

**Two in Three (64%) Canadians Believe that
Provincial Health Spending Could Escalate to 70-
80% of Budgets Within Next Twenty Years**
*To Contain Costs, Majority (64%) Would be Willing to Allow
People to Purchase Private Insurance to Receive Treatment in
Private Facilities Outside of Government System*

Public Release Date: Sunday, June 6, 2010, 12:00 PM EDT



Ipsos Reid

Ipsos Reid is Canada's market intelligence leader and the country's leading provider of public opinion research. With operations in eight cities, Ipsos Reid employs more than 300 research professionals and support staff in Canada. The company has the biggest network of telephone call centres in Canada, as well as the largest pre-recruited household and on-line panels. Ipsos Reid's Canadian marketing research and public affairs practices are staffed with seasoned research consultants with extensive industry-specific backgrounds, offering the premier suite of research vehicles in Canada—including the Ipsos Trend Report, the leading source of public opinion in the country—all of which provide clients with actionable and relevant information. Ipsos Reid is an Ipsos company, a leading global survey-based market research group. To learn more, visit www.ipsos.ca

*For copies of other news releases, please visit
<http://www.ipsos-na.com/news/>*

© Ipsos Reid

*Washington ∙ New York ∙ Chicago ∙ Minneapolis ∙ Seattle ∙ San Francisco
Vancouver ∙ Edmonton ∙ Calgary ∙ Winnipeg ∙ Toronto ∙ Ottawa ∙ Montreal*

Two in Three (64%) Canadians Think its Feasible that Provincial Health Spending Could Escalate to 70-80% of Budgets Within Next Twenty Years

To Contain Costs, Majority (64%) Would be Willing to Allow People to Purchase Private Insurance to Receive Treatment in Private Facilities Outside of Government System

Toronto, ON – A new Ipsos Reid poll commissioned for the **Munk Debates** has found that two in three (64%) Canadians believe that a situation whereby provincial government health spending would account for 70% to 80% of provincial budgets is 'real and could occur'. Conversely, one in three (36%) believe that studies which suggest that healthcare costs could escalate this much are just 'alarmist speculation'.

On Monday night in Toronto the Munk Debates is convening a national debate on the future of healthcare in North America. The debate will feature former U.S. Governor **Dr. Howard Dean**, former U.S. Senate Majority Leader the Honourable **Dr. William Frist**, the head of Canada's largest research hospital (The University Health Network) **Dr. Robert Bell**, and Canadian award winning author and critic of "single payer" systems, **Dr. David Gratzer**.

The sold out debate will be broadcast for free on the internet at www.munkdebates.com starting a 7:00 PM EDT. The semi-annual Munk Debates are initiative of the Aurea Foundation, a charitable organization established in 2006 by Peter and Melanie Munk to support Canadian institutions involved in the study and development of public policy.

Key Findings...

Various solutions are being debated and considered in an effort to help curb the rapid increase of healthcare spending in Canada while still providing quality care, and Canadians were asked to indicate whether they support or oppose these ideas:

Two in three (64%) would be 'willing to accept' (18% definitely/46% probably) a plan that would 'allow people to purchase private healthcare insurance to receive treatment in private facilities not funded by government tax dollars'. Conversely, one in three (36%) would be 'not willing to accept' (14% definitely/22% not very) a system that operated in this manner.

Canadians are divided over the merits of extending nation-wide the recent proposal floated by the Quebec government to a system to charge citizens a user fee each time they visit a doctor. Four in ten (44%) are 'willing to accept' (16% definitely/27% probably) a system that would 'deter overuse of the healthcare system by charging a \$25 user fee for visits to the doctor, with exemptions for low-income groups'. Slightly more Canadians (56%) are 'not willing to accept' (24% not at all/32% not very) a user-fee system of this nature.

Thinking about the future of the Canadian healthcare system twenty years down the road, a majority (56%) of Canadians think that the Canadian and U.S. healthcare systems will be more similar to each other than they are today. However, they don't agree on which system will prevail: one in three (34%) think that the 'U.S. healthcare system will likely look a lot like our Canadian healthcare system today', while two in ten (21%) believe that 'Canada's healthcare system will likely look a lot like the U.S. healthcare system does today'.

