A decorative bar in the top left corner, consisting of a large green rectangle and a smaller gold square at its bottom right corner. A thin grey line extends from the gold square to the left.

Wyoming AARP Legislative Issues Survey: Member Concerns

A decorative element in the bottom right corner, featuring a gold square at the intersection of a horizontal grey line and a vertical grey line.

September 2004



Wyoming AARP Legislative Issues Survey: Member Concerns

**Report Prepared
By Erica Dinger**

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AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization dedicated to making life better for people 50 and over. We provide information and resources; engage in legislative, regulatory and legal advocacy; assist members in serving their communities; and offer a wide range of unique benefits, special products, and services for our members. These include *AARP The Magazine*, published bimonthly; *AARP Bulletin*, our monthly newspaper; *AARP Segunda Juventud*, our quarterly newspaper in Spanish; *NRTA Live and Learn*, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our Web site, www.aarp.org. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Acknowledgements

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Background

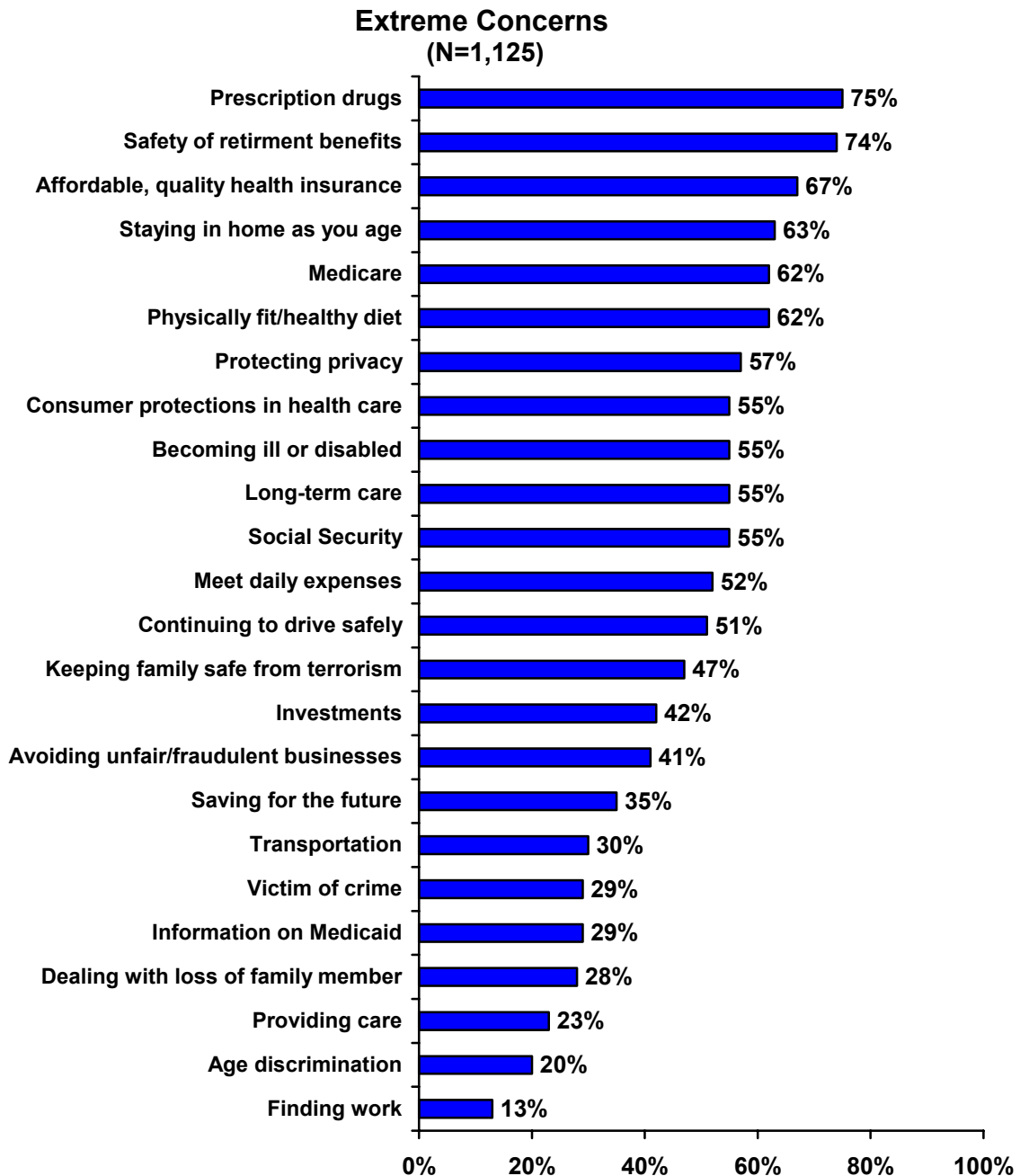
As the United States population and the Wyoming population ages, some personal concerns begin to take on higher priorities. Affordable prescription drugs, the safety of pension and retirement income, and health insurance are of primary concern to those age 50 and older.

