

Access & Equity

Fielded June 2021

Every month, IBM Watson Health® conducts a health poll that surveys approximately 3,000 Americans to gauge attitudes and opinions on a wide range of healthcare issues.

This health poll is powered by the IBM Watson Health PULSE® Healthcare Survey, an independently funded, multi-modal (cell phone, internet) survey that collects information from approximately 60,000 U.S. households annually.

The results depicted in this report represent responses from 3,038 survey participants interviewed from June 1–13, 2021, with a margin of error of +/- 1.8%.

Executive summary

This health poll asked Americans about their opinions about access to health services and reporting race and ethnicity data.

Of all respondents:

50%

said they Always feel able to access the services and goods they need to maintain their health. This rate tends to increase with age, education level and income. 27% said they Often feel able to do so, while 15% said Sometimes.

34%

said Cost is the main barrier to receiving health services and goods. Other reasons given include Quality of Care (13%) and Transportation (12%).

32%

said they Strongly Agree with the idea of reporting race and ethnicity data to their health insurance provider or employer for the purposes of designing better benefits or programs. 27% said they Somewhat Agree and 28% said they were Neutral.

37%

said they have No Concerns with the idea of reporting their own race and ethnicity data to their health insurance provider or employer for the purposes of designing better benefits or programs. 28% said they have Privacy Concerns, 21% said they have Concerns About Discrimination and 20% said they have Concerns the Data May Be Used Against Them.

24%

said they have Definitely noticed symptoms that might indicate depression among children in the household due to social distancing. 31% said they have Maybe noticed symptoms, while 22% said Definitely Not.

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Note: Bolded figures are statistically significant.

Note: Care should be taken when interpreting all questions due to small sample sizes.

Question 1: How often do you feel you are able to access the services and goods that you (and your family) need for maintaining your health, such as going to the doctor or filling a prescription?

Age group (in years)	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
<35	35.5%	31.8%	22.6%	5.4%	2.9%
35 - 64	46.5%	29.1%	15.9%	5.2%	2.1%
65+	74.2%	17.7%	4.7%	1.4%	0.8%
Total	50.0%	27.2%	15.1%	4.4%	2.0%

Education level

HS or Less	43.8%	25.5%	17.9%	5.9%	4.2%
Some College/Associate	46.0%	28.5%	17.7%	5.2%	2.0%
College+	56.2%	27.2%	11.8%	3.0%	0.8%
Total	50.0%	27.2%	15.1%	4.4%	2.0%

Generation

Silent Generation	83.4%	11.5%	3.2%	1.2%	0.7%
Baby Boomers	68.9%	21.3%	6.1%	1.5%	1.0%
Generation X	46.6%	27.3%	16.8%	5.9%	2.3%
Millennials	36.5%	32.7%	21.1%	5.2%	2.6%
Total	50.0%	27.2%	15.1%	4.4%	2.0%

Annual income

<\$25k	36.9%	26.5%	22.4%	8.1%	3.7%
\$25k - \$49.9k	45.3%	30.0%	17.0%	4.5%	2.1%
\$50k - \$99.9k	56.7%	26.5%	12.2%	2.6%	1.2%
\$100k+	62.6%	25.3%	8.6%	2.4%	0.9%
Total	50.0%	27.2%	15.1%	4.4%	2.0%

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Question 2: What is the main barrier to receiving the health services and goods you (and your family) need?

Age group (in years)	Transportation	Not enough doctors in my area	Quality of care in my area	Mobility or disability issues
<35	12.9%	7.0%	14.8%	5.5%
35 - 64	11.3%	7.5%	13.5%	7.6%
65+	14.8%	6.7%	7.4%	7.6%
Total	12.3%	7.2%	13.2%	6.9%
Education level				
HS or Less	13.7%	6.2%	10.6%	8.3%
Some College/Associate	14.4%	6.1%	11.2%	6.0%
College+	9.6%	8.8%	16.7%	6.6%
Total	12.3%	7.2%	13.2%	6.9%
Generation				
Silent Generation	7.2%	5.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Baby Boomers	15.1%	6.3%	8.4%	7.8%
Generation X	11.4%	7.6%	11.8%	8.3%
Millennials	12.2%	7.3%	16.4%	5.5%
Total	12.3%	7.2%	13.2%	6.9%
Annual income				
<\$25k	19.5%	6.9%	8.4%	10.3%
\$25k - \$49.9k	10.8%	6.7%	11.4%	5.5%
\$50k - \$99.9k	9.8%	6.8%	16.3%	4.3%
\$100k+	6.7%	11.5%	21.5%	8.0%
Total	12.3%	7.2%	13.2%	6.9%

Note: Question 2 results continued on Page 5.

