

This election year, health care costs top voter concerns: Poll

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Unexpected medical bills and high health care costs are dominating an election where kitchen table economic problems weigh heavily on voter's minds, a new KFF poll has found.

Voters struggling to pay their monthly bills are most eager to hear presidential candidates talk about economic and health care issues, according to the latest KFF Health Tracking Poll.

Nearly three in four adults are worried about being able to afford unexpected medical bills (74%) and the cost of health care services (73%), the [poll](#) found.

More than half also said the same about paying for [prescription drugs](#) (55%), as well as other everyday expenses like gas, utilities, food and housing.

About half of voters (48%) said [health care costs](#) are a major reason for their negative views of the economy, and health care worries top the list, regardless of partisanship.

Overall, two-thirds of voters (67%) view the economy negatively, but Republican voters are more than twice as likely as Democratic voters to hold such negative views, the poll found.

The poll also found that one in five adults (19%) have trouble affording their monthly bills, and another four in 10 (37%) can just afford their monthly bills.

Those groups had very different views than those who said they can pay their bills with money left over. They are more likely to view the national economy negatively, more likely to worry about health care expenses and more likely to want [presidential candidates](#) to focus on economic issues.

The poll also found that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) remains popular with the American public.

About six in 10 people (59%) view the ACA favorably, with 39% viewing it unfavorably.

What's more, half the public (50%) want the next president and Congress to expand what the ACA does, versus 16% who want to keep it as is, 14% who want to scale back the law and 18% who want it repealed entirely.

Two-thirds (67%) said it's "very important" to maintain the ACA's prohibition on insurers denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions, including 54% of Republicans.

However, only about four in 10 people (39%) were aware this provision is part of the ACA.

And while former President Donald Trump has talked about replacing the ACA, only one in six of all voters (16%) and three in 10 Republican voters believe he actually has a plan do so, results show.

The poll included 1,309 U.S. adults, including 1,055 registered voters. It was conducted between Jan. 20 and Feb. 7, with a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

More information: The American Medical Association has more on [health care spending](#).

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