

MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
FROM: JARRETT LEWIS & BILL McINTURFF, PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
DATE: MARCH 4, 2024
SUBJECT: NATIONAL TELEHEALTH SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

ABOUT THE SURVEY

On behalf of hims & hers, Public Opinion Strategies conducted a national online survey of 1,008 adults. The survey included 549 telehealth users and 873 registered voters and was conducted January 25-31, 2024. Quotas were set for gender, region, age, ethnicity and education. Modest weighting was also applied to these same variables upon completion of interviewing based on U.S. Census data. Since the sample was drawn from an opt-in panel sample rather than a random probability sample, a credibility interview is used for determining the accuracy of the data. Results from the survey have a credibility interval of $\pm 3.52\%$ percentage points.

SURVEY FINDINGS

1. Cost remains a significant barrier to Americans receiving medical care.

- Fully 62% of Americans say reducing health care costs like premiums and deductibles is one of their two most important health care issues – this is down from a year ago, although up from the first track in 2021 (52%).
- Further, nearly 4-in-10 Americans report they or someone in their family have delayed care in the last year due to the cost of care. Hispanic adults (51%), those with a high deductible (50%), Black adults (47%) and those with a chronic illness (45%) are among the groups most likely to have delayed care because of cost. And 57% of those who describe their mental health as fair or poor have delayed care because of cost in the last year.

2. Access to health care continues to be *more* of a problem following the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Two thirds (67%) of Americans say access to medical care is a problem where they live, up from 58% who said the same during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2021. Access to care is an issue among underserved patient populations: Hispanic Americans (77%), Rural Americans (71%), and Black Americans (71%) all say access to care is a problem where they live.
- Fully 9-in-10 Americans are aware of the shortage of health care workers –and more than three-quarters are concerned about that shortage.

3. Americans continue to recognize the gravity of the mental health situation in America.

- Fully 47% know someone who would benefit from receiving counseling or therapy from a mental or behavioral health professional but who is not currently receiving that care.
- Fully 92% of Americans believe mental health issues are a very serious or somewhat serious problem in the U.S.
- Just 44% believe that people in the U.S. can access the mental and behavioral health they need.

4. Telehealth utilization has remained steady over the last two years.

- Fully 54% of respondents have now had a telehealth visit, mirroring the data from the last two years. The percentage of Americans who have used telehealth has risen dramatically since 2019 (10% in June 2019, 29% in April 2020, 43% in August 2020, 51% in February 2021 55% in 2022 and 2023).¹
- Among those who have used telehealth, satisfaction remains consistently high. Fully 89% of those who have used telehealth say they were satisfied with their most recent visit – in four years of tracking, the satisfaction number has never dropped below 86%.
- Over half of non-telehealth users say they would be likely to try it in the future.

5. A majority of Americans believe physician assistants and nurse practitioners providing care through telehealth platforms should be permitted to treat different health issues.

- A majority of Americans believe clinicians providing care through telehealth channels should be permitted to treat common illnesses (89%), chronic illnesses (68%) and mental or behavioral health issues (66%).

6. Americans support policies that will expand asynchronous telehealth options.

- Two-thirds of Americans support legislation to expand patient access to asynchronous telehealth.
- Majorities of Republicans (62%) and Democrats (73%) support this legislation.
- Hispanic Adults (77%), Black Adults (68%) and those with Medicaid coverage (74%) express stronger levels of support for legislation to expand asynchronous telehealth. Notably, healthcare workers are among the strongest supporters, with 79% in support of expanding asynchronous telehealth.

7. A majority of Americans have heard about weight loss drugs like Ozempic – and a majority support doctors who provide care through telehealth platforms being allowed to prescribe these drugs.

- Fully 62% of Americans have seen, read, or heard a lot or some about weight loss prescription drugs.
- Nearly 6-in-10 (58%) say doctors working for telehealth companies should be allowed to prescribe these weight loss prescription drugs, including majorities of Republicans, Independents and Democrats.

BOTTOM LINE

It is clear that a majority of Americans have accepted and embraced telehealth as a reliable and convenient way to receive medical care. And, nearly 1-in-6 adults in America had four or more telehealth visits – that is a remarkable statistic considering just 10% of Americans had ever had a single telehealth visit less than five years ago.

Patients want to receive care in the way that works best for them and over the past few years it has been a combination of telehealth support via synchronous real-time video consultation and asynchronous interactions between providers and patients. Telehealth, encompassing both synchronous and asynchronous modalities, serves as a pivotal solution to tackle access challenges and alleviate provider shortages, addressing the concerns of Americans.

This versatile approach not only contributes to mitigating our nation's mental health crises but also helps overcome cost barriers that currently afflict our healthcare system. Based on this representative survey, Americans want to be in control of their care and would like to see legislators embrace this health care modality.

¹ Data from June 2019 are from a J.D. Power National Survey. The description of telehealth and question language differ. Data from April and August of 2020 are from Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock and Public Opinion Strategies national online surveys. The description of telehealth and question language differ.