Public attitudes to the NHS

www.health.org.uk/publicattitudes

February 2015
The British Social Attitudes survey

- Annual survey initiated by NatCen in 1983
- Measures social and political attitudes and moral values
- Random sample of 3000 adults across Britain
- Face-to-face interview
- Range of funding sources: government depts, charities, grants from ESRC and other foundations
- Health is a key topic
Figure 1. Public spending on health in the UK, in real terms and as a percentage of national income.


Note: GDP deflators for 1949/50 to 1954/55 are estimated.
Figure 2. Political party supporter representation in the BSA results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKIP/Veritas</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democrat</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Party</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish National Party</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base: 2,878
Maximum margin of error: 1.8%
Figure 3. Percentage of population (born before 2001) belonging to each of the four generations since 1961

Source: ONS population estimates England & Wales: 1838 to 2013
Figure 4. View on whether the government should support a national health system that is tax funded, free at the point of use, and providing comprehensive care for all citizens

- Agree or strongly agree: 89%
- Disagree or strongly disagree: 10%
- Don't know: <1%

Unweighted base: 2,878
Maximum margin of error: 1.8%
Figure 5. View on whether the government should support a national health system that is tax funded, free at the point of use, and providing comprehensive care for all citizens, by political party supported.

Unweighted bases: 144-838
Maximum margins of error: Lab 3.4%; Con 3.6%; Lib Dems 8.2%; UKIP 6.0%
Figure 6. Percentage of respondents agreeing that the government should support a national health system that is tax funded, free at the point of use, and providing comprehensive care for all citizens.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted bases: 165-2,449
Maximum margins of error: ENG 2.0%; SCOT 6.0%; WAL 7.6%
Figure 7. View on how the general standard of care has changed over the last five years

Unweighted base: 2,878
Maximum margin of error: 1.8%
Figure 8. View on how the general standard of care has changed over the last five years, by experience of being an inpatient in the last year or not

Unweighted bases: 137-612
Maximum margins of error: Yes 8.3%; No 3.9%
Figure 9. View on where people would like to receive NHS-funded treatment

- 39% for an NHS service
- 16% for a private service
- 2% for a non-profit service
- 43% would not have a preference

Unweighted base: 2878
Maximum margin of error: 1.8%
Figure 10. View on where people would like to receive NHS-funded treatment, by generation

Unweighted base: 543-1075
Maximum margins of error: WAB 4.1%; BB 3.0%; X 3.7%; Y 4.2%
Figure 11. View on where people would like to receive NHS-funded treatment from, by party supported

Base: 2075
Maximum margins of error: Lab 3.4%; Con 3.6%; Lib Dems 8.2%; UKIP 6.0%
Figure 12. View on still being happy to be treated in non-NHS organisations even if this meant that your local NHS hospital or clinic was at risk of being closed as a result of people using other providers

Half would

Half wouldn’t

Unweighted base: 506
Maximum margin of error: 4.4%
Figure 13. View on the way the NHS uses money

- The NHS almost never wastes money: 7%
- The NHS generally doesn't waste money: 37%
- The NHS often wastes money: 51%

Unweighted base: 2,878
Maximum margin of error: 1.8%
Figure 14. View on the way the NHS uses money, by generation

- The NHS almost never wastes money
- The NHS generally doesn’t waste money
- The NHS often wastes money

Unweighted base: 543-1,075
Maximum margins of error: WAB 4.1%; BB 3.0%; X 3.7%; Y 4.2%
Figure 15. Percentage of respondents who think that the NHS often wastes money

- England: 52%
- Scotland: 45%
- Wales: 56%

Unweighted bases: 165-2,449
Maximum margins of error: ENG 2.0%; SCOT 6.0%; WAL 7.6%
Figure 16. Willingness for the government to spend less money on other public services to maintain current NHS services

- Yes: 38%
- No: 58%
- Don’t know: 3%

Unweighted base: 2,878
Maximum margin of error: 1.8%
Figure 17. View on cutting other public services to maintain current NHS services, by views on how often the NHS wastes money

Unweighted bases: 181-1,563
Maximum margins of error: Often 2.5%; Generally doesn't 3.1%; Almost never 7.3%
Figure 18. View on cutting other public services to maintain current NHS services, by recent experience of being an inpatient in an NHS hospital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has been an inpatient</th>
<th>Has not been an inpatient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, cut other public services</td>
<td>No, don't cut other public services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted bases: 344-612
Maximum margins of error: Has been 8.4%; Hasn't been 4.0%
Figure 19. Percentage of respondents willing to cut other public services to fund NHS

Unweighted bases: 165-2,449
Maximum margins of error: ENG 2.0%, SCO 6.0%, WAL 7.6%
Figure 20. Percentage of respondents prepared to travel further away from their home for different types of care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A&amp;E</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternity</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist and complex</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base: 2,878  
Maximum margin of error: 1.8%
Figure 21. Would you still be prepared to travel further away from your home for care if this meant that your local hospital or clinic was at risk of being closed?

Unweighted base: 2,878
Maximum margin of error: 1.8%
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