

## **New Poll Shows Americans More Likely to Favor Health Care Reform if it Improves Coverage for Long-Term Care Services**

### *Support for Improved Coverage Cuts Across Gender, Age, Income, and Party Lines*

*July 8, 2009* – A new survey released today examines Americans' views towards health care reform and long-term care coverage that would help people receive care in their homes instead of in nursing homes. On behalf of The SCAN Foundation, Lake Research Partners conducted a national omnibus survey among N = 1,022 Americans nationwide from June 26 through 29, 2009. The purpose of the survey was to understand public opinion toward long-term care issues, whether insurance coverage and costs are concerns, and to gauge support for improving coverage for home and community-based long-term care as part of health care reform. The poll shows concern about affording long-term care services in the future, and broad-based support for improving coverage for services that help people remain in their homes as an alternative to nursing home care.

Following are key findings:

- Nearly eight in ten Americans (79%) say they would be more likely to support a health care reform proposal that included improved coverage for home and community-based long-term care services.
- One reason for broad support is that nearly the same proportion (78%) of Americans say health care reform would benefit them personally if it included improved coverage for these services.
- Another reason for support may reflect attitudes toward nursing home care. Nine in ten Americans (92%) say it is important to improve coverage for services that help people remain in their home instead of going into a nursing home.
- Additionally, 79% of Americans are concerned about their ability to pay for long-term care in the future, with nearly half (46%) feeling very concerned. Affordability concerns cut cross all income groups, including majorities of those making \$100,000 or more.
- Concern about affording long-term care services as well as support for improving coverage as part of health reform spans majorities of all demographic groups including gender, age, income, and party affiliation.

## Detailed Findings

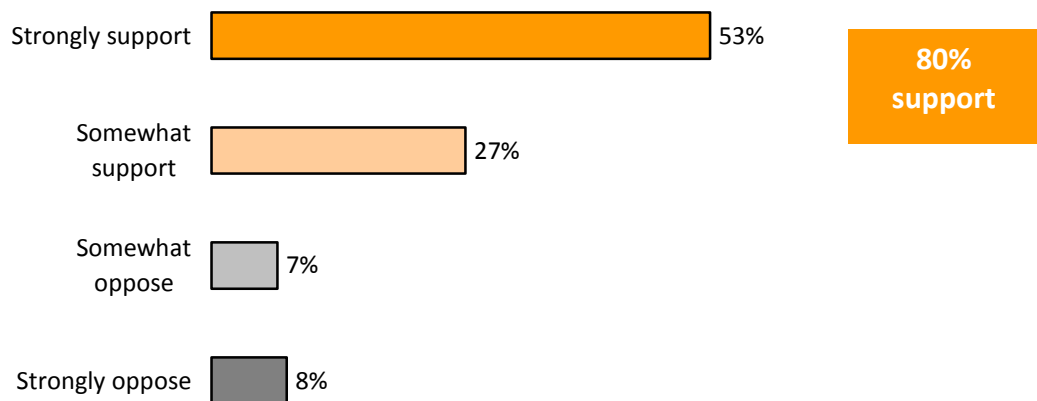
### Introduction to the Survey

To help ensure all survey respondents understood the definition of “long-term care,” interviewers read the following definition prior to the survey questions:

*Now I'd like to ask you about long-term care, which includes a range of services people need when they can no longer independently care for themselves. These services include providing help in people's homes or communities with daily activities like eating and bathing, as well as nursing home care. As you may or may not know, Medicare only covers a very limited amount of long-term care services.*

**Eight in ten Americans (80%) support improving insurance coverage for home and community-based long-term care services as part of health care reform.** Half (53%) strongly support including this in health care reform. (See Figure 1.) Support crosses party lines, with majorities of Republicans (69%), independents (72%), and Democrats (93%) expressing support for its inclusion in health care reform.

