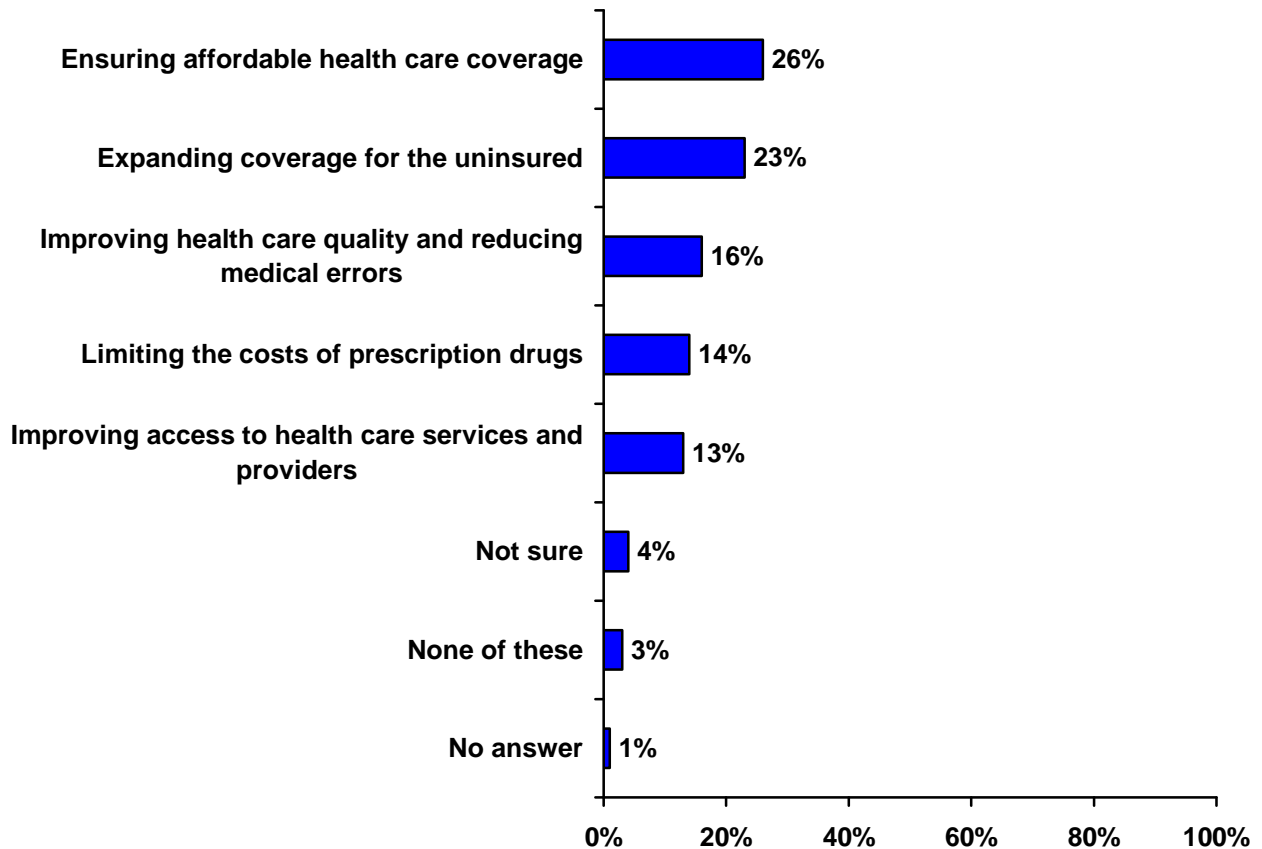
**How Worried Are You About Each of the Following?  
(N=801)**



\*Responses equal less than 5%.

Similar to the health care-related issues that New Mexicans age 50+ are worried about, when asked what single health care-related issue the Governor and State Legislature should work on, the top two choices are related to cost. The top issue is ensuring affordable health care coverage, followed by expanding coverage for the uninsured.

