VITAL VOICES

Issues that Impact Washington Adults Age 45 and Older

DOI: https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00351.065
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to State Centric Surveys  3

Core Questions  4

Health Questions  10

Methodology  26

About AARP  28

Contact  29
INTRODUCTION

For the past two decades, AARP has provided state offices with data to support planning and advocacy. As the breadth of our work has expanded, AARP Research and our national partners have responded by creating a tool that will empower state offices and staff to do more for their local constituents.

As part of our transition from National to Nationwide, AARP is launching a new research initiative that will deliver vital, current, and state-specific data to every state office on a rolling three-year schedule. The name of this nationwide initiative is Vital Voices, and we will use it to ensure that each individual state has access to the data they need for local advocacy, outreach, and education efforts. States can use the data in numerous ways:

- Predict the need for a specific program or interest in a specific issue.
- Enhance all communications with current data.
- Track issues and attitudes over time to assess shifts in public opinion.

Bringing Vital Voices to the states has been an enterprise-wide initiative. Never before has AARP launched a research program of this size and with this much promise. We give it to you with the hope that this data will inform better decisions for Washington adults age 45 and older.
Survey Results for Washington-Core Questions

Issues that Impact Washington Adults Age 45 and Older
Washington residents age 45+ think many issues are extremely or very important, with ‘having adequate health insurance coverage’ and ‘staying physically healthy’ topping the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Care Issues</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having adequate health insurance coverage</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying physically healthy</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying mentally sharp</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having Medicare benefits available to you in the future</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying for health care expenses, including premiums and co-pays</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying for prescription drugs</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. For the following list of issues, please indicate how important each is to you personally. (Health Care) (n=812)
*not all charts equal one-hundred percent due to removal of small cells, see annotation for all categories
More than half of Washington residents age 45+ rate ‘having enough income or savings to retire’ and ‘having adequate Social Security benefits available’ as extremely or very important.

Percentage Rating Economic Issues Extremely or Very Important

- Having enough income or savings to retire: 92%
- Having adequate Social Security benefits available to you in the future: 87%
- Protecting yourself against unfair financial practices: 79%
- Protecting yourself against consumer fraud: 79%
- Being able to stop working for pay at the age you want: 73%
- Having online security: 69%
- Having good employment opportunities in your community: 59%
- Protection from age discrimination: 58%
- Maintaining relevant job skills and experience: 50%

*not all charts equal one-hundred percent due to removal of small cells, see annotation for all categories
Independent living and caregiving issues are extremely or very important to many Washington residents age 45+.

**Percentage Rating Independent Living Issues Extremely or Very Important**

- Getting to the places you need to go independently: 80%
- Caring for a loved one: 80%
- Staying in your own home as you get older: 80%
- Having high quality long-term care in your community: 76%

---

1. For the following list of issues, please indicate how important each is to you personally. (Independent Living and Long-Term Care) (n=812)

*not all charts equal one-hundred percent due to removal of small cells, see annotation for all categories*
Are you currently providing unpaid help to a relative or friend 18 years or older to help them take care of themselves? This would include doing things for them such as grocery shopping, providing transportation, managing finances, arranging for healthcare or other services, or preparing meals.

(n=812)

About one-third (31%) of Washington residents age 45+ are currently providing unpaid care to an adult relative or friend.
Half (48%) of Washington residents age 45+ who are not currently providing unpaid care have provided this type of care in the past.
Survey Results for Washington-Health Questions

Issues that Impact Washington Adults Age 45 and Older
More than half (59%) of Washington residents age 45+ are currently taking two or more prescription medications on a regular basis.

Number of Prescription Medications Taken Regularly

- **27%**: None
- **13%**: 1
- **22%**: 2 to 3
- **18%**: 4 to 5
- **19%**: 6 or more
- **1%**: Refused

**PER2**: Approximately how many different prescription medications do you take on a regular basis such as daily, weekly, or monthly? (n=812)
More than half (52%) of Washington residents age 45+ rate the price of prescription drugs as a 4 or a 5.

PER12. Using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is "reasonable" and 5 is "unreasonable," how reasonable or unreasonable are the prices of prescription drugs? You may select any number 1 through 5. (n=812)
Seven in ten (70%) Washington residents age 45+ are at least somewhat concerned about being able to afford prescription drugs over the next two years.

Level of Concern About Affording Prescription Drugs Over Next 2 Years

- Extremely concerned: 21%
- Very concerned: 22%
- Somewhat concerned: 27%
- Not very concerned: 16%
- Not concerned at all: 14%
- Don't know: 0%
- Refused: 0%
PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

The majority (82%) of Washington residents age 45+ believe that it should be legal for people in the U.S. to buy drugs from Canada and Europe.

