Senior voters on Medicare: Tracking their priorities entering the 2020 election

Historically, senior citizens have been a critical voting block in presidential elections. As we enter an election cycle that is unpredictable in many ways, the PAN Foundation has conducted monthly surveys of seniors to identify the issues they are considering as they cast their ballot, and to gain their perspectives on policies to lower out-of-pocket costs.

COVID-19 growing as a top of mind issue for voters

Since tracking began in August, COVID-19, the economy, and healthcare have remained top-of-mind for senior voters on Medicare, though their vote in the 2020 presidential election. However, in October COVID-19 increased 9% as a top 2 issue.

COVID-19 Pandemic
Economy
Healthcare

Thinking about healthcare issues, senior voters say affordability of health insurance and addressing high out-of-pocket costs are very important issues in the presidential election.

Say affordability of health insurance is an important issue in the presidential election.

Say high out-of-pocket costs is an important issue in the presidential election.

Support for a cap on out-of-pocket costs

Despite strong support, two-thirds of senior voters on Medicare (64%) are not confident Congress will pass legislation that places a cap on what they pay out-of-pocket for prescription drugs.

Candidate’s plan to lower out-of-pocket medication costs impacts voting choice

Seven in ten senior voters say that a candidate’s plan to address out-of-pocket costs for prescription medications is important in their decision about who to vote for this election cycle.

Learn more about PAN’s survey results

See results

METHODOLOGY:

Wave 1:
This poll was conducted between August 7-10, 2020 among a national sample of 1000 senior voters on Medicare.

Wave 2:
This poll was conducted September 3-6, 2020 among a national sample of 1,000 senior voters on Medicare.

Wave 3:
This poll was conducted October 2-5, 2020 among a national sample of 1,000 senior voters on Medicare.

Wave 4:
This poll was conducted October 16-19, 2020 among a national sample of 1,000 senior voters on Medicare.

The interviews were conducted online, and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of senior voters on Medicare based on gender and race. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

COVID-19 concerns

Three in five senior voters are concerned about the impact COVID-19 will have on what they pay out-of-pocket for prescription drugs.

Affordability of health insurance is a critical issue for seniors

A large majority of senior voters say that placing a cap on what seniors pay out-of-pocket for prescription drugs and legislation that would smooth the out-of-pocket costs for prescription medications throughout the year.

Cap out-of-pocket costs

Legislation that would smooth out-of-pocket costs for prescription medications through the year

Not confident

Despite strong support, two-thirds of senior voters on Medicare (64%) are not confident Congress will pass legislation that places a cap on what they pay out-of-pocket for prescription drugs.

Cap out-of-pocket costs

85%

Not confident

Smooth out-of-pocket costs

73%

68%

Candidate’s plan to lower out-of-pocket medication costs impacts voting choice

Seven in ten senior voters say that a candidate’s plan to address out-of-pocket costs for prescription medications is important in their decision about who to vote for this election cycle.

73%

73%

68%