

## Perspectives on Today's Healthcare: Adults with Diabetes Summary

The American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) advocates for the physician associate/assistant (PA) profession and provides tools to improve the PA practice and patient care. Earlier this year, AAPA approached The Harris Poll to revisit work that had been conducted in 2014. Unlike the past survey, AAPA wanted to take a wider look at the state of the U.S. healthcare system and capture the issues patients are encountering within today's system. Additionally, the research seeks to understand attitudes toward PAs to reinforce the need for this group of expertly trained, high-quality, compassionate providers. This summary includes research findings from adults who have been diagnosed with diabetes.

### *View of the System*

- More than half of adults with diabetes (53%) grade the U.S. healthcare system poorly, with 26% giving it a C, another 20% giving it a D, and 6% saying it deserves an F. [Q100]
- Grades for the healthcare adults with diabetes received in the past 12 months are more positive than grades for the U.S. healthcare system in general (73% vs. 47% respectively for A/B). [Q115 & Q100]
  - Men with diabetes (41%) are more likely than women (22%) to give the healthcare they received an A.
- Nearly three-quarter of adults with diabetes (73%) say the healthcare system is not meeting all their needs. Adults with diabetes are most likely to point to it taking too long to get an appointment (34%), while more than 1 in 5 say healthcare costs strain their/their family's finances, and/or that insurance doesn't cover the cost of enough services (22% each). [Q125]

### *Barriers to Care*

- Affordability is believed to be the primary barrier to accessing healthcare in the U.S. (61%) followed by the system being too focused on profit (42%) among those who have been diagnosed with diabetes. Insurance issues, like having access to insurance and not understanding what is covered, are also commonly reported barriers to accessing healthcare in the U.S. (25% each) reported by adults with diabetes. [Q105]
- Slightly more than two in five (42%) say there are often times when they cannot afford care for themselves or their family. [Q130]
- A similar proportion (41%) say their community doesn't have the resources it needs to keep people healthy. [Q130]

- When it comes to getting an appointment, those who cannot get one within a week end up waiting about a month, on average, to see a healthcare provider (3.8 weeks). [Q150]

### *Impact of the System*

- Over the past 2 years, almost half of adults with diabetes (45%) have delayed or skipped needed care altogether. Women are more likely than men to say they have skipped or delayed care (58% vs. 35%). [Q135]
  - The most common reason for doing so was concern about the cost (40%), followed by not being able to take time away (e.g., work/other obligations) (22%), and it taking too long to get an appointment (22%). [Q140]
  - About a third of those who skipped or delayed care said their condition worsened and/or their mental health negatively impacted (36% each) as a result. [Q145]
- Slightly more than a third of adults with diabetes (35%) say their own health would improve if healthcare didn't cost so much. About 1 in 5 say their health would improve if their provider better understood them and their needs (23%), if it wasn't so hard to get an appointment (22%), if their healthcare provider had more time to spend with them (22%), or if there was more focus on preventative care (21%). [Q305]

### *Views of Providers*

- About 7 in 10 adults with diabetes are concerned that the demands on healthcare providers are too great (73%) and that providers seem more rushed than they have in the past (67%). [Q310]
- About 3 in 10 say they have experienced a time when they felt like their provider wasn't really listening to them (30%) or that they felt rushed during a healthcare appointment with their provider (29%). [Q175]
- Nearly two-thirds of adults with diabetes (63%) wish their healthcare providers took more time to understand them. [Q180]
- 73% of adults with diabetes (73%) have seen a PA. [Q500]
  - Among those who have:
    - 82% rate the care they received in the past 12 months from the PA as excellent (40%) or good (42%). [Q532]
    - 91% believe PA's provide safe and effective healthcare. [Q550]
    - 93% say having a PA at a practice makes it easier for patients to get an appointment. [Q551]

### *Views of PAs*

- Two-thirds of adults with diabetes (68%) would trust a PA to be their primary healthcare provider. [Q565]
- A large majority of adults with diabetes (93%) believe PAs should be allowed to provide care to the fullest extent of their education, training, and experience.
- And, 90% say PA practice laws should be updated to allow states and healthcare systems to fully utilize their healthcare workforce. [Q605]

### **Research Method**

The research was conducted online in the U.S. by The Harris Poll on behalf of The American Academy of Physician Associates among n=2,519 adults age 18+ including n=328 adults who have been diagnosed with diabetes. The survey was conducted from February 23 – March 9, 2023.

Data from the national sample was weighted by race where necessary and by gender, region, education, marital status, household size, employment, household income, language proficiency (for Hispanic respondents only), and propensity to be online to bring respondents in line with their actual proportions in the population, and then combined using a post-weight.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, as subject to other multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including but not limited to coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the national sample data is accurate to within +2.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.