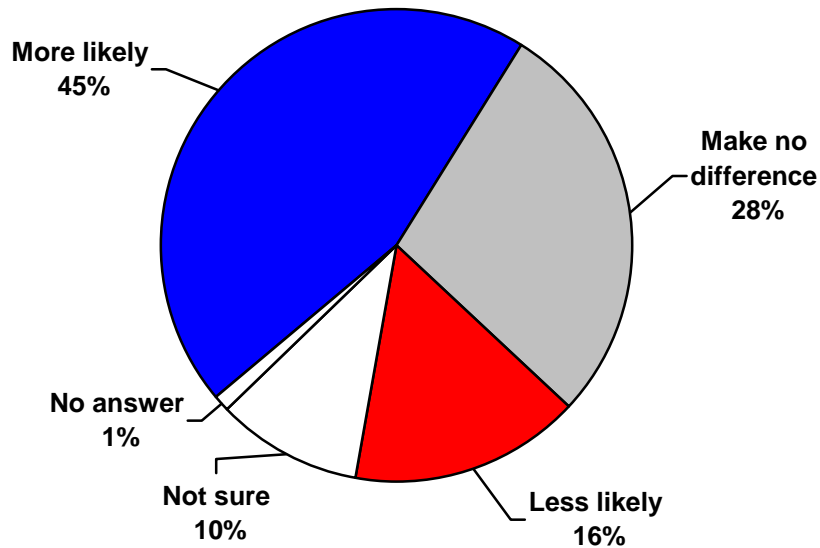
**What Health Care Issue Should the Governor and State Legislature  
Work on in 2007-2008?  
(N=801)**



\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects.

While 45 percent of respondents say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports giving the same health care coverage to all residents, only 16 percent say they would be less likely and 28 percent say it would make no difference in how they vote.

**What is Your Likelihood of Voting for A Candidate Who Supports Giving Health Care Coverage to All New Mexico Residents?  
(N=801)**



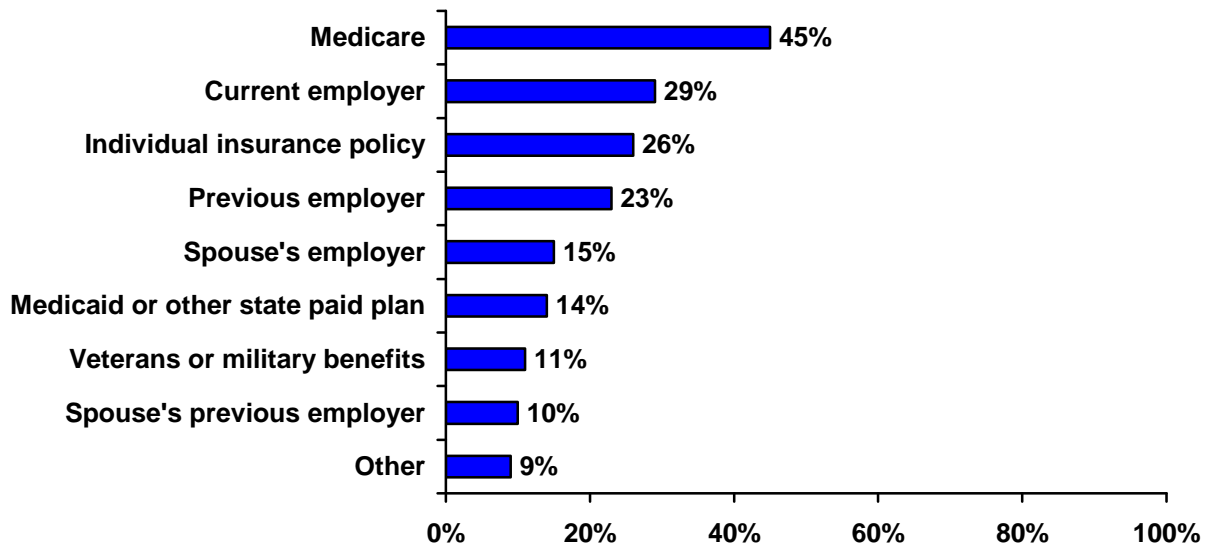
\*Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects.