AARP Wyoming commissioned the *2004 Wyoming AARP Survey of Members: Concerns and State Legislative Issues*, a mail survey of 1,125 Wyoming AARP members, to explore and measure members' opinions about a variety of legislative issues and concerns. This report is part of the larger survey and examines the opinions of members regarding personal concerns on a variety of issues, including issues surrounding health care access and cost, retirement benefits, and consumer issues.

Findings

Three-fourths of AARP Wyoming members are extremely concerned about having access to affordable prescription drugs and the safety and security of their pension and retirement benefits.

Three-fourths of Wyoming members express extreme concern about access to affordable prescription drugs and the safety of their retirement benefits. Finding affordable health insurance, staying in their own home as they age, having Medicare as a base for health coverage, and staying fit are also of extreme concern for Wyoming members.



Although access to affordable prescription drugs, safe and secure retirement benefits, and affordable health insurance are important to all age groups, there are some age differences in other areas of extreme concern. Some of these differences are most likely attributable to different life stages. For instance, the quality of long-term care, becoming ill or disabled, driving safely, and having affordable transportation are of more concern to members 60+. Saving for the future, age discrimination at work, and finding work in retirement are of more concern to those members under age 60.

Extreme Concerns of Wyoming Members	By Age			
	Total % (N=1,125)	50-59 (n=371)	60-74 (n=463)	75+ (n=248)
Having access to affordable Rx	75%	72%	78%	73%
Safe and secure retirement benefits	74	73	76	69
Affordable, quality health insurance	67	74	68	54
Staying at home as you age	63	54	68	65
Having Medicare as base for retirement	62	59	65	60
Staying physically fit	62	58	63	64
Protecting privacy	57	54	60	53
Consumer protection in health care	55	50	59	57
Becoming ill or disabled	55	48	58	61
Quality long-term care	55	46	58	62
Social Security	55	51	57	53
Money for daily expenses	52	55	54	46
Continuing to drive safely	51	40	55	63
Keeping family safe from violence or terrorism	47	36	51	55
Good investment information	42	43	42	42
Avoiding unfair or fraudulent businesses	41	32	45	43
Saving for the future	35	45	30	29
Safe and affordable transportation	30	18	32	41
Being a victim of crime	29	23	31	32
Information on Medicaid	29	26	30	26
Loss of family member	28	22	29	35
Providing care or support for family member	23	25	22	20
Age discrimination	20	24	21	11
Finding work in retirement	13	18	14	5

Conclusions

The results of this survey highlight AARP Wyoming members' top concerns: affordable prescription drugs, the safety and security of pension and retirement benefits, and affordable health care. Staying at home as they age, having Medicare as a base for retirement health insurance, and staying fit and healthy are also of concern to AARP Wyoming members. These top concerns are mirrored in AARP's priorities and AARP Wyoming's commitment to these issues.