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Question 2: What is the main barrier to receiving the health services and goods you (and your family) need?

Age group (in years)	Cost	Lack of insurance	Another barrier	Don't know
<35	37.6%	9.5%	2.6%	9.5%
35 - 64	34.0%	8.1%	5.0%	10.6%
65+	23.4%	3.8%	8.8%	24.4%
Total	34.0%	8.1%	4.6%	11.9%

Education level

HS or Less	30.9%	8.3%	3.3%	16.2%
Some College/Associate	35.4%	10.9%	4.2%	10.6%
College+	35.0%	5.7%	5.8%	9.9%
Total	34.0%	8.1%	4.6%	11.9%

Generation

Silent Generation	4.2%	0.0%	14.1%	60.6%
Baby Boomers	24.7%	4.0%	9.2%	21.9%
Generation X	35.3%	9.0%	3.9%	9.9%
Millennials	36.9%	9.0%	3.3%	8.7%
Total	34.0%	8.1%	4.6%	11.9%

Annual income

<\$25k	28.0%	9.3%	3.1%	12.0%
\$25k - \$49.9k	35.5%	11.3%	5.5%	12.5%
\$50k - \$99.9k	41.3%	4.9%	4.6%	10.5%
\$100k+	28.9%	3.8%	5.8%	12.2%
Total	34.0%	8.1%	4.6%	11.9%

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Question 3: How much do you agree or disagree with the idea of reporting your own race and ethnicity, language preference, or cultural values to your health insurance provider or employer for the purposes of designing better health plan benefits, wellness programs, or to provide better quality healthcare to you (and your family)?

Age group (in years)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<35	30.5%	30.8%	27.2%	5.3%	2.6%	2.7%
35 - 64	30.9%	25.8%	28.3%	5.3%	5.5%	3.7%
65+	35.8%	25.1%	26.5%	5.7%	2.9%	3.5%
Total	32.0%	27.0%	27.6%	5.4%	4.1%	3.4%

Education level

HS or Less	33.9%	20.7%	32.5%	4.6%	2.8%	4.2%
Some College/Associate	28.7%	28.0%	28.4%	5.7%	4.8%	3.8%
College+	33.0%	30.0%	24.2%	5.6%	4.3%	2.6%
Total	32.0%	27.0%	27.6%	5.4%	4.1%	3.4%

Generation

Silent Generation	39.8%	26.3%	22.0%	5.3%	2.0%	3.6%
Baby Boomers	34.6%	25.8%	26.3%	5.7%	3.8%	3.4%
Generation X	30.0%	26.2%	28.2%	5.3%	5.9%	3.9%
Millennials	31.3%	28.8%	28.4%	5.2%	2.8%	2.8%
Total	32.0%	27.0%	27.6%	5.4%	4.1%	3.4%

Annual income

<\$25k	31.3%	22.2%	33.6%	3.9%	3.9%	4.0%
\$25k - \$49.9k	28.2%	28.1%	30.2%	6.8%	3.9%	2.5%
\$50k - \$99.9k	33.7%	28.5%	24.7%	5.0%	3.8%	3.8%
\$100k+	38.7%	31.0%	17.3%	6.1%	4.5%	2.2%
Total	32.0%	27.0%	27.6%	5.4%	4.1%	3.4%

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Question 4: What—if any—concerns do you have with the idea of reporting your own race and ethnicity, language preference, or cultural values to your health insurance provider or employer for the purposes of designing better health plan benefits, wellness programs, or to provide better quality healthcare to you (and your family)?