- ✚ Younger respondents say that they are more likely to vote for a candidate that is supportive of wider health care access for all residents than older respondents (50-64: 54%; 65+: 33%).
- ✚ Almost three-fourths (72%) of liberal respondents say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports expanding access to health care, compared to just over half of independent respondents (53%) and only 33 percent of conservative respondents.

## Health Care Profile of New Mexico Residents age 50+

In this study, 14 percent of adults age 50+ are without health care insurance. Of those who are insured, Medicare is the most common insurance, followed by employer insurance, and individual insurance policies.

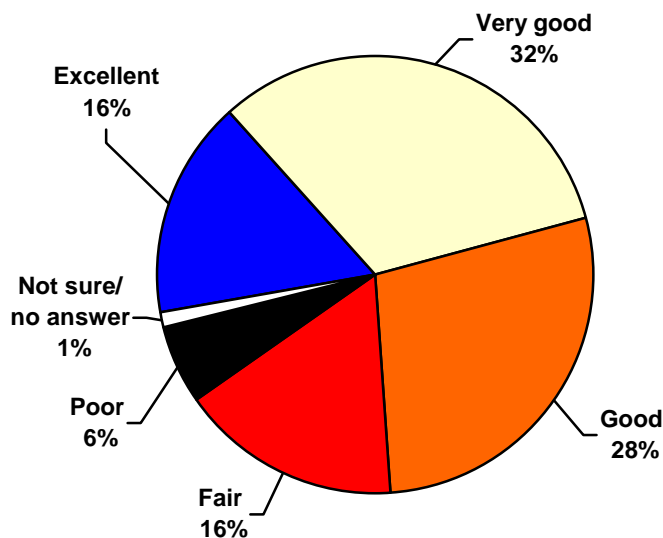
**Health Care Coverage for New Mexico Residents Age 50+  
(n=685, those with health care coverage)**



\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects.

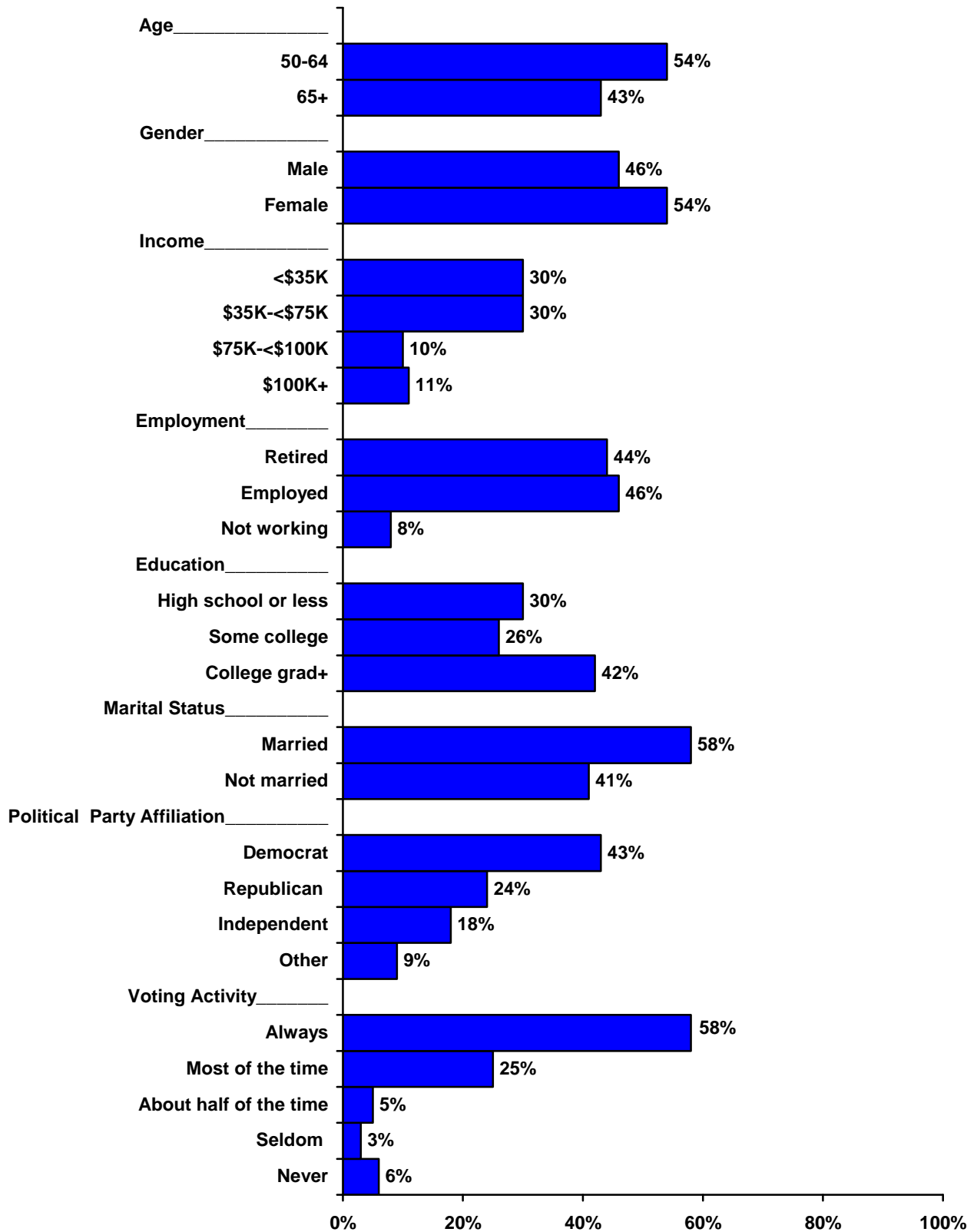
Almost one-half of New Mexico residents age 50 and older say that their health is excellent or very good, while only 22 percent say their health is fair or poor.

