

How People Find and Use Price Information: Public Agenda's Price Transparency Survey

A recently published Public Agenda [report](#) by David Schleifer, Rebecca Silliman, and Chloe Rinehart provides a wealth of new information about how Americans are seeking out and using information about health care prices. One key finding from the report is that while Americans do seek out information about how much their health care will cost, they still need more help accessing price information, in particular provider price comparisons. The report analyzes information found through a national survey and state surveys of residents in Florida, New York, New Hampshire, and Texas.

The national survey found that half of Americans have tried to find health care price information, and that most Americans (63 percent) agree that overall, more price transparency is needed. Not surprisingly, people who pay high out-of-pocket costs are the most likely to seek price information. While many people look for health care prices, only one in five Americans use that information to compare health care prices between providers. Those who do compare prices ultimately save money, with just over half (59 percent) choosing a lower-priced over a higher-priced provider. Four out five Americans believe that state governments should play a role in facilitating provider price comparisons. In addition, most people acknowledge that health care prices and quality are unrelated, but most are also unaware that prices vary between providers. Over half of the those surveyed (56 percent) reported either that they believed providers charge the same price for the same service, or that they did not know if prices vary between providers.

These findings demonstrate that price transparency tools can help American consumers navigate the increasingly expensive health care landscape, but that they still need more tools to facilitate both price and quality comparison between providers. People who compare prices often choose lower-priced care, helping people on health plans with high out-of-pocket costs or without insurance save

money. Unfortunately, many people remain unaware of existing price comparison tools. The report includes helpful suggestions on strategies for providing information about price transparency through channels that people typically turn to when researching the cost of their care. This report will help policymakers, providers, insurers, employers, and price information providers understand the public's needs and respond with tools that save consumers money and promote price competition.

The details on the data discussed above, as well as other important findings, are available in the full reports and summaries from this project. We have posted links to all these resources below.

- [Full Report](#)
- [Research Brief](#)
- [Topline & Methodology](#)
- [Charts & Graphs](#)
- [Florida Brief](#)
- [New York State Brief](#)
- [New Hampshire Brief](#)
- [Texas Brief](#)