On the other hand, four in ten (44%) believe that the Canadian and U.S. healthcare systems will still be very different in terms of access, delivery and payment systems'.

Despite the tough choices which lie ahead with respect to healthcare funding, Canadians are still confident that Canada will have the better healthcare system in twenty years. Most (85%) say that, in twenty years, Canada will have the better healthcare system where if someone got sick they would most likely want to be in Canada. However, 15% believe that that person would want to be in the United States to receive treatment for their illness.

The survey also tested Canadians' support for a series of healthcare reforms made in a recent TD Economics study of Ontario's healthcare system. Key findings include:

- Eight in ten (78%) would 'support' (22% strongly/56% somewhat) 'changing the way doctors are compensated so they are better able to consider the cost-effectiveness of their treatments decisions'. Two in ten (22%) 'oppose' (5% strongly/17% somewhat) this idea.
- Three quarters (74%) 'support' (19% strongly/55% somewhat) a plan that would 'shift responsibilities among health care providers from physicians to non-physician health professionals, notably nurse practitioners'. One quarter (26%) of Canadians 'oppose' (6% strongly/20% somewhat) this shifting of responsibilities.
- Seven in ten (70%) would 'support' (26% strongly/43% somewhat) a plan that would 'scale back drug benefits for higher incomes seniors and focus it instead on seniors in need'. A similar proportion (67%) of those aged 55+ also supports this idea. Just three in ten (30%) Canadians, overall, 'oppose' (10% strongly/21% somewhat).
- Only a minority (43%) 'supports' (7% strongly/36% somewhat) a plan that would 'incorporate a health-care benefit tax into the annual income tax to improve public

awareness of the cost of health care services'. A majority (57%) 'opposes' (23% strongly/34% somewhat) this idea.

- Just four in ten (42%) 'support' (6% strongly/36% somewhat) a move that would 'fund future drug and health care costs by requiring people to pay into a government-run fund along the lines of the Canada Pension Plan'. Six in ten (58%) 'oppose' (22% strongly/36% somewhat) this policy.

The Munk Debates...

Monday nights sold out Munk Debate will take place at Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music and debate the resolution **be it resolved, I would rather get sick in the U.S. than Canada.**

Arguing for the benefits of the Canadian healthcare system will be **Governor Howard Dean**, former Democratic National Committee Chairman, presidential candidate, six-term Governor of Vermont, and physician. He will be joined by **Dr. Robert Bell**, President and CEO of University Health Network (UHN), Canada's largest research hospital.

Speaking in favour of the U.S. health system will be **Dr. William Frist**, former U.S. Senate Majority Leader, nationally recognized heart and lung transplant surgeon, and Professor of Business and Medicine at Vanderbilt University. He will be joined by **Dr. David Gratzer**, a licensed physician in the U.S. and Canada, senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, and winner of the Donner Prize for *Code Blue: Reviving Canada's Health Care System*.

For more information on the Munk Debates, including a live stream of the entire debate starting at 7:00 PM EST and biographical notes for presenters visit:

<http://www.munkdebates.com/>

© Ipsos Reid

- 4 -

*Washington λ New York λ Chicago λ Minneapolis λ Seattle λ San Francisco
Vancouver λ Edmonton λ Calgary λ Winnipeg λ Toronto λ Ottawa λ Montreal*



These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between May 31 and June 3, 2010, on behalf of The Munk Debates. For this survey, a sample of 1,019 adults from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

-30-

For more information on this news release, please contact:

FOR IPSOS REID
John Wright
Senior Vice President
Ipsos Reid
Public Affairs
(416) 324-2002

FOR THE MUNK DEBATES
Rudyard Griffiths
Co-Organizer &
Moderator
The Munk Debates
(416) 737-9626

For full tabular results, please visit our website at www.ipsos.ca. News Releases are available at: <http://www.ipsos-na.com/news/>