Belief That Buying Drugs in Canada or Europe Should be Legal

- 82% Yes, should be legal
- 10% No, should not be legal
- 7% Don’t know
- 0% Refused

Currently, U.S. law largely prohibits people from importing prescription drugs from other countries like Canada or Europe. Some people believe that the laws should be changed to allow Americans to buy less expensive prescription drugs from other countries as long as they are just as safe and effective as those bought in the U.S. Do you believe that it should be legal for people in the U.S. to buy drugs from Canada and Europe, or not? (n=812)
The vast majority (93%) of Washington residents age 45+ strongly or somewhat support allowing Medicare to use its bargaining power to negotiate lower prices for prescription drugs.

Level of Support for Medicare Negotiating Lower Prices

- Strongly support: 73%
- Somewhat support: 20%
- Somewhat oppose: 3%
- Strongly oppose: 2%
- Don’t know: 2%
- Refused: 0%
In the past year, about one in four (22%) Washington residents age 45+ report delaying getting a prescription filled because of the cost.

Types of Challenges With Obtaining Prescriptions

- Delayed getting a prescription filled because of the cost: 22% Yes, 77% No
- Decided not to fill a prescription because of the cost of the drug: 20% Yes, 79% No
- Taken less medicine than prescribed to make it last longer: 19% Yes, 80% No
- Cut back on such items as food, fuel, or electricity to afford prescription drugs: 11% Yes, 88% No
- Ordered your prescription drugs by mail or Internet from another country because they cost less: 7% Yes, 92% No
- Traveled to Canada or another country to purchase prescription drugs because they cost less: 5% Yes, 95% No

**PER9.** Many people face difficult decisions when buying prescription medications. In the past 12 months, have you...? (n=812)
Most (91%) Washington residents age 45+ either strongly or somewhat support making it easier for generic drugs to come to market.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Strongly support</th>
<th>Somewhat support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making it easier for generic drugs to come to market</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requiring drug companies to publicly disclose how prices are set</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing states to negotiate with drug companies for lower prices</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capping how much Americans have to pay out of pocket for their prescriptions</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

PER10. The following are proposals that have been made to lower the costs of prescription drugs. Do you support or oppose...? (n=812)
INSULIN

One in five (20%) Washington residents age 45+ use insulin for diabetes or has an immediate family member who does.

Percent Who Use or Have an Immediate Family Member Who Uses Insulin

- Yes, I do: 81%
- Yes, a family member does: 13%
- No: 7%
- Refused: 1%

INS1. Do you, or does anyone in your immediate family, use insulin for diabetes? (n=812)
Half (49%) of Washington residents age 45+ report they (or their family member) have been using insulin for ten years or more.

**Length of Insulin Use in Family**

- 6% Less than one year
- 4% One year to less than two years
- 21% Two years to less than five years
- 19% Five years to less than ten years
- 49% Ten years or more

**INS2.** How long have you been using insulin? (n=151)
Among Washington residents age 45+ who have experience with insulin personally or through an immediate family member, just 19% report having no out of pocket spending on insulin.

Out of Pocket Insulin Spending

- Nothing, $0 per month: 19%
- More than $0, but less than $10 per month: 4%
- More than $10, but less than $25 per month: 6%
- More than $25, but less than $50 per month: 12%
- More than $50, but less than $75 per month: 6%
- More than $75, but less than $100 per month: 4%
- More than $100, but less than $200 per month: 10%
- More than $200, but less than $500 per month: 11%
- More than $500 per month: 5%
- Don't know: 24%
- Refused: 1%

**INS3.** In the past 12 months, approximately how much (have you/has your family member) spent, per month, out of (your/their) own pocket—that is, not reimbursed by (your/their) health insurance company—for (your/their) insulin prescription? (n=151)
INSULIN

Among Washington residents age 45+ who have used insulin for five or more years (or an immediate family member has), nearly half (46%) report that their out of pocket spending has increased compared to four years ago.

Change in Insulin Spending Over 4 Years

- Increased a lot: 30%
- Increased a little: 16%
- Remained unchanged/ stayed about the same: 38%
- Decreased a little: 2%
- Decreased a lot: 2%
- Don't know: 12%
- Refused: 1%

INS4. Compared to 4 years ago, has (your/your family member's) out of pocket spending on insulin increased, decreased, or stayed about the same? (n=102)
Half (51%) of Washington residents age 45+ who have experience with insulin personally or through an immediate family member say that increased prescription costs have driven up their out of pocket spending.

