



New Poll Reveals Broad Support for Coordinated Care Delivery in Health Reform

Voters in 'Blue Dog' and Swing Congressional Districts More Likely to Support Reform with Inclusion of Provision that Drives Down Long-Term Costs

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 24, 2009) – As Congress works to bring down the cost of health-care delivery, more than half of likely voters in “Blue Dog” and swing Congressional districts across the country support the inclusion of family doctor-coordinated health teams as part of comprehensive health reform, the finding of a new poll released today by America’s Agenda: Health Care for All and independent polling firm Lake Research Partners. The poll, conducted from October 21-25, 2009, indicates a growing consensus around a policy idea that up to this point has been largely absent from the health-care reform debate on Capitol Hill.

“It’s clear that Americans support the transition to a modern health-care system that brings down costs, prioritizes the delivery of effective care and helps people live longer and healthier lives,” said Doug Dority, President of America’s Agenda. “With cost control as a central focus, policymakers have a unique opportunity to include doctor-directed coordinated health teams as part of the final bill that goes to the president’s desk.”

“The most cost-effective health care system is one that helps people stay healthy in the first place. Coordinated health teams help family doctors provide the support their patients need to stay out of the hospital and stay healthy between visits to the doctor. Americans understand the team approach to health care, and they like it,” said Joe Hunt, International Iron Workers President.

Key findings from the survey include:

- **While skepticism about health-care reform still exists, the inclusion of coordinated health teams has the potential to help break the months-long stalemate between moderate and progressive Members of Congress.** Fifty-eight percent of likely voters in “Blue Dog” and swing districts favor this type of addition, with support for health care reform dropping off to 36 percent without it
- **Americans are convinced the idea will pave the way for sustainable cost savings.** Respondents believe coordinated health teams can help drive down overall costs of care (68 percent), are a smart and efficient use of tax dollars (67 percent) and are capable of generating savings of two to four times the initial investment over ten years (62 percent).
- **Voters believe coordinated health teams will satisfy a variety of critical needs.** Voters are convinced that such teams will support a greater emphasis on prevention (68 percent), manage care of those with chronic diseases more effectively (68 percent) and improve efficiency through the coordination of care (69 percent).

- **The inclusion of coordinated health teams makes voters more likely to support health care reform at a rate of nearly 3 to 1.** Fifty percent of likely voters surveyed report that this will make them more apt to back reform, compared with 18 percent who state the opposite. Intensity of support is particularly strong among women under age 50 (55 percent), teachers (56 percent), and families that have a friend or loved one with chronic disease (60 percent).

Legislation incorporating this provision set to be introduced in the near term would guarantee beneficiaries of Medicare, Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) plans, and any federally-established health Insurance exchanges the option to receive high quality health-care through the collaborative efforts of a primary care physician and doctor-coordinated personal medical teams.

Best practice examples from the private sector and a number of states show similar measures substantially cutting costs and improving patient health by making chronic disease prevention and care coordination top priorities.

In Vermont, for example, a state health reform law enacted in 2006 established community health teams – coordinated health teams that contract with primary care physicians to support patient adherence to personal health plans between doctor visits – is showing very promising results. In the first year under the new Vermont system, emergency room visits have fallen by 30%.

“Fragmentation in delivery of health care is a major cause of costly duplication of medical tests and wasteful overuse of health services,” said America’s Agenda Executive Director, Mark Blum. “It reduces care quality and drives relentless increases in avoidable health costs. Coordination of care is the antidote. Coordinated health teams, whether delivered by a classic patient-centered medical home or by a community health team, are important building blocks of the coordinated health care system America needs in order to be able to provide citizens with high quality care at a cost in line with other spending.”

"Despite a politically polarized environment surrounding health care reform, voters in the Blue Dog and swing districts surveyed solidly support health care delivery system reforms like establishing the use of coordinated health teams that will improve the quality of health care and lower costs," said Celinda Lake, President of Lake Research Partners.

Founded in 2004, America's Agenda: Health Care for All has actively built and strengthened comprehensive health-care reform campaigns in states across the country. The organization’s campaigns have provided templates for federal legislation and won passage, in states like Vermont and West Virginia, of some the most far-reaching health reform legislation enacted, to date, anywhere in the country.

For more information on America’s Agenda: Health Care for All, visit www.americasagenda.org.

Survey Methodology

These findings are based on 1000 telephone interviews with a random sample of likely 2010 voters in 84 congressional districts that are competitive and/or represented by members of the Blue Dog caucus. Interviews were conducted from October 21-25, 2009. Sampling error is +/- 3.1% overall.

About America's Agenda

America's Agenda brings together U.S. businesses, national and international labor unions and government leaders who share a common commitment to achieving access to affordable, high-quality health care for every American.

About Lake Research Partners

Lake Research Partners is a leading public opinion and political strategy firm providing expert research-based strategy for campaigns, issue advocacy groups, foundations, and non-profit organizations and has been actively engaged in research on health care reform.

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