**How You Would Describe Your Health?  
(N=801)**



\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects.

## Respondent Demographics (N = 801)



\* Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding effects, as well as the accounting of *Not Sure* and *No Answer* responses.

## Methodology

AARP commissioned Alan Newman Research to conduct a telephone survey of New Mexico residents age 50 years and older. This survey was conducted October 29 – November 15, 2007, and a total of 801 interviews were completed.<sup>3</sup> The sample was generated using a random digit dialing process.

Survey responses were weighted to reflect the actual distribution of age and gender for the population of residents over age 50 in New Mexico. Weighted responses to all survey questions are in the attached annotated questionnaire. Throughout the report, statistics representing responses are reported in percentage. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding effects.

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<sup>3</sup> The cooperation rate was 22% and the response rate was 18%. A sample of this size has a sampling error of 3.5 percent. This means that 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would be within +/- 3.5 percentage points of the results obtained had everyone in New Mexico age 50+ been interviewed.

## Annotated Questionnaire



# New Mexico Health Care Reform Survey

**N=801 Residents 50+ ; Sampling Error= +/- 3.5%**

FIELD USE ONLY	
Date:	Supervisor:
Interviewer:	Editor:
Start Time:	Completed:
End Time:	Terminated:
# Minutes:	Validated:
Telephone #: ( ) -	

Q#: \_\_\_\_\_

**AARP – New Mexico Health Care Reform Survey– October 2007  
WEIGHTED RESULTS**

QUOTAS	
<b>800 Completes Among New Mexico Residents Age 50+</b>	<b>RDD</b>

## Introduction

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm calling on behalf of Alan Newman Research, a national opinion research firm. Tonight we are calling New Mexico residents to find out their opinions on healthcare.

It is important to us that you know we are NOT telemarketers. This is NOT a sales call and you will NOT be asked to buy anything either now or later. Your views are important and we would greatly appreciate your participation. The survey should only take a few minutes of your time.

