



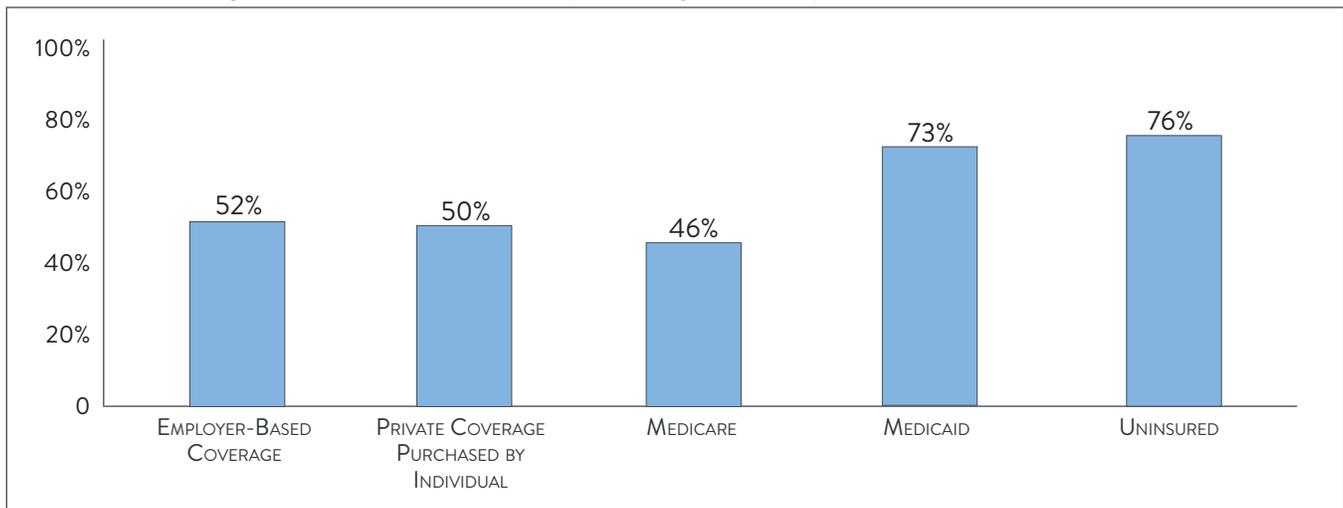
Illinois Residents Worried about High Drug Costs; Support a Range of Government Solutions

According to a survey of more than 1,000 Illinois adults conducted from January 9 to January 17, 2020, Illinois residents are extremely concerned about prescription drug costs and express a strong desire to enact solutions.

Over half (54%) of all survey respondents reported being either “worried” or “very worried” about affording the cost of prescription drugs. The uninsured, those with employer-based coverage and those on Medicaid are the most concerned about affording drugs (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

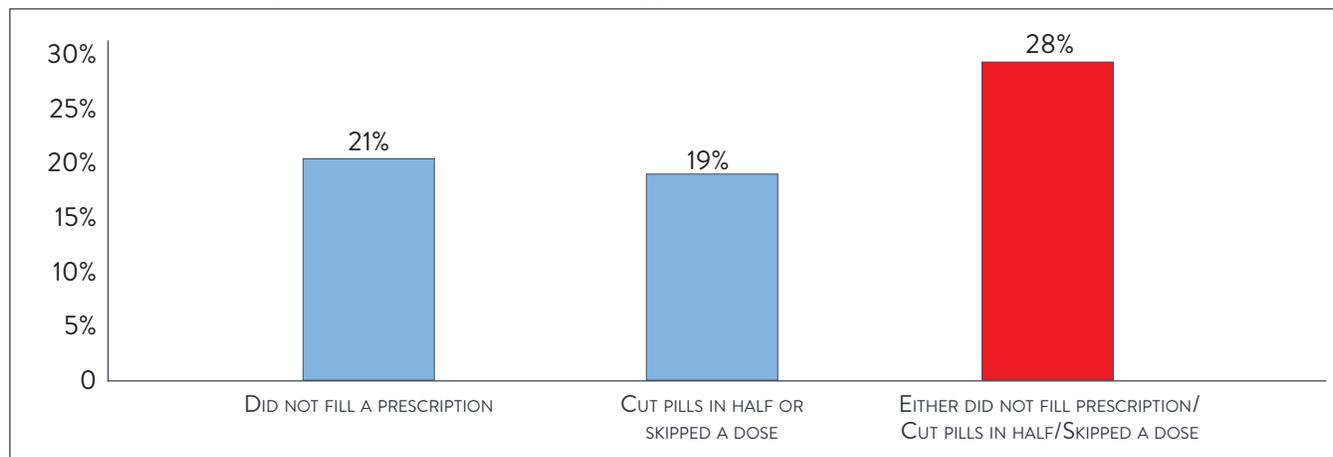
Somewhat or Very Worried About Affording Prescription Drugs



Source: 2020 Poll of Illinois Adults, Ages 18+, Altarum Healthcare Value Hub’s Consumer Healthcare Experience State Survey

Concerns about affording drugs may be tied to concerns about the security of health coverage. As detailed in a companion data brief, many respondents are worried about losing their health coverage or being unable to afford their insurance. Among those with Medicaid, 60% are worried about losing their coverage and are even more worried about affording it (70%).¹ For many, including Medicaid recipients, concerns about affording drugs are likely tied to concerns about the security of their health coverage.

In addition to being concerned about drug affordability in the future, many Illinois residents are currently experiencing hardship due to drug costs. Indeed, cost concerns led 28% of respondents (or someone in their household) to not fill a prescription or to cut pills in half (Figure 2).

