

87% of Americans Think Obesity is a Problem in Their State

Nearly Seven in Ten Further Say Medicare Should Cover Prescription Medications to Treat Obesity

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Nearly Seven in Ten Further Say Medicare Should Cover Prescription Medications to Treat Obesity

Washington, D.C. – While incidences of obesity, estimated by the CDC, indicate a growing concern in the United States, it comes as no surprise that nearly seven in ten Americans agree that Medicare should cover FDA-approved prescription medications to treat obesity (69%, rated 4/5 “strongly agree”), according to a new study conducted by Ipsos on behalf of the Gerontological Society of America. However, the percentage of Americans that agree the U.S. government should invest in more traditional approaches, such as medical treatments (63%) and programs (71%) still hold strong.

In contrast, when asked about FDA findings and current regulations, only 31% of respondents were aware the FDA has found that current prescription medications are safe and effective in treating obesity, and even fewer (23%) were aware federal law specifically prohibits Medicare from covering patient costs for prescription obesity medications.

When thinking about the overall economic impact of obesity on the U.S., more than six in ten (59%) were *unaware* obesity currently costs the federal government more than \$200 billion a year, mostly in healthcare costs through Medicare and Medicaid. While a strong majority (68%) thinks the U.S. government should change its policy and allow Medicare to cover FDA-approved prescription obesity medications, a stark contrast exists among likely Republican (61%) and Democrat (81%) voters on the subject.

Methodology

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These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted December 9-15, 2015. For the survey, a sample of 1,006 U.S. adults (ages 18 and over) was interviewed online in English.

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos' online panel (see link below for more info on "Access Panels and Recruitment"), partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling (see link below for more info on the Ipsos "Ampario Overview" sample method) and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing sample. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2014 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points for all respondents (see link below for more info on Ipsos online polling "Credibility Intervals"). Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following ($n=1,006$, $DEFF=1.5$, adjusted Confidence Interval=4.5).

For more information about Ipsos online polling methodology, please go here <http://goo.gl/yJBkuf>

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