Methodology

This report is one part of the larger survey and report entitled *2004 Wyoming AARP Survey of Members: Concerns and State Legislative Issues*. The full survey is a mail survey of 1,125 Wyoming AARP members that addresses their opinions about a variety of issues including personal concerns, telecommunications, grandparenting, and retirement. This report summarizes findings on the key concerns questions covered in the survey.

AARP conducted the *2004 Wyoming AARP Survey of Members: Concerns and State Legislative Issues* survey from April through May 2004. A sample of 2,000 AARP members in Wyoming, proportionally stratified by three age segments—50 to 59, 60 to 74, and 75+, was randomly selected from AARP's membership database. Each sampled member was contacted about the survey in four ways: a pre-notification postcard, the survey itself, a reminder postcard, and a second survey. Fifty-six percent of the sampled Wyoming members returned surveys by the cut-off date, May 25, 2004, providing 1,125 useable surveys for analysis. Thus, the survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 2.9 percent.¹ Survey responses were weighted to reflect the distribution of the age segments in the member population of Wyoming. For more information about this study, contact Jennifer Sauer, AARP Knowledge Management, at (202) 434-6207 or Erica Dinger, AARP Knowledge Management, at (202) 434-6176.

¹ This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would fall in a range of 2.9 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every AARP member in Wyoming age 50 or older had been surveyed.

Annotated Questionnaire

2004 Wyoming AARP Survey of Members: Concerns and State Legislative Issues

Weighted n = 1,125; Response Rate = 56 %; Sampling Error = 2.92+/-
(Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. A “*” means less than 1%)

Personal Concerns

1. Below is a list of concerns that have been expressed by people age 50 and older. Please rate your own level of concern about each item using a 5-point scale where 1 means you are "not at all concerned" and 5 means you are "extremely concerned."

	Extremely Concerned			Not at all Concerned	No Response	
a. Having adequate information on Medicaid, the government health insurance program for low income people	29%	21%	27%	12%	11%	2%
b. Providing care or financial support for a parent, grandchild or other relative	23%	18%	25%	15%	17%	2%
c. Having Social Security as a base for retirement income	55%	18%	14%	7%	5%	2%
d. Finding affordable, high quality health insurance	67%	15%	8%	4%	5%	2%
e. Staying in your own home as you get older	63%	19%	10%	4%	4%	1%
f. Staying physically fit/maintaining a healthy diet	62%	22%	10%	2%	3%	2%
g. Having high quality long-term care for you or a family member	55%	23%	13%	4%	3%	1%
h. Making sure your pension benefits and/or retirement savings are safe and secure and	74%	13%	7%	3%	3%	1%
i. Having good information about investments	42%	22%	20%	7%	8%	1%
j. Dealing with the loss of a close family member	28%	22%	27%	12%	8%	2%
k. Finding work in retirement	13%	16%	26%	16%	28%	2%
l. Having enough money to meet daily expenses	52%	17%	16%	7%	8%	2%
m. Facing age discrimination in employment	20%	15%	20%	14%	28%	3%
n. Saving for the future	35%	21%	22%	8%	12%	3%
o. Having Medicare as a base for retirement health coverage	62%	19%	12%	4%	3%	2%
p. Having access to affordable prescription drugs	75%	15%	6%	2%	2%	1%

1. CONTINUED--Below is a list of concerns that have been expressed by people age 50 and older. Please rate your own level of concern about each item using a 5-point scale where 1 means you are "not at all concerned" and 5 means you are "extremely concerned."

