

REPORT:

# Maine Families Highly Concerned with Rising Healthcare Costs Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

## A new survey of likely Maine voters

found a rapidly growing healthcare cost crisis. The results are staggering – hundreds of thousands of Mainers are unable to afford treatment for health problems or medications prescribed by a doctor. Mainers who lack health coverage often delay seeking care from the doctor. Cost barriers prevent them from getting treatment and being able to afford prescription drugs – all realities that could lead to worse health outcomes, especially during the pandemic.



## KEY FINDINGS

Conducted by Global Strategy Group and released by West Health and Maine Consumers for Affordable Health Care (CAHC), this new survey exposes how many are feeling the devastating impacts of unaffordable and inaccessible healthcare – particularly during the pandemic:



More than 100,000 Mainers have experienced the death of a friend or family member in the past 5 years because they couldn't afford the necessary medical treatment for their illness.

**100k**  
Mainers



Roughly 66,000 Maine families have lost insurance coverage due to the economic shutdown brought on by the pandemic.

**66k**  
Maine Families



In the last year, nearly 200,000 Maine families did not seek treatment for a health problem due to cost of care.

**200k**  
Maine Families



On balance, 57% of Mainers prefer a public official who will prioritize bringing down healthcare costs vs. only 32% who would prefer a public official who will prioritize economic growth by cutting taxes and regulation.

**57%**  
of Mainers



Roughly 219,000 could not pay for drugs or medicine that a doctor prescribed.

**219k**  
Mainers

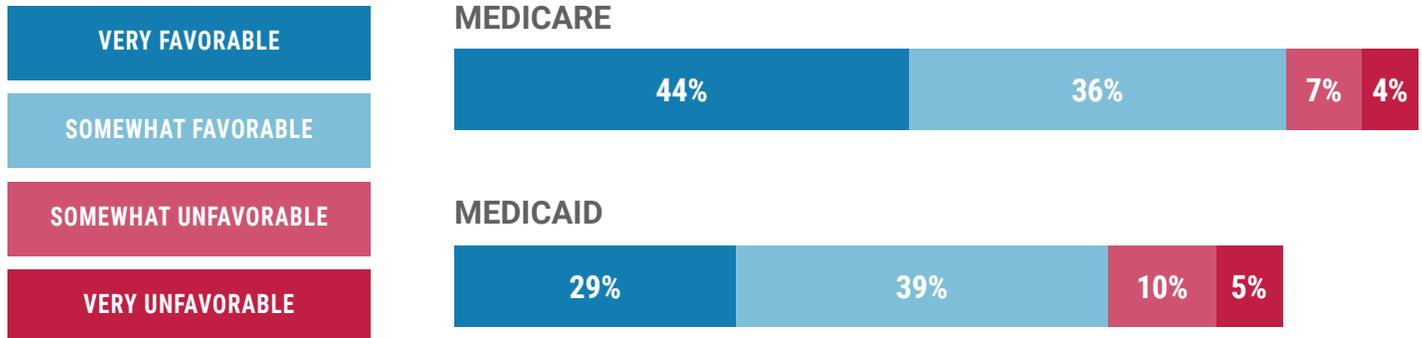


Healthcare costs are going up for over 3 out of 4 Maine families.

**75%**  
of Maine Families

## MEDICARE AND MEDICAID REMAIN POPULAR IN MAINE.

80% of Maine voters have a favorable view of Medicare (compared to 11% unfavorable) and 68% have a favorable view of Medicaid (compared to 15% unfavorable).



Our Consumer Assistance HelpLine staff talk with Mainers every day who are struggling to access and pay for the health care they need. These findings verify what we know and hear everyday - that healthcare is too expensive for many in Maine. While some steps have been taken to address rising costs, much more needs to be done to improve affordability to make sure that every person Maine can access the quality health care and medicine they need, when they need it.

– ANN WOLOSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MAINE CONSUMERS FOR AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE SHARED IN THE SENTIMENTS OF MAINE PEOPLE

For decades Americans have been promised lower healthcare costs, but these have largely been broken promises. People are frustrated and worried, and more importantly, they are getting sicker and even dying.

– TIM LASH, CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER AT WEST HEALTH

## METHODOLOGY

The findings are from a multi-channel survey of 600 likely general election voters in Maine between August 20 – 30, 2020. Interviews were conducted by live telephone and via web-based panel. Interviews conducted via web-based panel were matched back to a corresponding voter file. The confidence interval for the survey at 95% confidence interval overall is +/- 4% within each state.

## ABOUT CAHC

Maine Consumers for Affordable Health Care (CAHC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with the mission of improving access to affordable, quality health care for all people living in Maine. CAHC serves as Maine’s Health Insurance Consumer Assistance Program which provides confidential, toll free assistance statewide to people who need help understanding health insurance options and safety net programs and in enrolling in coverage.

## ABOUT WEST HEALTH

Solely funded by philanthropists Gary and Mary West, West Health is a family of nonprofit and nonpartisan organizations including the Gary and Mary West Foundation and Gary and Mary West Health Institute in San Diego, and the Gary and Mary West Health Policy Center in Washington, D.C. West Health is dedicated to lowering healthcare costs to enable seniors to successfully age in place with access to high-quality, affordable health and support services that preserve and protect their dignity, quality of life and independence. [Learn more at www.westhealth.org](http://www.westhealth.org) and follow [@westhealth](https://twitter.com/westhealth).

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