**Figure 1: Support for Improving Long-Term Care Services in Health Care Reform**

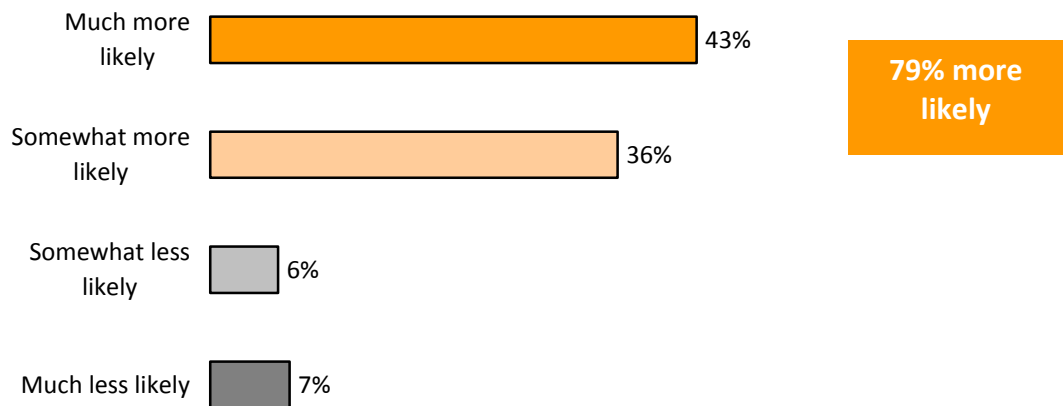


*Q. Would you support or oppose improving insurance coverage for home and community-based long-term care services as part of health care reform?*

**Eight in ten Americans (79%) say they would be more likely to support a health reform proposal that included improved coverage for home and community-based long term-care services.** (See Figure 2.) Four in ten (43%) say they would be much more likely to support the proposal, and 36% say they would be somewhat more likely to support it. Thirteen percent say they would be less likely to support such a proposal.

Two-thirds of Republicans (67%) and independents (65%) say they would be more likely to support a health reform proposal if it improved coverage for these types of long-term care services. Nine in ten Democrats (91%) say the same.

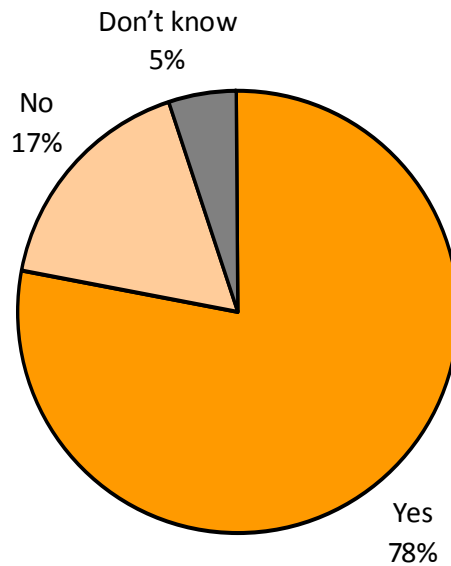
**Figure 2: Likelihood to Support Reform Proposal that Included Improved Coverage for Long-Term Care Services**



*Q. If a health care reform proposal included improved coverage for home and community-based long term care services, would you be more or less likely to support the proposal?*

**A large majority of Americans (78%) say health reform would benefit them or a family member if it included improved coverage for home and community-based long-term care services.** (See Figure 3.) Even younger Americans ages 18 to 34 see a personal benefit (85%) if health care reform improved coverage for long-term care services. Again this finding crosses the political spectrum with Americans who identify as Republican (68%), independent (67%), and Democrat (90%) saying they would benefit personally.

