



National Health Issues Survey Results: Access & Affordability

Patients Rising – in coordination with Gravis Marketing, a leading market research and polling firm – conducted a national survey of 1507 registered voters to ask their views on national health issues including patient access and affordability, drug pricing policies, and trust among healthcare stakeholders. The survey was conducted between April 29-May 12, 2021. This Current Issues report explores the survey's results on issues of access and affordability.

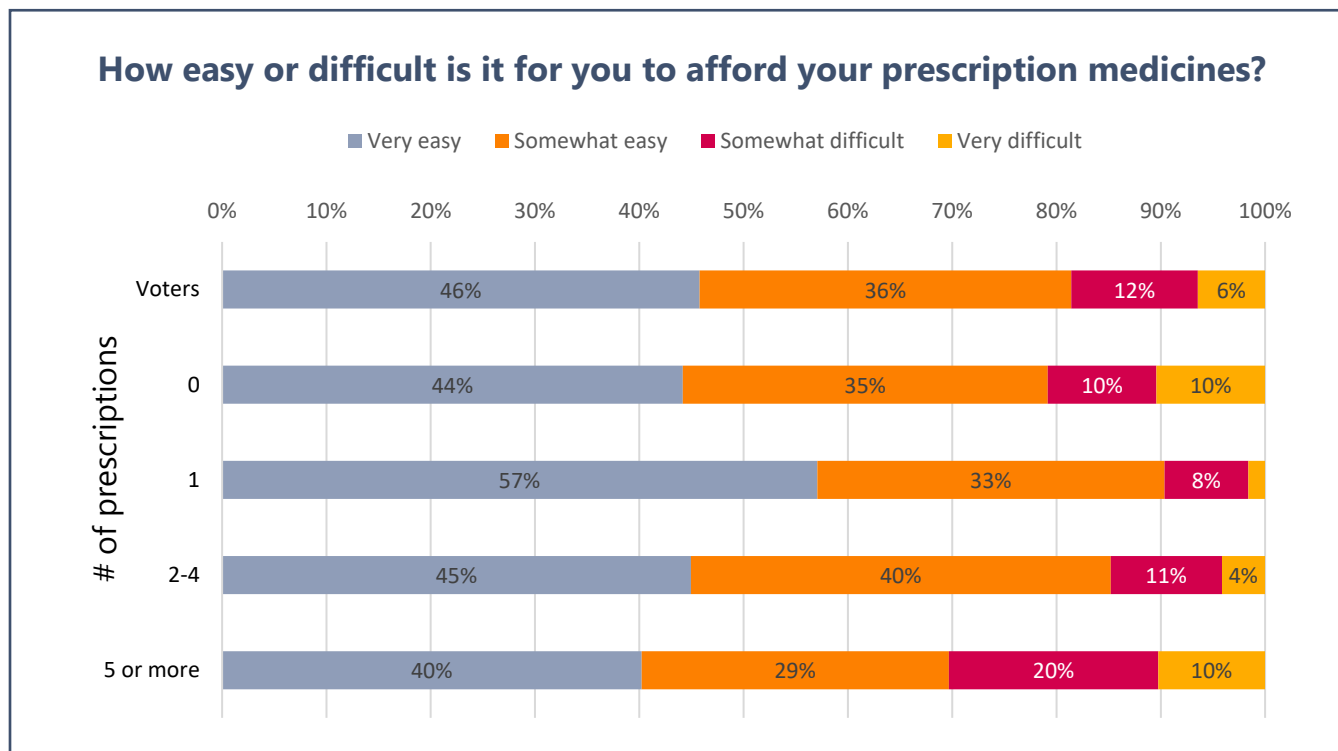
Top Themes

- Voters find their health insurance premiums to be a greater financial burden than the cost of prescription drugs.
- Despite the affordability of prescription drugs, voters still support policies to further lower their healthcare expenses.
- These policies include passing along discounts and rebates to patients, more rapidly approving generic alternatives, and capping annual prescription drug costs.