Figure 2**Did not Fill a Prescription, Cut Pills in Half or Skipped a Dose Due to Concerns About Cost**

Source: 2020 Poll of Illinois Adults, Ages 18+, Altarum Healthcare Value Hub, Altarum's Consumer Healthcare Experience State Survey

In light of these prescription drug cost concerns—as well as concern about high healthcare costs generally—it is not surprising that Illinois residents are extremely dissatisfied with the health system:

- Only **28%** agree or strongly agree with the statement, “We have a great health care system in the U.S.”
- While **70%** agree or strongly agree that, “the system needs to change.”

When given more than 20 options, the option cited **most frequently** as being a “major reason” for high healthcare costs were drug companies charging too much money:

- **72%**—Drug companies charging too much money
- **66%**—Hospitals charging too much money
- **62%**—Insurance companies charging too much money
- **53%**—Some well-known or large hospitals or doctor groups using their influence to get higher payments from insurance companies

When it comes to tackling high drug costs specifically, respondents endorsed a number of strategies:

- **87%**—Authorize the Attorney General to take legal action to prevent price gouging or unfair prescription drug price hikes
- **87%**—Require drug companies to provide advanced notice of price increases and information to justify those increases
- **87%**—Set standard prices for drugs to make them affordable
- **86%**—Create a Prescription Drug Affordability Board to examine the evidence and establish acceptable costs for drugs
- **85%**—Prohibit drug companies from charging more in the U.S. than abroad

What is remarkable about the findings is high support for change regardless of the respondent’s political affiliation (see Table 1).

Table 1
Percent Who Agree/Strongly Agree, by Political Affiliation

SELECTED SURVEY QUESTIONS	TOTAL	GENERALLY SPEAKING, DO YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AS...		
		REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRAT	NEITHER
MAJOR REASON FOR RISING HEALTHCARE COSTS: <i>DRUG COMPANIES CHARGING TOO MUCH MONEY</i>	72%	67%	74%	72%
THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD AUTHORIZE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION TO PREVENT PRICE GOUGING OR UNFAIR PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICE HIKES	87%	86%	87%	87%
THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REQUIRE DRUG COMPANIES TO PROVIDE ADVANCED NOTICE OF PRICE INCREASES AND INFORMATION TO JUSTIFY THOSE INCREASES	87%	88%	86%	87%
THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SET STANDARD PRICES FOR DRUGS TO MAKE THEM AFFORDABLE	87%	86%	89%	84%
THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CREATE A PRESCRIPTION DRUG AFFORDABILITY BOARD TO EXAMINE THE EVIDENCE AND ESTABLISH ACCEPTABLE COSTS FOR DRUGS	86%	80%	90%	86%
THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROHIBIT DRUG COMPANIES FROM CHARGING MORE IN US THAN ABROAD	85%	88%	86%	82%

Source: 2020 Poll of Illinois Adults, Ages 18+, Altarum Healthcare Value Hub, Altarum’s Consumer Healthcare Experience State Survey

While Illinois residents are united in calling for a role for government in addressing high drug costs, they also see a role for themselves:

- 78% would switch from a brand to a generic if given the option
- 60% have tried to find out the cost of a drug beforehand

Note

1. See: Healthcare Value Hub, *Illinois Residents Struggle to Afford High Healthcare Costs; Support a Range of Government Solutions Across Party Lines*, Data Brief No. 63 (February 2020). www.healthcarevaluehub.org/Illinois-2020-Healthcare-Survey/

Methodology

Altarum’s Consumer Healthcare Experience State Survey (CHESS) is designed to elicit respondents’ unbiased views on a wide range of health system issues, including confidence using the health system, financial burden, and views on fixes that might be needed.

The survey used a web panel from Dynata with a demographically balanced sample of 1,047 respondents who live in Illinois. The survey was conducted only in English and restricted to adults ages 18 and older. The cases were weighted for age, gender and income to be demographically representative of Illinois. The demographic composition of respondents was as follows.

Demographic Composition of Survey Respondents

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			GENDER		
Under \$20K	102	10%	MALE	408	40%
\$20K - \$30K	101	10%	FEMALE	639	61%
\$30K - \$40K	92	9%	INSURANCE STATUS		
\$40K - \$50K	81	8%	HEALTH INSURANCE THROUGH EMPLOYER OR FAMILY MEMBER’S EMPLOYER	490	46%
\$50K - \$60K	85	8%	HEALTH INSURANCE BUY ON MY OWN	100	11%
\$60K - \$75K	102	10%	MEDICARE	277	22%
\$75K - \$100K	172	16%	MEDICAID	120	14%
\$100K - \$150K	191	18%	TRICARE/MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM	8	1%
\$150K+	121	12%	DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) HEALTH CARE	8	2%
PARTY AFFILIATION			NO COVERAGE OF ANY TYPE	33	4%
REPUBLICAN	302	29%	I DON’T KNOW	11	1%
DEMOCRAT	436	42%	HEALTH STATUS		
NEITHER	309	30%	EXCELLENT	155	16%
AGE			VERY GOOD	377	36%
18-24	69	7%	GOOD	358	33%
25-34	105	11%	FAIR	128	13%
35-44	160	17%	POOR	29	3%
45-54	155	16%			
55-64	211	22%			
65+	258	23%			

Source: 2020 Poll of Illinois Adults, Ages 18+, Altarum Healthcare Value Hub’s Consumer Healthcare Experience State Survey



ABOUT ALTARUM’S HEALTHCARE VALUE HUB

With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Healthcare Value Hub provides free, timely information about the policies and practices that address high healthcare costs and poor quality, bringing better value to consumers. The Hub is part of Altarum, a nonprofit organization with the mission of creating a better, more sustainable future for all Americans by applying research-based and field-tested solutions that transform our systems of health and healthcare.

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