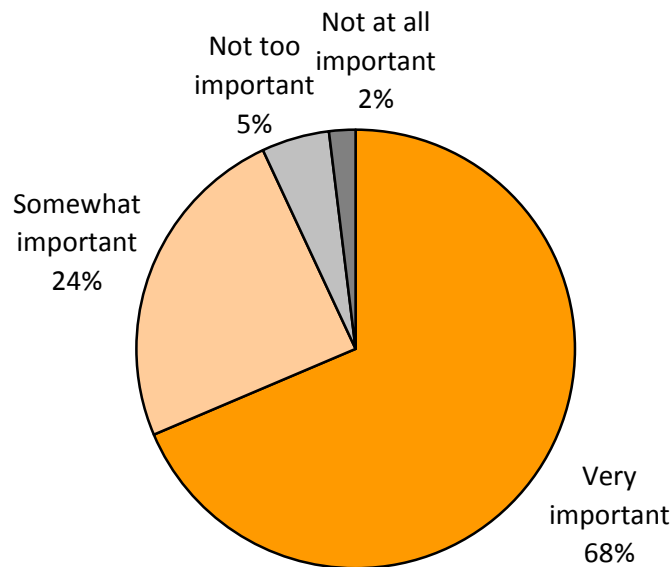
**Figure 3: Would Health Reform Benefit You or a Family Member if it Included Improved Coverage for Long-Term Care Services?**



*Q. Do you think health care reform would benefit you or a family member, either now or in the future, if it included improving coverage for home and community-based long-term care services?*

**Nine in ten Americans (92%) say it is important to improve insurance coverage for services that help people remain in their homes instead of going to nursing homes.** Nearly seven in ten (68%) feel it is very important to improve coverage for this reason. Seven percent say it is not too or not at all important. (See Figure 4.) Majorities of Republicans (90%), independents (89%), and Democrats (97%) say improving coverage to help people remain in their homes is important.

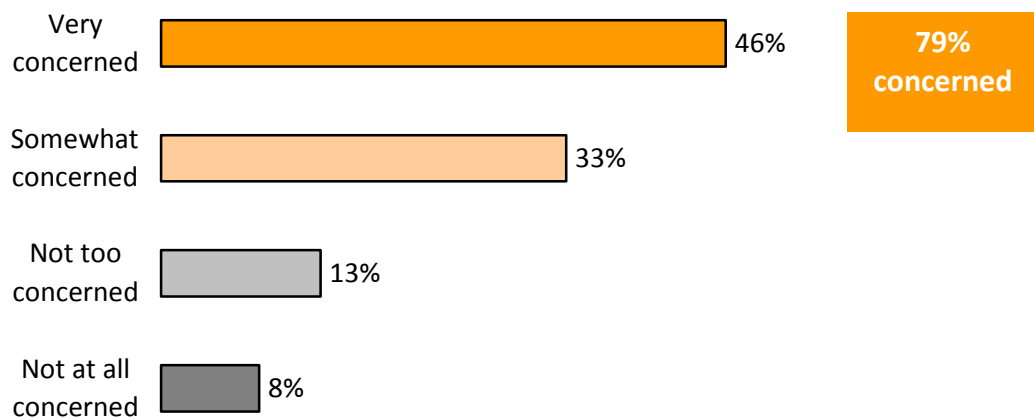
**Figure 4: Importance of Improving Insurance Coverage for Home and Community-Based Services to Help People Remain in Homes**



*Q. How important do you feel it is to improve insurance coverage for services that help people remain in their homes instead of going to a nursing home?*

**Most Americans are concerned about their ability to pay for the long-term care they may need in the future.** Nearly eight in ten (79%) express concern about being able to afford long-term care for themselves or a family member in the future. (See Figure 5.) Nearly half (46%) say they are very concerned. Worries about affordability span age groups, including younger Americans: 18 to 34 year olds (76% concerned), 35 to 44 year olds (80%), 45 to 54 year olds (84%), 55 to 64 year olds (80%), and those 65 and older (73%). Additionally, affordability concerns cut across all income groups, even those with household incomes of \$100,000 or more (73% concerned).

**Figure 5: Concern about Paying for Long-Term Care in the Future**



*Q. How concerned are you about being able to pay for long-term care that you or a family member may need in the future?*

#### **Methodology**

This national omnibus survey was conducted by telephone June 26-29, 2009 among 1,022 adults 18 and older nationwide, using RDD probability sample. Data were weighted by gender, age, race, and region. The margin of sampling error for the survey is  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points. The sampling error is larger for smaller subgroups within the sample.