	Extremely Concerned			Not at all Concerned	No Response
q. Protecting your right to privacy	57%	20%	14%	3%	2%
r. Becoming ill or disabled	55%	23%	14%	3%	3%
s. Being a victim of crime	29%	21%	28%	12%	4%
t. Avoiding business practices that are unfair or fraudulent	41%	22%	20%	8%	2%
u. Having safe and affordable transportation systems available	30%	23%	26%	11%	2%
v. Keeping your family safe from acts of terrorism and violence	47%	18%	19%	8%	2%
w. Having consumer protections in health care plans	55%	25%	11%	3%	3%
x. Continuing to drive safely	51%	24%	13%	4%	2%

2. Please list the names of each newspaper you have a subscription to:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I do not have a subscription to any newspaper.

3. Please indicate which of the following publications you read regularly even though you may not have a subscription to them. (Check ALL that apply.)

<u>%</u>	
86	Local newspaper
28	Senior center bulletin
17	Senior newspapers
33	Religious organization bulletin
13	Civic newsletters
32	Free community newspapers
81	<i>AARP The Magazine</i>
71	<i>AARP Bulletin</i>
20	Other membership organization newsletters
28	Other (specify) _____
2	I DON'T read any of these types of publications regularly
2	No Response

4. Have you ever heard about or read AARP Wyoming's occasional newspaper called *The Wyoming Sage*?

<u>%</u>	
78	I have never heard about <i>The Wyoming Sage</i> → SKIP TO QUESTION 5
10	I have heard about and read <i>The Wyoming Sage</i>
7	I have heard about but not read <i>The Wyoming Sage</i>
5	No Response

4a. In which of the following places did you hear about or find this newspaper?
(Check ALL that apply.) (n=192)

<u>%</u>	
3	The library
1	The senior center
37	Inserted in local newspaper
8	Other (specify): _____
29	Can't remember/Don't know
20	No Response

Telecommunications

This part of the survey asks questions about the types of telephone service you currently use and may consider using. Wireline telephone service refers to a telephone line connecting your residence to a service provider or carrier that enables you to make and receive local and long-distance calls only within your residence or business. Cellular telephone service refers to a [wireless](#) connection from a mobile telephone to a relatively nearby transmitter enabling you to make local or long distance calls.

5. Do you currently subscribe to basic or local telephone service?

<u>%</u>	
91	Yes
5	No → GO TO QUESTION 10
4	No Response

6. How satisfied are you with your basic or local telephone service? (n=1,020)

<u>%</u>	
31	Very satisfied
33	Somewhat satisfied
20	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
10	Somewhat dissatisfied
4	Very dissatisfied
2	No Response

7. Do you think you are paying too much, too little, or about the right amount for your basic or local telephone service? (n=1,020)

<u>%</u>	
67	Too much
*	Too little
30	About the right amount
3	No Response

8. On average, how much do you pay per month for your basic or local telephone service? (n=1,020)

<u>%</u>	
9	Between \$0 and \$29 per month
55	Between \$30 and \$49 per month
26	Between \$50 and \$79 per month
4	Between \$80 and \$99 per month
1	Between \$100 and \$124 per month
*	More than \$125 per month
4	No Response

9. Is there more than one telephone service provider in your area from which you can choose to purchase basic or local telephone service? (n=1,020)

<u>%</u>	
35	Yes
42	No
20	I'm not sure
3	No Response

10. Do you currently use a wireless or cellular phone?

<u>%</u>	
62	Yes
37	No
1	No Response

11. To what extent have you considered switching from wireline telephone service to cellular or wireless service for ALL your telephone needs? (Check ONE only)

<u>%</u>	
4	I currently use ONLY cellular service for all telephone needs
15	Strongly considered
28	Somewhat considered
21	Have not considered too much
30	Have not considered at all
2	No Response

Grandparenting

12. Do you have any grandchildren, including great grandchildren or step-grandchildren?

<u>%</u>	
75	Yes, I do
25	No [GO TO QUESTION 21]
1	No Response

13. Do you provide care on a regular basis for any of your grandchildren? (n=839)

<u>%</u>	
13	Yes
86	No
1	No Response

14. Do any of your grandchildren live in your household? (n=839)

<u>%</u>			
4	Yes	—————→	14a. If <u>YES</u>, do the parents of these grandchildren also live in your household? (n=32)
95	No		
1	No Response		
			45% Yes
			49% No
			6% No Response

