



UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

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Press Statement – For Immediate Release

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New Survey of State Residents on Health Care Costs – More Than Half Struggle to Pay for Health Care; Voice Strong Support for Change Across Party Lines

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — More than half of Connecticut residents struggle to afford health care costs, and 67 percent want the government to address health care affordability in the coming year, more than they want it to address joblessness or the economy, according to a brief released today featuring survey results from the nonpartisan Altarum Healthcare Value Hub.

“This survey reflects the dismal reality for Connecticut residents who live of residents who live with the doubly challenging fear of getting sick and of the financial impact of health care costs,” said Frances Padilla, president of Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut. “How much more pain do folks need to be in before our elected officials intervene?”

According to the survey, 92 percent of Connecticut residents, across party lines, agreed that the government should expand health insurance options so that everyone can afford quality coverage.

Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut hosted the release of the statewide survey of adults on the high cost of health care. The survey was conducted in May of this year. It measured state residents’ struggles to afford health care, opinions about what should be done, and people’s fears relating to COVID-19.

“Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, Connecticut residents are critically concerned about health care affordability and believe that their elected officials should act to address these problems. We found that almost half of Connecticut adults (44%) encountered one or more cost-related barriers to getting healthcare during the last 12 months. Even when they got the care they needed, one in four (24%) struggled to pay the resulting bill. Solutions received widespread support across party lines,” said Amanda Hunt, Co-Deputy Director for Healthcare Value Hub.

The survey found that state residents:

- Worry about affording treatment for COVID-19 if they caught it
- Worry about affording health care in general in the future
- Agree across party lines that the government should ensure vaccines are affordable for all
- Forego health care due to cost; including skipping needed dental care, skipping doses of medicine, and avoiding the doctor altogether

“This disturbing survey paints a picture of quiet desperation – even Connecticut families with insurance feel underinsured and financially vulnerable.” said Ted Doolittle, Healthcare Advocate for the State of Connecticut. “We need to admit what health care economists have been telling us for 20 years – the job-based insurance carriers need government help to get the price of health care down to internationally competitive levels.”

When residents were asked about strategies to address health care concerns, they agreed in high numbers across party lines on various government solutions, including, but not limited to, expanding health care coverage options and setting standard prices for drugs.

The brief is attached and can be found electronically here:
www.healthcarevaluehub.org/connecticut-state-survey.

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The Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut is dedicated to achieving universal access to quality and affordable health care and to promoting health in Connecticut. We envision a health care system that is accountable and responsive to the people it serves.

With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Healthcare Value Hub provides free, timely information about the policies and practices that address high health care costs and poor quality, bringing better value to consumers. The Hub is part of Altarum, a nonprofit organization that creates and implements solutions to advance health among vulnerable and publicly insured populations.