

December 3, 2020

To: United States of Care (USofCare)
Fr: Molly Murphy, Luke Martin; ALG Research
Re: Key Findings from an Online Nationwide Poll

The results of our recent survey for USofCare make it clear that financial concerns and the COVID-19 pandemic have created an opening to improve our current health care system. While voters are generally satisfied with the insurance they have and the care they receive, they see major problems in our current health care system, particularly around affordability. They are disinclined to make major changes that would disrupt the things that work well, but very few, just 13%, would prefer we keep our current system as-is. Instead, voters are looking for targeted solutions that address the most pressing issues.

Cost is the crux of their concerns. It is an all encompassing issue as cost is a major source of anxiety in all of the different elements of our health care system from start to finish – from their insurance deductibles, to co-pays for their care, to prescription drug prices. While smaller percentages of people currently live without insurance or worry about losing it, many have faced financial hardships in their life that have caused them to forego health care. Cost stands significantly above any other areas in need of fixing and is where solutions should be directed.

- **COVID-19 has created a need to examine and fix our health care system to make it work better.** Overall, 84% of voters agree, and a majority (54%) strongly agree, that we must build a better, more equitable health care system in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Support from Black voters is particularly notable as 94% agree overall and 75% strongly agree. Additionally, 83% overall think it's more important that we make changes to our health care system as a result of COVID-19.
- **USofCare's core goal is overwhelmingly supported by voters**, 83% of which favor their vision for the future of health care. At least half of voters also say each of USofCare's individual goals describe their own goals and needs for the health care system:
 - People can get the personalized care they need, when and how they need it – 64% say this describes their goals for the health care system.
 - People have the security and freedom that dependable health care coverage provides as life changes – 63% describes.
 - People experience a health care system that's understandable and easy to navigate – 60% describes.
 - People have certainty that they can afford their health care – 57% describes.

These findings are from an online survey, conducted by ALG Research November 12-18, 2020 among N=1000 registered voters nationwide. Overall results were weighted to reflect the composition of registered voters across the country.

- **Cost is the main source of anxiety when it comes to health care and is at the top of the list for fixes.** Cost is the overwhelming reason 42% of voters have foregone health insurance in the past, that 41% of those under 30 have opted not to seek medical treatment in the last year, and when forced to choose which aspect of the U.S. health care system most needs improvement, affordability was chosen by a majority of voters (51%) and more than twice as much as the next closest option. Costs come from a range of sources. Voters do not identify one single driver of cost problems that is a bigger issue than other – instead, all range of health care costs (premiums, deductibles, surprise bills, prescription prices, etc.) are major sources of concern across a diverse range of demographics.
- While voters are able to recognize problems and see a need for improvement in the health care system, at the individual level, **people feel satisfied with the care they receive and the coverage they have.** Confirming a major finding from our previous qualitative research, most Americans (62%) believe the care they receive is, on average, better than most, while just 17% believe it worse than average.
- **A majority (54%) prefer to improve the system through incremental changes prioritizing the biggest problems,** while just 24% are looking to transform our system through large-scale changes. One thing that is abundantly clear though is that there are very few, just 13%, who would prefer to keep our current health care system as is.

 - At the moment, a public option seems to fit this category with more than 2-in-3 Americans (68%) in support of the concept overall, including more than half of Republicans (54%).
 - Making virtual care more accessible is also a potential solution. Of the 44% of survey respondents who had received it, mostly as a result of the pandemic, 87% had something positive to say about the experience.
- **There is widespread knowledge that some people face major inequities in health care** – especially the uninsured (57%), low income (48%), people with mental illness (46%), and undocumented people (46%). When compared to voters overall, Black and Hispanic voters are also significantly more likely to believe their own demographic groups face major inequities in health care.

 - Black voters are 30-points more likely than voters overall to believe that other Black people face major inequities in health care.
 - Hispanic voters are 22-points more likely than voters overall to believe that other Hispanic people face major inequities in health care.