

HEALTH POLL:

# Deferred care and prescription medication

December 2018

## Survey overview

Every other month, the IBM® Watson Health™-NPR Health Poll surveys approximately 3,000 Americans to gauge attitudes and opinions on a wide range of healthcare issues. Poll results are reported by National Public Radio (NPR) on the health blog, “Shots” (<http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/>), and on air.

The Watson Health-NPR Health Poll is powered by the IBM Watson Health PULSE® Healthcare Survey, an independently funded, multi-modal (land line, cell phone, internet) survey that collects information from approximately 80,000 US households annually.

The results depicted here represent responses from 3,013 survey participants interviewed from July 2 -14, 2018. The margin of error is +/- 1.8 percentage points.

# Executive summary

This month's Watson Health PULSE Healthcare Survey asked respondents about their ability to pay for healthcare services and prescription drugs. Overall, 20% of respondents said that they had postponed, delayed or canceled healthcare services during the last three months due to cost.

Additional findings include:

- Rates of healthcare deferral due to cost are highest among the youngest demographic. Among the 20% of respondents who said they had postponed, delayed or canceled services due to cost, 34% were under age 35. That percentage fell to 19% among respondents age 35 – 64 and 8% among those 65 and older.
- 26% of all respondents said that they had difficulty paying for healthcare services over the last three months, a rate that tended to decrease with increasing age.
- 66% of respondents said that they had received a prescription in the last three months. Of those who received a prescription, 97% had it filled.
- 19% of respondents who said they had a prescription filled said they had difficulty paying for it. The highest frequency of reported difficulty paying for prescription drugs was found among respondents under age 35 (38%). That percentage fell to 18% among respondents age 35 – 64 and 9% among those 65 and older.
- 68% of respondents said they are aware of coupons that are available from drug manufacturers that can be used to help offset the cost of certain medications, a rate that tended to increase with increasing levels of education.
- 34% of respondents who were aware of these coupons said they had used them when filling a prescription.

# Survey data

## Question 1

In the past 3 months, have you or anyone in your household had to postpone, delay or cancel healthcare services, like a doctor's appointment or medical procedure, because of cost?

	Yes	No
<b>Age</b>		
<35	33.5%	66.5%
35 - 64	19.3%	80.7%
65+	8.4%	91.6%
Total	19.6%	80.4%
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	18.4%	81.6%
Some college/associate degree	27.5%	72.5%
College+	15.4%	84.6%
Total	19.6%	80.4%
<b>Generation</b>		
Silent Generation	5.1%	94.9%
Baby Boomers	13.9%	86.1%
Generation X	20.7%	79.3%
Millennials	30.8%	69.2%
Total	19.6%	80.4%
<b>Income</b>		
<\$25,000	19.5%	80.5%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	25.1%	74.9%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	20.5%	79.5%
\$100,000+	14.8%	85.2%
Total	19.6%	80.4%

**Bolded figures** are statistically significant.

## Question 2

In the past 3 months, have you or anyone in your household had difficulty paying for healthcare services like a doctor's appointment or medical procedure?

	Yes	No
<b>Age</b>		
<35	40.7%	59.3%
35 - 64	26.1%	73.9%
65+	11.0%	89.0%
Total	25.5%	74.5%
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	25.5%	74.5%
Some college/associate degree	36.1%	63.9%
College+	18.7%	81.3%
Total	25.5%	74.5%
<b>Generation</b>		
Silent Generation	6.3%	93.7%
Baby Boomers	17.4%	82.6%
Generation X	28.2%	71.8%
Millennials	38.9%	61.1%
Total	25.5%	74.5%
<b>Income</b>		
<\$25,000	27.5%	72.5%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	39.0%	61.0%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	25.9%	74.1%
\$100,000+	13.8%	86.2%
Total	25.5%	74.5%

**Bolded figures** are statistically significant.

### Question 3

In the past 3 months, did you receive a prescription for any kind of medication?

	Yes	No
<b>Age</b>		
<35	38.7%	61.3%
35 - 64	71.8%	28.2%
65+	84.1%	15.9%
Total	66.2%	33.8%
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	62.3%	37.7%
Some college/associate degree	68.2%	31.8%
College+	67.1%	32.9%
Total	66.2%	33.8%
<b>Generation</b>		
Silent Generation	85.7%	14.3%
Baby Boomers	84.9%	15.1%
Generation X	67.3%	32.7%
Millennials	40.5%	59.5%
Total	66.2%	33.8%
<b>Income</b>		
<\$25,000	71.3%	28.7%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	63.8%	36.2%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	64.0%	36.0%
\$100,000+	70.2%	29.8%
Total	66.2%	33.8%

**Bolded figures** are statistically significant.

#### Question 4

Did you fill the prescription?

