Background

AARP conducted a phone survey of 1,200 registered voters age 50 and older in Illinois between October 22, 2019 to November 13, 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 (75%) reporting they take prescription drugs on a regular basis and three in five (60%) saying they are concerned about the cost of their medications.

Majority of the 50-Plus in Illinois: Take Prescriptions Regularly and are Concerned About Affording Prescription Medication

75% of registered voters age 50-plus in Illinois report they take prescription drugs on a regular basis.

60% of registered voters age 50-plus are concerned about being able to afford the cost of prescription medication.

58% of registered voters age 50-plus say the price of prescription drugs is unreasonable.

26% of registered voters age 50-plus in Illinois report not filling at least one prescription provided by their doctor in the past two years.

One-Quarter: Did Not Fill at Least One Rx; Spent $1,200+/Year Out-of-Pocket on Rx

One-quarter (26%) of registered voters age 50-plus in Illinois report not filling at least one prescription in the past two years. While half (51%) say they had $600 or less in out-of-pocket expenses for prescriptions in the past year, one-quarter (25%) had out-of-pocket expenses of more than $1,200 with more than one in ten (13%) saying they spent $2,400+.
Cost Most Often Cited As Reason For Not Filling a Prescription Provided by Doctor

Among those registered voters age 50-plus who report not having filled at least one prescription in the past two years (26%), nearly three-quarters (73%) cite cost as a factor. This was followed by 14% who cited side effects as a reason why they did not fill at least one prescription in the past two years.

Majority 50-Plus Illinoisans Say Price of Prescription Medication is Unreasonable

When asked how reasonable or unreasonable they consider the prices of prescription medications, nearly three in five (58%) say they consider them unreasonable (either a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale).

3 in 5 are Concerned About Being Able to Afford Prescriptions in Next Few Years

Participants were asked to consider their level of concern about being able to afford the cost of prescription medications over the next few years, the majority (60%) say they are concerned; either very concerned (35%) or somewhat concerned (25%).
High Prescription Drug Prices May Lead Some to Make Compromising Trade-Offs

When looking at actions in the past year, the price of prescription drugs has compelled some people to make adjustments that could affect their health and quality of life. As a result of high prices, one in five have delayed getting prescriptions filled (21%), not gotten prescriptions filled (20%), or taken less medicine to make it last longer (19%). And one in seven (15%) say they have had to cut back on necessities like food, fuel, and electricity to be able to afford a prescription drug.

### Top Current Trade-Offs to Be Able to Purchase Prescription Drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade-Off</th>
<th>Have in past year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delayed getting a prescription filled because you didn’t have enough money to pay for it.</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not gotten a prescription filled because you didn’t have enough money to pay for it.</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken less medicine than your doctor prescribed to make it last longer.</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut back on necessities like food, fuel, and electricity to be able to afford a prescription drug.</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Prescription Drug Prices Here...and Elsewhere – Most Say U.S. Consumers Pay More

Two in three (67%) registered voters age 50-plus in Illinois believe U.S. consumers either definitely pay more (47%) or probably pay more (20%) for prescription drugs compared to consumers in other developed countries. Less than one in ten (8%) think U.S. consumers pay the same or less than consumers in other countries.
Many Experience Rx Shortages; Have/Know Someone Who Has Ordered Rx From Canada

Three in ten (31%) say they have experienced prescription medication shortages at their pharmacy and nearly two in ten (18%) say they, or someone they know, have purchased prescriptions from a licensed online pharmacy in Canada to save money.

Most Agree: Safe, Affordable Prescription Drugs Can be Imported From Canada

The vast majority (79%) agree with the statement: The U.S. can safely import less expensive prescription drugs from Canada. Doing so will allow Illinoisans greater access to the prescription drugs they need at prices they can afford.

“U.S. can safely import less expensive Rx from Canada”
Widespread Sentiment: Rx Companies Are Focused on Profit, Not on Helping People

Considering statements regarding prescription drug companies’ concerns, most (77%) say the statement that companies are more concerned about making profits and not concerned enough about helping people is closest to their view.

Most Say IL Elected Officials: Aren’t Doing Enough; Are Influenced by Rx Companies

When asked whether the governor and state legislature are doing too much, too little or just enough to address the high cost of prescription drugs, more than seven in ten say elected officials are doing too little. Nearly eight in ten or more say prescription drug companies have a lot or some influence over the IL Governor and the State Legislature.
Nearly All Favor Proposals Designed to Cut Prescription Drug Prices

Vast majorities support a proposal to create prescription drug price transparency laws that would require companies to report reasons for dramatic price increases (85%) and a proposal allowing the state to create an FDA-approved program to safely import less expensive prescription drugs (81%).

% of Likely Voters Age 50+ Indicating “Strongly Support” or “Somewhat Support” (Total and by Party).

Would you support or oppose a proposal that would...

Create prescription drug price transparency laws that require drug makers to report the reasons behind dramatic price increases

- Total (n=1200): 90%
- Democrat (n=425): 87%
- Republican (n=303): 82%
- Independent (n=182): 80%

Allow the state to create an FDA-approved program to safely import less expensive prescription drugs to help people save money on their medications

- Total (n=1200): 88%
- Democrat (n=425): 88%
- Republican (n=303): 82%
- Independent (n=182): 80%

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