

HEALTH CARE

Three-in-Five Britons Think the NHS Requires a Major Overhaul

Respondents cite a heavy bureaucracy and wait times as biggest problems with the National Health Service.

[LONDON – Jul. 20, 2010] – Most people in Britain think there are many things that the National Health Service (NHS) should be doing better, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,980 British adults, 58 per cent of respondents say that some things in the NHS are good, but the system is in need of major changes.

Conversely, a quarter of Britons (26%) think most of the NHS works well, and only minor changes are required. Just over one-in-ten (12%) say there are so many flaws in the health care system that it needs to be fully rebuilt.

Trust in the NHS

A large majority of Britons (74%) are confident that, if they get sick, they will have access to all the help needed from doctors and hospitals. But a quarter of respondents (24%) express little or no confidence in getting what they need.

Among those who express confidence in getting the required attention, 55 per cent say this is

KEY FINDINGS

- **58% say the NHS has some good things, but many changes are needed**
- **24% have no confidence in getting help from doctors and hospitals if they get sick**
- **46% cite bureaucracy and poor management as the worst aspect of the NHS**
- **40% would pay to cut their waiting time**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From July 15 to July 16, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,980 randomly selected British adults who are Springboard UK panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.2%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Great Britain. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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because they trust physicians and nurses; 46 per cent simply say they know they will get everything they need; 33 per cent say they trust the NHS to work in a timely manner; and a further 33 per cent say they are confident that medical facilities are up-to-date.

Among those respondents who express little or no confidence in the NHS to provide help when needed, the biggest worry is long waiting times (52%), followed by concerns about cuts to services (48%), and fears that medical facilities are ill-equipped (40%). Over a quarter of people in this group (27%) say they do not trust physicians and nurses.

Biggest Challenges

Almost half of Britons (46%) agree that the biggest problem facing the NHS right now is bureaucracy and poor management. Other challenges, cited by considerably fewer respondents, include inadequate resources and facilities (12%), long waiting times (10%), shortage of doctors and nurses (10%), and insufficient hygiene standards (8%).

Other Ways to Seek Help

Long waiting times are a recurrent issue with the NHS. Two-in-five Britons (40%) would be willing to pay out of pocket to have quicker access to medical health services, but 34 per cent would not.

Almost three-in-ten respondents (28%) would travel abroad to get medical treatment faster, but half (50%) would not consider this option.

Britons over the age of 55 are more likely than their younger counterparts to say that the NHS's bureaucracy is its biggest weakness (60%), and that they are willing to travel to a different country to seek quicker access to medical treatments (53%).

Download Full Tables

http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/table_nhs_july2010.pdf

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Which one of the following statements comes closest to expressing your view of the National Health Service (NHS)?

	Age			
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
The NHS works well, and only minor changes are needed to make it work better	26%	28%	25%	27%
There are some good things in our NHS, but many changes are required	58%	53%	58%	62%
The NHS has so much wrong with it that we need to completely rebuild it	12%	13%	12%	10%
Not sure	4%	7%	4%	1%

Health Care

If you were to become sick, how confident are you that you would have access to all the help from doctors and hospitals that you would need?

	Age			
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
Very confident	21%	18%	18%	27%
Moderately confident	53%	53%	54%	51%
Not too confident	18%	19%	19%	17%
Not confident at all	6%	6%	7%	5%
Not sure	2%	4%	2%	0%
Confident – net	74%	71%	72%	78%
Not confident – net	24%	25%	25%	22%

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Why do you feel this way? – Respondents who answered “Very confident” and “Moderately confident.”

	Age			
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
I trust UK physicians and nurses	55%	54%	52%	58%
I know I will get the help I need	46%	47%	41%	48%
I trust the medical facilities are up-to-date	33%	33%	32%	33%
I trust the NHS works in a timely manner	33%	32%	33%	35%
Other	7%	3%	8%	8%
Not sure	5%	6%	6%	2%

Health Care

Why do you feel this way? – Respondents who answered “Not too confident” and “Not at all confident.”

	Age			
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
I am worried about long waiting times	52%	60%	50%	46%
I am worried about cuts to services	48%	47%	46%	51%
I think the medical facilities are ill-equipped	40%	38%	40%	40%
I do not trust physicians and nurses	27%	29%	27%	25%
Other	16%	11%	18%	17%
Not sure	2%	1%	3%	1%

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Health Care

In your view, which is the biggest problem facing the NHS right now?

	Age			
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
Bureaucracy, poor management	46%	29%	47%	60%
Inadequate resources and facilities	12%	16%	12%	9%
Long waiting times	10%	17%	10%	4%
Shortage of doctors and nurses	10%	13%	9%	8%
Insufficient standards of hygiene	8%	7%	8%	8%
Little focus on preventive care	4%	3%	4%	3%
Lack of a wider range of services for patients	2%	3%	1%	2%
Vague legal rights of patients	1%	2%	1%	0%
Other	4%	4%	4%	5%
Not sure	4%	7%	3%	1%

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If you were able to, would you be willing to pay out of your own pocket to have quicker access to medical services that currently have long waiting times?

	Age			
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
Yes	40%	43%	37%	43%
No	34%	29%	35%	35%
Not sure	26%	28%	28%	23%

Health Care

If you were able to, would you consider traveling to another country to have quicker access to medical services that currently have long waiting times?

	Age			
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
Yes	28%	31%	27%	27%
No	50%	46%	49%	53%
Not sure	22%	23%	24%	20%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.

<http://bit.ly/4zxf1S>

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at

<http://bit.ly/3z0u11>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>**

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