



KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

- 1) **The need for reform is critical.** Overall, Americans are dissatisfied with the current health care system. Fifty-two percent of Americans are saying the costs of health care are too high. Meanwhile, 77 percent of Americans are unhappy with the way the health care system is being regulated.
- 2) **Quality and cost are key.** When it comes to healthcare reform, people in general want a new standard that focuses on **quality** and **cost effective care**. Half of all Americans believe that the greatest shortcoming of our health care system is that the costs are just too high.
- 3) **Doctors and advocacy groups must be involved in health care reform.** Eighty-six percent of Americans would trust doctors and medical or patient advocacy groups to set standards for measuring and reporting quality. This is compared to 8 percent for health insurers.
- 4) **It's about the quality, not the volume.** No matter how you ask it, Americans believe that quality of care is the fairest way to compensate doctors. Overall, people base their opinion of fair doctor compensation on the "quality of care provided." Sixty-four percent agree that quality of care is most important; compared to 21 percent suggesting "performance-based" pay; 6 percent choosing "patient outcome"; 6 percent selecting "merit"; and only 2 percent saying physician payment should be based on "volume." The problem with volume (the current system of payment) is that doctors are rewarded based on the number of procedures, rather than the evidence-based quality of care provided to patients. People expect to be treated by a doctor who is focused on providing the best care possible.
- 5) **Heart health is close to the hearts of most Americans.** There are few people in America who can say that they have not had their lives touched by heart disease. Nearly three-fourths (72 percent) of Americans personally know someone affected by heart disease. Two-thirds of Americans consider themselves to be at-risk for heart disease. And, 70 percent of Americans described themselves as "concerned" or "fanatical" about their heart health. Interestingly, Young Men 18-39 are the most fanatical about heart health, with nearly one in five describing themselves in that way. Not only is the public affected, but the government's pocketbook is as well. Over 40 percent of Medicare dollars are spent on cardiovascular disease.
- 6) **ACC Quality First objectives are on target.** When the American College of Cardiology is mentioned by name, with objectives, the College has wide support for its overall mission-- with 83 percent of Americans surveyed agreeing that the primary objectives of the ACC are extremely or very important. In particular, "helping to set a new standard for healthcare reform" is what the public feels the ACC's top priority should be (39 percent), followed by "advocating for sound healthcare policies" (25 percent). When it comes to healthcare reform, people in general want the ACC to advocate a new standard that focuses on **quality** and **cost-efficient care**. People with heart problems want the ACC to be a proponent for policies that will benefit cardiovascular patients and practices and ensure that changes to the system will benefit *their* needs.
- 7) **Cardiologists and pediatricians get the highest favorability and trust ratings.** Pediatricians (32 percent) and cardiologists (27 percent) are viewed most favorably by the American public when compared to other specialists—nearly three times the amount of support of any other specialist, including oncologists (the next closest at 11 percent). Those over 40 have greater favorability toward their cardiologist. Almost a third of those over 40 (31 percent) and nearly half (45 percent) of Americans 60 or older give cardiologists their highest job-approval rating, beating out pediatricians—and even oncologists—handily. Likewise, pediatricians and cardiologists are considered the most **trustworthy** specialists--at a rate of 2-to-1 versus other specialists--with cardiologists surpassing pediatricians as age increases.
- 8) **Not only are cardiologists trusted, they are considered vital to the nation's health.** When asked which specialists are most necessary in America, cardiologists are in roughly a three-way tie with pediatricians and oncologists. But among those over 60, cardiologists lead the pack and are considered the most necessary specialist (38 percent).