**S1. In order to save time and ensure I only ask you questions relevant to someone in your age group, could you tell me whether you are age 18 to 34, 35 to 49, 50 to 64, or are you 65 or older?**

- 1) 18 – 34 → [ASK TO SPEAK W/ SOMEONE IN HH 50+, IF NONE, TERM.]
- 2) 35 – 49 → [ASK TO SPEAK W/ SOMEONE IN HH 50+, IF NONE, TERM.]
- 3) 50 – 64
- 4) 65+
- 5) DON'T KNOW / NOT SURE → [TERMINATE]
- 6) REFUSED → [TERMINATE]

## Main Questionnaire

**1. Do you have any kind of health care coverage, including health insurance or government plans such as Medicare or Medicaid?**

- % n=801
- 86 Yes
- 14 No [SKIP TO Q4]
- <1 Not sure [SKIP TO Q4] [DO NOT READ]
- <1 Refused [SKIP TO Q4] [DO NOT READ]

**2. [IF Q1=YES] How are you covered? Are you covered....**

[INTERVIEWER INSERT AND RANDOMIZE EACH ITEM BELOW, READ AND RECORD ANSWER FOR EACH. IF 65+, CONFIRM WHETHER THEY HAVE MEDICARE AND SOME OTHER COVERAGE SUCH AS AN INDIVIDUAL POLICY. IF RESPONDENT GIVES NAME OF INSURER, ASK WHETHER THEY PAY FOR THE POLICY ON THEIR OWN OR IF IT IS PAID FOR BY AN EMPLOYER /PREVIOUS EMPLOYER] n=685

	Yes	No	NOT COVERED ANY OTHER WAY	Not Sure	Refused
	%	%	%	%	%
Through your current employer.....	29	70	0	<1	1
Through your spouse’s employer .....	15	77	7	0	1
On your own, through an individually purchased insurance policy .....	26	70	3	1	1
Through a previous employer [MAY BE RETIREMENT BENEFIT]..	23	72	3	1	1
Through a spouse’s previous employer [MAY BE RETIREMENT BENEFIT].....	10	87	3	<1	1
Through Veterans or military benefits .....	11	88	<1	<1	1
Through Medicaid or other state paid plan.....	14	86	<1	<1	<1
Through Medicare .....	45	54	<1	1	0
Through some other way: [PLEASE SPECIFY:___].....	9	86	4	<1	1

**3. How confident are you that you will be able to maintain your present level of health care coverage at an acceptable cost to you over the next five years? Are you....?**

%	n=685
25	Extremely confident
31	Very confident
24	Somewhat confident
9	Not very confident
8	Not at all confident
3	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
<1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**4. How important do you think it is for the state of New Mexico to reduce the number of residents without health care coverage? Do you think it is....?**

%	n=801
35	Extremely important
36	Very important
12	Somewhat important
5	Not very important
6	Not at all important
6	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**5. How important do you think it is for the state of New Mexico to make health care coverage more affordable for all residents? Do you think it is....?**

%	n=801
48	Extremely important
31	Very important
9	Somewhat important
4	Not very important
5	Not at all important
2	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**6. How important do you think it is that individuals should be allowed to buy health care coverage regardless of their age or health conditions? Do you think it is....?**

%	n=801
47	Extremely important
39	Very important
9	Somewhat important
1	Not very important
1	Not at all important
3	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**7. How strongly do you agree or disagree that all New Mexico residents should have access to health care coverage? Do you....?**

%	n=801
74	Strongly agree
14	Somewhat agree
3	Neither agree nor disagree
3	Somewhat disagree
3	Strongly disagree
2	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**8. How strongly do you agree or disagree that each of the following should contribute so that everyone can have access to quality, affordable health care coverage? [INTERVIEWER INSERT AND RANDOMIZE EACH ITEM BELOW] Do you....? n=801**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Sure/ Refused
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employers.....	58	23	5	4	5	5
Workers .....	51	29	4	6	7	4
Health care providers such as hospitals .....	47	24	6	7	9	7
Government .....	55	21	4	6	12	2
Insurance companies ...	54	21	5	5	9	7
Individuals .....	49	29	5	4	8	5

