Background

AARP conducted a survey of 1,200 registered voters age 50 and older in New York between October 16, 2019 and November 5, 2019 to evaluate their current use and experience with prescription medications and to understand their thoughts regarding proposals aimed at reducing the prices of prescription drugs.

A large portion of this population is impacted by the prescription drug price issue with the vast majority (84%) reporting they or someone in their household have taken prescription drugs in the past two years and two in three (62%) saying they are concerned about the cost of their medications. Eight in ten registered voters age 50-plus in New York favor expanding the income eligibility criteria for the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) (84%) and enabling authorities to take civil action against those who charge excessive prices for essential drugs (81%).

Majority Take Prescriptions on a Daily Basis and Are Concerned About Affordability

84% of registered voters age 50-plus in New York report they have taken prescription drugs in the past two years or live with someone who has.

90% of those who report someone in the household has taken a prescription drug in the past two years also indicate medication is taken on a daily basis.

24% of registered voters age 50-plus in New York report not filling at least one prescription provided by their doctor in the past two years.

Cost Most Often Cited as Reason For Not Filling a Prescription Provided by Doctor

Among those registered voters age 50-plus who report not filling at least one prescription in the past two years (24%), six in ten (60%) cite cost as a factor. This was followed by 15% who cited side effects as a reason why they did not fill a prescription.

Majority Say Elected Officials Aren’t Doing Enough to Address High RX Prices

Regardless of party affiliation the vast majority feel elected officials are not doing enough to address the high cost of prescription drugs. When asked whether elected officials are doing too much, too little or just enough to address the high cost of prescription drugs, more than eight in ten say elected officials are doing too little.
Nearly All Support Proposals to Cut Prescription Drug Prices

Vast majorities support proposals aimed at lowering prescription drug prices. Over eight in ten support expanding the income eligibility criteria for the EPIC (84%) and enabling authorities to take civil action against those who charge excessive prices for essential drugs (81%).

% of registered voters age 50+ indicating “Strongly support” or “Somewhat support” (by total and party)

Would you support or oppose a proposal that would…

- Increase access to affordable prescription drugs by expanding the income eligibility criteria to allow older New Yorkers to sign up for the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program
  - Total (n=1,200): 84%
  - Democrat (n=520): 91%
  - Republican (n=272): 83%
  - Independent (n=150): 91%

-Enable the New York State Attorney General to take civil action against drug manufacturers and wholesale distributors who charge excessive prices for essential drugs
  - Total (n=1,200): 81%
  - Democrat (n=520): 87%
  - Republican (n=272): 80%
  - Independent (n=150): 87%

-Enable the New York State legislature to allow the state to create an FDA-approved program to import prescription drugs from Canada to help people save money on their medications
  - Total (n=1,200): 75%
  - Democrat (n=520): 83%
  - Republican (n=272): 75%
  - Independent (n=150): 77%

-Require a manufacturer of brand name drugs to notify the Attorney General and the Department of Health if they entered into an agreement with another manufacturer to delay the introduction of a generic version of the drug
  - Total (n=1,200): 73%
  - Democrat (n=520): 79%
  - Republican (n=272): 71%
  - Independent (n=150): 76%

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