15. Have you had to return to work either on a part-time or full-time basis to help pay for the expenses of caring for any of your grandchildren? (n=839)

<u>%</u>	
2	Yes
96	No
2	No Response

16. Are you the legal guardian for any of your grandchildren? (n=839)

<u>%</u>	
1	Yes [SKIP TO QUESTION 18]
98	No
1	No Response

17. Have you considered becoming the legal guardian for any of your grandchildren? (n=822)

<u>%</u>	
6	Yes
91	No
3	No Response

18. On the list below, place a check in the box next the information you wish had about being a grandparent. (Check ALL that apply.) (n=839)

<u>%</u>	
30	The importance of grandparents to a child's well-being
30	How to speak to your grandchildren's parents about issues concerning your grandchildren
40	Fun things to do with grandchildren of all ages
5	Information resources for grandparents raising grandchildren
5	Step-grandparenting
3	Grandparenting in a multicultural family
3	Support groups for grandparents raising grandchildren
36	Keeping in touch long distance
30	Financial gifts for grandchildren
5	Legal options for grandparents raising grandchildren
4	Information on state economic assistance programs for grandparents raising grandchildren
10	Children's developmental stages
23	How to speak to your grandchildren about issues in their lives
2	Other (<i>please specify</i>) _____
28	None of the above
7	No Response

19. On the list below, check the way in which you would most prefer receiving information about grandparenting. (Check ONE only.) (n=839)

<u>%</u>	
3	E-mails
2	Web pages or web sites
2	In person workshops or seminars in your hometown
28	Magazine or newspaper articles
10	An organization or association newsletter
40	Don't want information about grandparenting
16	No Response

20. How important do you think it is for grandparents providing care for their grandchildren to have access to affordable child care services that would allow them time to do chores such as housecleaning and grocery shopping? (n=839)

<u>%</u>	
53	Very important
24	Somewhat important
7	Not too important
8	Not at all important
9	No Response

21. **Currently, there is no state law in Wyoming that allows grandparents without legal custody of their grandchildren to enroll them in school even if the children’s parents cannot be found. That means that grandparents who are caring for their grandchildren but who have not taken legal custody cannot enroll them in school. How strongly do you support or oppose a proposed law in Wyoming that would allow grandparent caregivers without legal custody of their grandchildren to enroll them in school?**

<u>%</u>	
61	Strongly support
19	Somewhat support
2	Somewhat oppose
2	Strongly oppose
12	Not sure
5	No Response

22. **Similarly, there is no state law in Wyoming that allows grandparents without legal custody of their grandchildren to have access to their medical records and make medical decisions even if the children’s parents cannot be found. How strongly would you support or oppose a proposed law in Wyoming allowing grandparent caregivers without legal custody of their grandchildren to have access to their medical records and make medical decisions?**

<u>%</u>	
67	Strongly support
21	Somewhat support
3	Somewhat oppose
2	Strongly oppose
7	No Response

Retirement

23. **Which of the following best describes your current employment status?**

<u>%</u>		
30	<u>Not retired</u> - Employed or self-employed full-time	
4	<u>Not retired</u> - Employed or self-employed part-time	
1	<u>Not retired</u> - Unemployed and looking for work	
2	Retired and working again full-time	[SKIP TO QUESTION 28]
7	Retired and working again part-time	[SKIP TO QUESTION 28]
2	Retired and looking for work	[SKIP TO QUESTION 28]
46	Retired and NOT looking for work	[GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 29]
3	Other	[GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 29]
5	No Response	

24. **Thinking about your own current work and financial situation, how likely is it that you will put off retiring from work as long as possible? (n=397)**

<u>%</u>	
45	Very likely
28	Somewhat likely
19	Not too likely
5	Not at all likely
3	No Response