Age group (in years)	Privacy concerns		Security concerns	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
<35	74.9%	25.1%	83.1%	16.9%
35 - 64	74.2%	25.8%	82.6%	17.4%
65+	71.4%	28.6%	82.7%	17.3%
Total	73.7%	26.3%	82.8%	17.2%

Education level	Privacy concerns		Security concerns	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
HS or Less	78.5%	21.5%	85.6%	14.4%
Some College/Associate	74.9%	25.1%	85.1%	14.9%
College+	70.2%	29.8%	79.6%	20.4%
Total	73.7%	26.3%	82.8%	17.2%

Generation	Privacy concerns		Security concerns	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
Silent Generation	81.3%	18.7%	82.3%	17.7%
Baby Boomers	72.2%	27.8%	83.9%	16.1%
Generation X	74.3%	25.7%	82.1%	17.9%
Millennials	73.5%	26.5%	82.6%	17.4%
Total	73.7%	26.3%	82.8%	17.2%

Annual income	Privacy concerns		Security concerns	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
<\$25k	78.0%	22.0%	84.6%	15.4%
\$25k - \$49.9k	75.3%	24.7%	84.4%	15.6%
\$50k - \$99.9k	71.8%	28.2%	81.4%	18.6%
\$100k+	69.8%	30.2%	79.7%	20.3%
Total	73.7%	26.3%	82.8%	17.2%

Note: Question 4 results continued on Page 8.

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Question 4: What—if any—concerns do you have with the idea of reporting your own race and ethnicity, language preference, or cultural values to your health insurance provider or employer for the purposes of designing better health plan benefits, wellness programs, or to provide better quality healthcare to you (and your family)?

Age group (in years)	Concerns this data might be used against me		Concerns about discrimination		No concerns	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<35	73.7%	26.3%	72.1%	27.9%	76.5%	23.5%
35 - 64	81.8%	18.2%	80.0%	20.0%	61.7%	38.3%
65+	82.3%	17.7%	85.4%	14.6%	49.9%	50.1%
Total	79.7%	20.3%	79.1%	20.9%	63.0%	37.0%
Education level						
HS or Less	82.6%	17.4%	84.6%	15.4%	56.5%	43.5%
Some College/Associate	81.4%	18.6%	78.6%	21.4%	62.5%	37.5%
College+	76.9%	23.1%	76.2%	23.8%	67.0%	33.0%
Total	79.7%	20.3%	79.1%	20.9%	63.0%	37.0%
Generation						
Silent Generation	86.7%	13.3%	88.0%	12.0%	41.0%	59.0%
Baby Boomers	83.0%	17.0%	84.5%	15.5%	50.6%	49.4%
Generation X	81.4%	18.6%	79.7%	20.3%	62.3%	37.7%
Millennials	75.0%	25.0%	73.6%	26.4%	74.8%	25.2%
Total	79.7%	20.3%	79.1%	20.9%	63.0%	37.0%
Annual income						
<\$25k	78.6%	21.4%	80.8%	19.2%	60.0%	40.0%
\$25k - \$49.9k	80.6%	19.4%	79.6%	20.4%	62.3%	37.7%
\$50k - \$99.9k	80.6%	19.4%	79.0%	21.0%	62.4%	37.6%
\$100k+	77.9%	22.1%	75.7%	24.3%	68.9%	31.1%
Total	79.7%	20.3%	79.1%	20.9%	63.0%	37.0%

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Question 5: In the last 12 months, have you noticed any symptoms (e.g., feeling sad, tired with lack of energy, appetite changes, sleep issues, problems at school) that might be indicative of depression among any of the children in the household due to social distancing measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Age group (in years)	Definitely	Maybe	Don't think so	Definitely not
<35	24.0%	30.1%	22.8%	22.3%
35 - 64	24.1%	31.2%	21.6%	22.2%
65+	16.9%	43.6%	12.1%	27.3%
Total	23.9%	31.0%	21.9%	22.3%

Education level

HS or Less	24.9%	31.5%	20.9%	22.2%
Some College/Associate	18.5%	32.3%	22.2%	25.6%
College+	26.5%	30.1%	22.2%	20.6%
Total	23.9%	31.0%	21.9%	22.3%

Generation

Silent Generation	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Baby Boomers	19.9%	31.9%	16.7%	31.5%
Generation X	21.9%	33.7%	20.4%	23.0%
Millennials	25.7%	28.9%	23.5%	21.2%
Total	23.9%	31.0%	21.9%	22.3%

Annual income

<\$25k	24.8%	29.9%	19.7%	24.0%
\$25k - \$49.9k	21.5%	33.2%	26.3%	18.3%
\$50k - \$99.9k	19.8%	30.7%	20.5%	28.5%
\$100k+	30.8%	30.4%	19.5%	18.4%
Total	23.9%	31.0%	21.9%	22.3%

Learn More

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