

# National survey reveals 80 percent of Americans claim docs need better bedside manners

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As the 2008 national presidential election heats up, one topic remains a voter hot button and a constant debate issue – the health care crisis in America. Political affiliations aside, there is one aspect everyone can agree on – the importance of access to quality health care. But what defines ‘quality’ health care today?

According to a new survey conducted by Kelton Research for the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, a vast majority of Americans wish their doctors demonstrated the ‘care’ in the term health care. The survey unveiled that nearly eight out of ten polled (78 percent) complain that today’s doctors need better bedside manners and less than half of survey respondents could describe their doctor’s recent conduct as attentive (49 percent), communicative (44 percent) or compassionate (32 percent) at their last medical visit.

“Many past studies have shown a strong correlation between patient and doctor satisfaction and better overall patient outcomes when doctors develop a relationship with their patients,” said Arnold P. Gold, MD, founder of the Arnold P. Gold Foundation. “What this survey shows us is that patients are still craving for their physician to see the ‘person’ behind the prognosis and really want a ‘connectedness’ with their doctor.”

As the leading Foundation dedicated to keeping the care in healthcare,

the Arnold P. Gold Foundation sponsored the online survey of 1,000 Americans over the age of 18 to garner patient perceptions about their physicians' commitment to providing compassionate care.

Survey respondents indicate that along with the need for better bedside manner, less than half (47 percent) of the doctors visited have displayed an interest in their overall well-being as a person rather than the specific ailment at hand. In addition, many Americans report that their dissatisfaction with doctors is due to an experience of disconnection, such as the doctor making them feel rushed (40 percent), not providing enough opportunity to discuss their concerns and questions (36 percent), or even being outright rude or condescending (23 percent).

Source: The Arnold P. Gold Foundation

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