25. **Which of the following best describes what you plan to do when you reach retirement age: (Check ONE only.) (n=397)**

<u>%</u>	
26	I want to continue working at my present job/career for as long as I am able
21	I want to continue working at my present job/career <u>but with reduced hours</u>
12	I want to retire and NEVER work again
3	I want to retire from my current job/career and look for full-time work elsewhere
15	I want to retire from my current job/career and look for part-time work elsewhere
*	I want to retire from my current job/career and go back to school
4	I want to retire from my current job/career and start my own business
5	I want to retire from my current job/career and be a consultant in my area of expertise
7	I want to retire from my current job/career and...(Other): _____
9	No Response

26. **How likely is it that you will stay in Wyoming once you retire? (n=397)**

<u>%</u>	
66	Very likely
22	Somewhat likely
8	Not too likely [SKIP TO QUESTION 27]
3	Not at all likely [SKIP TO QUESTION 27]
2	No Response

26a. **If you DO plan on staying in Wyoming when you retire, will you continue to live here:**

(n=347)	Yes	No	Not sure	No Response
Year-round	59%	5%	17%	19%
Seasonally – summer, winter, fall, or spring	23%	1%	9%	66%
Certain times of the year like holidays, local or family events	3%	3%	9%	85%
Other: _____	*	1%	3%	96%

27. **Which of the following reasons best describes why you DO NOT plan on staying in Wyoming once you reach retirement: (Check ALL that apply.) (n=397)**

<u>%</u>	
18	I don't like the weather conditions in Wyoming
2	There doesn't seem to be another job or career opportunity for me in Wyoming
5	I want to move closer to relatives and friends
5	Other: _____
69	No Response

28. Please rate each of the following in terms of their importance in your decision to be working right now. For each reason, please indicate if it is a major factor, a minor factor, or not a factor at all in your decision to be working. (n=522)

	Major factor	Minor factor	Not a factor at all	No Response
a. Need to pay for out-of-pocket health care expenses	47%	21%	24%	8%
b. Need to maintain health insurance coverage	57%	14%	22%	7%
c. Need to pay for out-of-pocket prescription drug costs	45%	20%	27%	8%
d. Enjoy the job or enjoy working	55%	25%	13%	7%
e. To qualify for Social Security	34%	18%	36%	12%
f. To fulfill pension requirements	30%	12%	46%	12%
g. Being productive is a way I can help others	38%	32%	21%	9%
h. People have an obligation to work if they can	21%	33%	35%	11%
i. It makes me feel useful	43%	30%	20%	8%
j. Need the money	66%	24%	6%	4%
k. To save more for retirement	62%	16%	13%	9%

The following questions ask about making certain health care decisions. We understand that this topic may be sensitive to some, and we greatly appreciate your time and consideration in answering these questions. Your responses are critical in helping the state of Wyoming and AARP support people like yourself when dealing with these issues.

Advance Planning and Preparation

29. Advance directives allow you to make your health care decisions known in advance. These directives help others make decisions on your behalf when you are no longer able to do so. Wyoming has several forms in place to help people express those choices. Which of the following advance directive forms have you heard about and completed?

	Have heard about <u>and</u> completed	Have heard about but <u>not</u> completed	Have not heard about	No Response
a. A durable power of attorney for health care in which you name someone to make decisions about your health care in the event you become incapacitated	38%	42%	12%	8%
b. A living will in which you state the kind of health care you want or don't want under certain circumstances.....	46%	44%	4%	5%
c. A cardiopulmonary resuscitation directive.....	22%	42%	24%	12%
d. A psychiatric advance directive.....	8%	27%	51%	15%

Currently, Wyoming's living will, durable power of attorney for health care, cardiopulmonary resuscitation directive, and psychiatric advance directive forms each have certain restrictions on who can make health care decisions for the patient. Some feel that these forms are complicated and could delay health care decision making by the patient and the family, while others believe that each patient has different requirements and circumstances around making health care decisions.