**9. Please tell me how strongly you support or oppose each of the following things when it comes to reforming New Mexico’s health care system. How strongly do you support or oppose [INTERVIEWER INSERT AND RANDOMIZE EACH ITEM BELOW]? Do you....? n=801**

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Refused
	%	%	%	%	%	%
a. Maintaining the current system.....	14	20	19	18	22	8
b. Expanding coverage to low-income individuals & increasing access to public programs .....	51	24	8	7	7	4
c. Establishing a commission that would combine all state healthcare programs such as Medicaid into one program, reduce expenses, expand access to healthcare coverage for all state residents, and allow people to buy insurance through the commission. ....	38	23	12	7	13	7
d. Creating a state run health care system that requires residents to give up their current health plan and enroll in the new state government plan but would not affect those on Medicare.....	14	12	13	13	42	6

**9e. Is there any other thing you support or oppose when it comes to reforming New Mexico’s health care system?**

%	n=801
37	Yes
56	No
7	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
<1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**9ea. Please tell me how strongly you support or oppose each of the following things when it comes to reforming New Mexico’s health care system. How strongly do you support or oppose *Some other way (Specify)*? Do you....?**

%	N=295
85	Strongly support
5	Somewhat support
1	Neither support nor oppose
<1	Somewhat oppose
6	Strongly oppose
-	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
3	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**10. I'm going to read to you a list of issues that people sometimes worry about. Please tell me how worried you are about each of the following. How worried are you about [INTERVIEWER INSERT AND RANDOMIZE EACH ITEM BELOW]? Are you extremely worried, very worried, somewhat worried, not very worried, or not at all worried? n=801**

	Extreme Worry %	Very Worried %	Some- what Worried %	Not Very Worried %	Not at All Worried %	Not Sure/ Refused %
Having to pay more for your health care .....	23	18	32	11	15	1
Not being able to afford the health care services you think you need.....	20	13	26	17	24	1
Not being able to afford the prescription drugs you need .....	18	12	22	18	29	1
The quality of health care services you receive getting worse.....	17	16	27	15	22	3
Finding a health care provider that is conveniently located to you.....	9	10	23	21	35	2
Finding a health care provider that accepts your insurance .....	10	12	22	20	33	3
Not being able to pay for the costs associated with a major illness or injury .....	23	15	25	14	23	1
Losing your health care insurance or health care coverage .....	18	11	20	19	31	2
Declaring bankruptcy because of health care costs .....	13	8	19	19	40	3

**11. I'm going to read to you a list of FIVE health care issues. Please tell me which issue you think the Governor and State Legislature should work on in 2007-2008. You may choose only one issue. [INTERVIEWER READ ITEMS A-E NUMBERING AS YOU READ 1-5 AND ACCEPT ONLY ONE ANSWER. RANDOMIZE]**

%	n=801
23	Expanding coverage for the uninsured
16	Improving health care quality and reducing medical errors
13	Improving access to health care services and providers
14	Limiting the costs of prescription drugs
26	Ensuring affordable health care coverage
3	None of these
4	Not sure [VOLUNTEERED] [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [VOLUNTEERED] [DO NOT READ]

**12. If a candidate for state public office supports the development of a health care system that gives the same health care coverage to all New Mexico residents, would you be more likely to vote for that candidate, less likely to vote for him or her, or would it not make a difference in your voting?**

%	n=801
45	More likely
16	Less likely
28	Make no difference
10	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

## Demographics

**The following questions are for statistical classification purposes only and will be kept entirely confidential.**

**D1. RECORD RESPONDENT'S GENDER. To ensure it is recorded accurately, could you please state your gender?**

%	n=801
46	Male
54	Female

**D2. How would you describe your health?**

%	n=801
16	Excellent
32	Very good
28	Good
16	Fair
6	Poor
<1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D3. What is your age as of your last birthday? [IN YEARS] \_\_\_\_\_**

%	n=801
54	50-64
43	65+

**D4. What is your current marital status? Are you....[READ OPTIONS]**

%	n=801
58	Married
4	Not married, living with your partner or significant other
2	Separated
12	Divorced
16	Widowed
7	Or are you currently single <u>and</u> never married
<1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D5.** [IF D4 = 1 ASK: “Are you or your spouse currently a member of A-A-R-P?” IF D4 = 2 ASK: “Are you or your partner currently a member of A-A-R-P?” OTHERWISE ASK: “Are you currently a member of A-A-R-P?”]