**Factors Contributing to Change in Insulin Spending**

- Cost of the same prescription increased: 51%
- Insurance company changed their coverage: 35%
- Changed medications to a more or less expensive prescription: 29%
- Changed insurance plans, got new or different insurance: 22%
- Was able to get a rebate or other assistance to pay for a prescription: 6%
- Don't know: 12%

INS5. Which of the following factors played a role in the (increase/decrease) in (your/your family member's) out of pocket expenses for insulin? (n=50)
Among Washington residents age 45+ who have experience with insulin personally or through an immediate family member, one-fourth (24%) have cut back on necessities in order to afford insulin.

**Personal Sacrifices for Insulin Prescription**

- Cut back on necessities like food, fuel, and electricity to be able to afford insulin: 8% (Yes), 16% (Yes a family member has), 70% (No), 8% (Don't know/refused)
- Taken less medication than the doctor prescribed to make it last longer: 6% (Yes), 15% (Yes a family member has), 72% (No), 8% (Don't know/refused)
- Skipped a prescription dose to save money: 5% (Yes), 13% (Yes a family member has), 74% (No), 9% (Don't know/refused)

**INS6.** Thinking about (your/your family member’s) insulin prescription, (have you/has your family member) ever done any of the following? (n=151)
**INSULIN**

The majority (83%) of Washington residents age 45+ who have experience with insulin personally or through an immediate family member strongly or somewhat support allowing local government to negotiate insulin prices.

**Level of Support for the State Negotiation of Insulin Price**

- **Strongly support**: 67%
- **Somewhat support**: 16%
- **Somewhat oppose**: 5%
- **Strongly oppose**: 8%
- **Don’t know**: 5%

**INS7.** Would you support or oppose allowing Washington state local government to negotiate the price of insulin? (n=151)
Most (93%) Washington residents age 45+ who have experience with insulin personally or through an immediate family member support capping out of pocket spending on insulin.

Level of Support for Capping Out of Pocket Insulin Spending

- **Strongly support**: 72%
- **Somewhat support**: 21%
- **Somewhat oppose**: 4%
- **Strongly oppose**: 2%
- **Don’t know**: 1%

**INS8.** Would you support or oppose capping how much Americans have to pay out of pocket for insulin? This would be any amount that is not reimbursed by your health insurance company. (n=151)
In December 2019, AARP engaged Alan Newman Research (ANR) to conduct a quantitative research study among Washington residents age 45+. Topics included healthcare, the economy and financial issues, independent living and long-term care, caregiving, prescription drugs, and insulin.

**METHODOLOGY**

ANR completed a total of 812 interviews (407 via landline telephone, 205 via cell phone, and 200 online). Respondents were screened to meet the following criteria:

- Age 45+
- Resident of Washington

Survey length averaged 18.3 minutes by telephone and 17.0 minutes online.
METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure

Landline, cell phone, and online sampling were used for this research, with the telephone sample drawn randomly from a list of residents age 45+ of Washington, purchased from Aristotle, and online sample provided by Fulcrum. A total of 30,942 records were utilized to achieve a sample of 812 respondents. The list of 2,993,406 residents of Washington age 45+ was randomly divided into 2,993 replicates of 1,000 records for telephone dialing. Initially, 20 replicates were released for calling, with additional replicates being opened as necessary. In all, 42 replicates representing a total of 41,300 resident records were dialed to complete the telephone portion of this study.

The total sample of 812 respondents yields a maximum statistical error of ±3.4% at the 95% level of confidence. (This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would be within ±3.4 percentage points of the results obtained had everyone in the population been interviewed.)

Interview Methodology

The survey was launched on December 2, 2019 and closed on December 12, 2019.

Telephone interviewing was active between 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., with some additional calling done between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. If necessary, up to 8 call attempts per telephone number were made to reach an eligible respondent. All numbers were called at multiple times of the day as well as days of the week to maximize each resident’s opportunity for inclusion in the study.

Percentages of some questions may exceed 100% due to rounding or the use of multiple response question formats. All data have been weighted by age, gender, and race/ethnicity according to 2018 U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) statistics for Washington.
ABOUT AARP

AARP is the nation’s largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also works for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen, high-quality products and services to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the nation’s largest circulation publications, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.
CONTACT

Cassandra Cantave,
ccantave@aarp.org

For media inquiries, please contact media@aarp.org

This research was designed and executed by AARP Research.