	Yes	No
<b>Age</b>		
<35	91.4%	8.6%
35 - 64	97.6%	2.4%
65+	97.8%	2.2%
Total	96.7%	3.3%
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	96.8%	3.2%
Some college/associate degree	96.0%	4.0%
College+	97.2%	2.8%
Total	96.7%	3.3%
<b>Generation</b>		
Silent Generation	97.7%	2.3%
Baby Boomers	98.4%	1.6%
Generation X	96.5%	3.5%
Millennials	92.9%	7.1%
Total	96.7%	3.3%
<b>Income</b>		
<\$25,000	96.6%	3.4%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	95.4%	4.6%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	96.6%	3.4%
\$100,000+	97.6%	2.4%
Total	96.7%	3.3%

**Bolded figures** are statistically significant.

## Question 5

Did you have difficulty paying for the prescription medication?

	Yes	No
<b>Age</b>		
<35	38.3%	61.7%
35 - 64	18.4%	81.6%
65+	9.3%	90.7%
Total	18.5%	81.5%
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	15.4%	84.6%
Some college/associate degree	22.5%	77.5%
College+	17.5%	82.5%
Total	18.5%	81.5%
<b>Generation</b>		
Silent Generation	8.2%	91.8%
Baby Boomers	11.8%	88.2%
Generation X	17.1%	82.9%
Millennials	42.9%	57.1%
Total	18.5%	81.5%
<b>Income</b>		
<\$25,000	19.8%	80.2%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	17.5%	82.5%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	19.9%	80.1%
\$100,000+	20.0%	80.0%
Total	18.5%	81.5%

**Bolded figures** are statistically significant.

## Question 6

Are you aware that some prescription drug manufacturers provide coupons that can be used to pay for or reduce the cost of certain medications?

	Yes	No
<b>Age</b>		
<35	58.7%	41.3%
35 - 64	71.6%	28.4%
65+	69.9%	30.1%
Total	67.9%	32.1%
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	58.2%	41.8%
Some college/associate degree	67.0%	33.0%
College+	73.5%	26.5%
Total	67.9%	32.1%
<b>Generation</b>		
Silent Generation	55.4%	44.6%
Baby Boomers	79.4%	20.6%
Generation X	67.4%	32.6%
Millennials	59.5%	40.5%
Total	67.9%	32.1%
<b>Income</b>		
<\$25,000	64.3%	35.7%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	59.8%	40.2%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	72.9%	27.1%
\$100,000+	77.1%	22.9%
Total	67.9%	32.1%

**Bolded figures** are statistically significant.



## Question 7

Have you used this type of coupon?

	Yes	No
<b>Age</b>		
<35	38.9%	61.1%
35 - 64	38.4%	61.6%
65+	18.7%	81.3%
Total	34.0%	66.0%
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	23.9%	76.1%
Some college/associate degree	29.7%	70.3%
College+	40.6%	59.4%
Total	34.0%	66.0%
<b>Generation</b>		
Silent Generation	13.3%	86.7%
Baby Boomers	29.8%	70.2%
Generation X	36.6%	63.4%
Millennials	41.2%	58.8%
Total	34.0%	66.0%
<b>Income</b>		
<\$25,000	17.1%	82.9%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	26.3%	73.7%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	41.6%	58.4%
\$100,000+	40.8%	59.2%
Total	34.0%	66.0%

**Bolded figures** are statistically significant.

# Appendix

- 1) In the past 3 months, have you or anyone in your household had to postpone, delay or cancel healthcare services, like a doctor's appointment or medical procedure, because of cost?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  
- 2) In the past 3 months, have you or anyone in your household had difficulty paying for healthcare services like a doctor's appointment or medical procedure?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  
- 3) In the past 3 months, did you receive a prescription for any kind of medication?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  
- 4) Did you fill the prescription?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  
- 5) Did you have difficulty paying for the prescription medication?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  
- 6) Are you aware that some prescription drug manufacturers provide coupons that can be used to pay for or reduce the cost of certain medications?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  
- 7) Have you used this type of coupon?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No

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