30. How strongly would you support or oppose a proposal in Wyoming to provide a single advance care directive form that would provide a patients' instructions about all their preferred types of health care?

<u>%</u>	
58	Strongly support
22	Somewhat support
13	Neither support nor oppose
1	Somewhat oppose
1	Strongly oppose
5	No Response

Currently in Wyoming, when a patient did NOT prepare any document describing their health care decisions and they are suffering from a terminal condition or an irreversible coma where they are unable to communicate their health care choices, ALL family members who can be contacted must be in agreement about a decision to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining measures.

There is a proposal in Wyoming to allow family members and others the authority to make health care decisions for the patient based on an order of priority to the patient rather than agreement. For example, if the patient has a spouse, the spouse will be asked to decide about the patient's treatment, and if there is no spouse, the patients children will be asked to decide, and if the patient does not have children, then the patients parents will be asked to decide, and so on.

31. How strongly would you support or oppose proposed legislation in Wyoming to allow family members to make decisions for a patient based on an order of priority rather than agreement when that patient has not executed an advance directive form?

<u>%</u>	
44	Strongly support
27	Somewhat support
15	Neither support nor oppose
3	Somewhat oppose
4	Strongly oppose
7	No Response

About You

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

32. How long have you lived in Wyoming? _____ (in years)

<u>%</u>	
2	1 – less than 3 years
3	3 – less than 5 years
5	5 – less than 10 years
5	10 – less than 15 years
4	15 – less than 20 years
77	More than 20 years

33. What is your 5-digit zip code? (WRITE IN YOUR ZIP CODE) _____

34. What county do you live in: _____

<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>	
18	Laramie	3	Uinta
12	Natrona	2	Big Horn
7	Fremont	2	Washakie
6	Sheridan	2	Hot Springs
6	Sweetwater	2	Weston
6	Park	2	Converse
5	Albany	2	Sublette
4	Carbon	1	Lincoln
4	Goshen	1	Crook
3	Campbell	1	USA
3	Platte	*	Niobrara
3	Teton	*	Thayne
3	Johnson	*	Sudn
		4	No Response

35. Are you...?

<u>%</u>	
49	Male
49	Female
3	No Response

36. What was your age at your last birthday? _____ (in years)

<u>%</u>	
33	50-59
41	60-74
22	75+
4	No Response

37. What is the highest level of education that you completed?

<u>%</u>	
6	Less than high school
25	High school graduate or equivalent
34	Some college or technical training beyond high school
15	College graduate (4 years)
12	Post-graduate or professional degree
8	No Response

38. What is your race? (Check ALL that apply)

<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>	
94	White or Caucasian	2	Native American or Alaskan Native
*	Black or African American	*	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
*	Asian	1	Other : _____
1	Hispanic, Spanish, Latino	2	No Response

39. What is your current marital status?

<u>%</u>	
3	Single, never married
60	Married
2	Living together as if married
1	Separated
13	Divorced
21	Widowed
1	No Response

40. What was your annual household income before taxes in 2003?

<u>%</u>	
6	Less than \$10,000
18	\$10,000 to under \$20,000
15	\$20,000 to under \$30,000
13	\$30,000 to under \$40,000
10	\$40,000 to under \$50,000
7	\$50,000 to under \$60,000
8	\$60,000 to under \$75,000
13	\$75,000 or more
10	No Response

41. Do you access the internet or World Wide Web or the on-line services such as America-on-Line (AOL)?

<u>%</u>		
54	Yes →	41a. If <u>YES</u>: Do you access the Internet or World Wide Web: (Check ALL that apply.) (n=608) 92% at home 2% at the senior center 33% at work * some other place 5% at the library
43	No	
3	No Response	

Thank you for completing this survey. Please use the postage-paid envelope and return it to State Member Research, AARP, 601 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20049, by May 25, 2004.

AARP
Knowledge Management
For more information please contact Erica Dinger (202) 434-6176