Key Survey Results

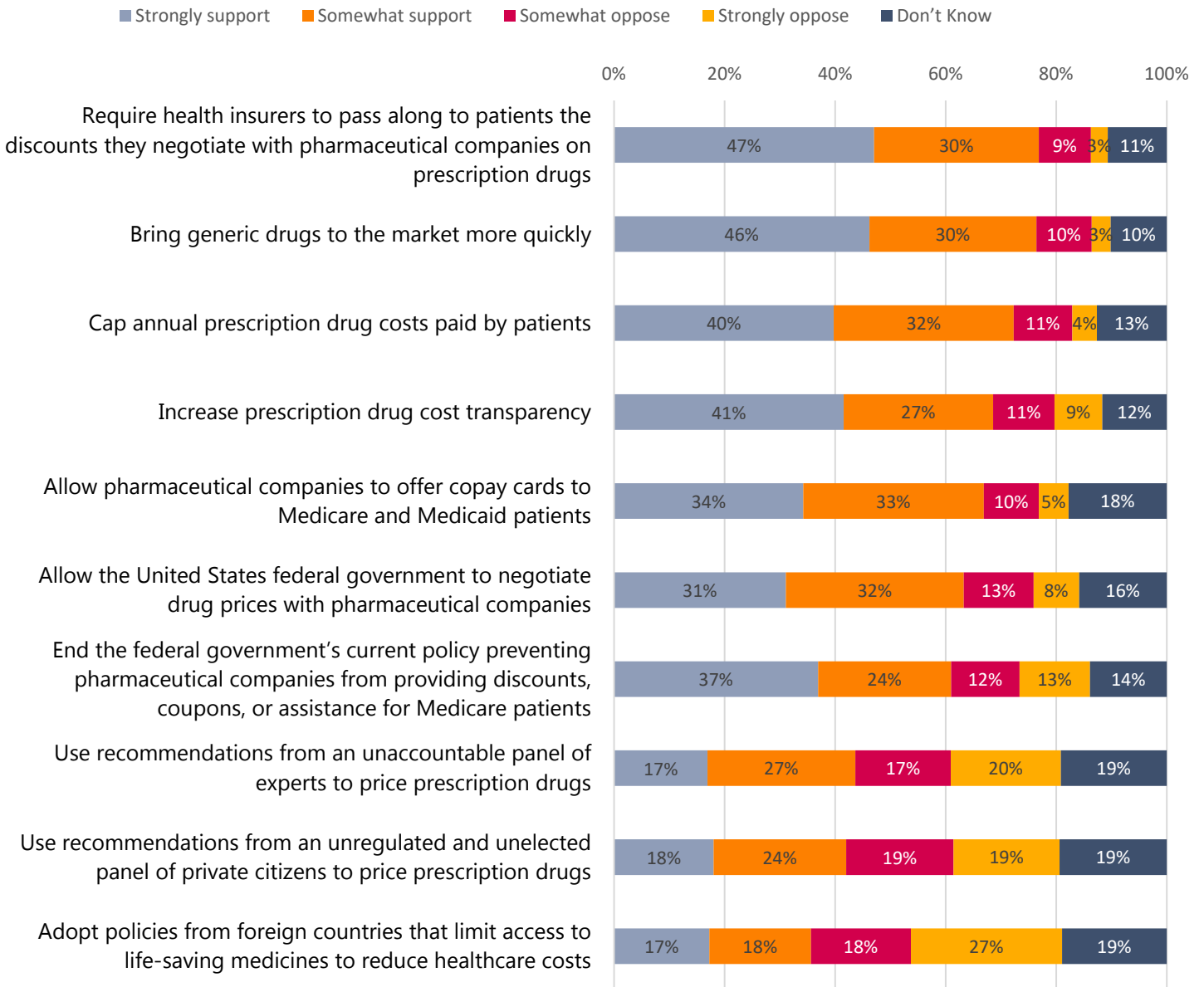
- Overall, voters are more concerned with reducing healthcare premiums than copays by a margin of 43% to 35%.
- 82% of those with health insurance have prescription drug coverage.
 - 89% are satisfied with their coverage and 51% are very satisfied with it.
- Most voters (56%) say their out-of-pocket prescription drug costs stayed the same last year, but 34% said they increased. Only 9% said they decreased.
- 45% with prescription covered reported a problem with their coverage in the past year.
 - Waiting more than two days (21%).
 - Trying a less expensive drug (20%).
 - Not having a medicine covered (18%) were each experienced by about 1 in 5 with prescription coverage.

- Only 18% of voters say it is difficult to pay for prescription drugs, but 30% of voters with 5 or more prescriptions have difficulty paying for prescriptions (see below).
 - Those on private plans and with fewer prescriptions are more concerned about premiums.
 - Those on Medicaid and with 5 or more prescriptions are more concerned about lowering copays.



- 47% of voters say they have received a discount on their prescription drugs in the past year.
 - This most often came in the form of a pharmacy coupon (20%) or a copay card (14%).
 - 24% of those who received a discount in the past year said they would not have filled the prescription if not for the discount.
- Voters clearly expect government policies to focus on lowering the price of prescription drugs.
- Policies that lower prescription drug prices all have strong support (between 61%-77%).
- The best testing individual policies were:
 - Requiring health insurers to pass along to patients discounts they negotiate with pharmaceutical companies on prescription drugs (77%)
 - Bring generic drugs to the market more quickly (76%)
 - Cap annual prescription drug cost paid by patients (72%)

How much do you support or oppose each policy?



Policy Recommendations

- **Patients should have low out-of-pocket costs.**
 - Insurance companies, Medicare, and Medicaid should honor co-pay assistance.
 - Ban co-pay card accumulators and maximizers, which financially penalize patients and provide a windfall for insurance companies.
 - Authorize and expand financial tools to help patients stretch their healthcare dollar further.

- **Health insurance must improve patient access, not create more barriers.**
 - Preserve the doctor-patient relationship as the central and best decision maker in healthcare.
 - Insurance markets should be competitive and offer patients a variety of health plans.
 - Eliminate disruptive insurance practices that limit patient access, like step therapy and excessive prior authorizations.
 - End coding games on preventative diagnostics, medicines, and procedures that lead to unexpected medical bills, as well as lengthy and unnecessary appeals by the patient.
- **Embolden the market-based healthcare model that encourages patient choice and maintains American leadership in life sciences and medical innovation.**
 - Audit policies and practices that can create perverse incentives and lead to unnecessary treatments like surgeries or other expensive procedures.
 - Reestablish transparency across the health system to understand the actual drivers of healthcare inflation.
 - Encourage entrepreneurial disruption that leads to the health system competing for patients, which would help lower costs and improve the use of health resources.
 - Patients, not companies like pharmacy chains, should benefit financially from the data collected on individuals.