%	n=801
61	Yes
38	No
<1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
1	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D6. Do you own or rent your residence?**

%	n=801
85	Own
12	Rent
1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
2	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D7. What is the highest level of education that you completed?** [READ OPTIONS]

%	n=801
6	0 to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, but with no diploma
24	High school graduate or equivalent
13	Post high school education, but with no degree
13	2 year degree
15	4 year degree
7	Post graduate study, but with no degree
20	Graduate or professional degree
<1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
2	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D8. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?** [READ OPTIONS]

%	n=801
8	Self-employed full-time
4	Self-employed part-time
28	Employed full-time
7	Employed part-time
44	Retired and not working at all
2	Unemployed and looking for work
6	Or are you not in the labor force for other reasons
<1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
2	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D9. Are you of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent?**

%	n=801
25	Yes
71	No
1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
4	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D10. What is your race? [READ OPTIONS]**

%	n=801
73	White or Caucasian
2	Black or African American
3	Native American or Alaskan Native
1	Asian
<1	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
15	Or are you some other race? [Please Specify: _____]
2	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
5	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D11. Thinking about your state elections for New Mexico Governor and Legislators in the last ten years, which of the following best describes your voting behavior? Would you say you vote always, most of the time, about half of the time, seldom, or would you say you never vote?**

%	n=801
58	Always
25	Most of the time
5	About half of the time
3	Seldom
6	Never
1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
2	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D12. What is your 5-digit zip code? \_\_\_\_\_**

**D13. In general, how often do you go online to access the Internet or World Wide Web or to send and receive email? Would you say several times a day, about once a day, 3-5 days a week, 1-2 days a week, once every few weeks, less often than every few weeks, or do you never go online to use the Internet or check email?**

%	n=801
27	Several times a day
16	About once a day
9	3-5 days a week
7	1-2 days a week
3	Once every few weeks
2	Once a month or less
34	Or do you never go online to use the Internet or World Wide Web?
1	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
2	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D14. Do you consider yourself to be a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or something else?**

%	n=801
43	Democrat
24	Republican
18	Independent
9	Other
2	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
5	Refused [DO NOT READ]



**D15. How would you characterize your political views? [READ OPTIONS]**

%	n=801
36	Conservative
26	Moderate
16	Liberal
14	None of the above
4	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
3	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**D16. Are you employed by or retired from.... [READ AND RECORD ANSWER FOR EACH]  
[CREATE COLUMN THAT INDICATES EITHER DOES OR DOES NOT WORK IN HEALTH CARE  
INDUSTRY BASED ON THIS QUESTION] n=801**

	Yes	No	Refused
	%	%	%
A health care <u>insurance</u> provider .....	6	92	2
A health care provider such as a hospital, pharmacy, or managed care facility .....	10	88	3
Some other aspect of the health care industry [Probe] .....	6	92	3

**D17. We realize income is a private matter and so rather than ask you anything specific about your income, I'd like to ask you to please stop me when I get to the category that includes your household's income before taxes in 2006. Was it....[READ OPTIONS]**

%	n=801
6	Less than \$10,000
10	\$10,000 but less than \$20,000
14	\$20,000 but less than \$35,000
14	\$35,000 but less than \$50,000
9	\$50,000 but less than \$60,000
8	\$60,000 but less than \$75,000
10	\$75,000 but less than \$100,000
11	\$100,000 or more
3	Not sure [DO NOT READ]
17	Refused [DO NOT READ]

**That was our last question for tonight. Thank you very much for taking the time to help us out. Have a great day/night!**



**AARP**  
**Knowledge Management**  
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