



To: American Health Care Association
From: Mark Blankenship, Opinion Access
Subject: Survey Summary and Key Findings
Date: 12/3/12

SURVEY SUMMARY

Health care generally, and long term care specifically, remain an important part of the conversation among Americans. **Seventy percent (70%)** of those surveyed have a positive opinion of skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers and **66%** have a positive opinion regarding assisted living facilities. Respondents to this survey clearly prefer improving the quality of care provided by nursing homes and long-term care facilities over government cuts to Medicare payments such facilities receive. Respondents further indicate they are **less likely (65%) to vote** for Members of Congress who would vote to cut up to \$15 billion dollars in Medicare payments to nursing homes tasked with providing senior citizens care.

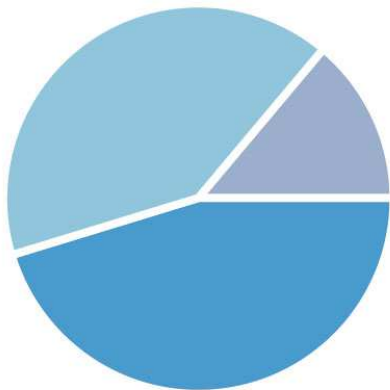
While 57% believe the quality of care offered by nursing homes in America has improved during the past 20 years, **84% of those surveyed agree** “nursing homes are facing a crisis because the government is cutting funds.” As the government is considering ways to reduce the deficit, a strong plurality (41%) believe cutting national defense and military spending is the most acceptable way when compared to other options such as cutting Medicare payments to nursing homes (4% agree) and raising the Social Security retirement age to 70 (24% agree).

One in three (31%) do not find any of these suggestions acceptable. In fact, 46% believe the government should not make cuts to Medicare payments to nursing homes under the sequestration proposals and rather provide more money to nursing homes to provide care for the aging baby boomer generation.

KEY FINDINGS

Current congressional budget initiatives such as the sequestration propose to cut **\$700 million** in Medicare from nursing homes.

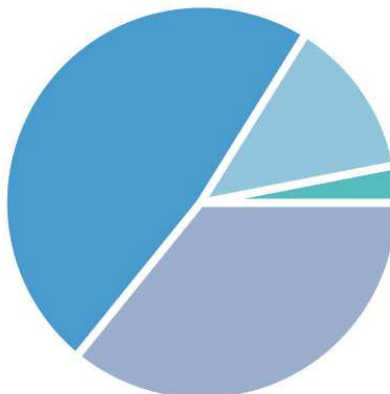
Which of the following comes closest to your reaction to this?



- 14% The government should make this cut to nursing homes, the industry can afford to absorb them and keep running.
- 41% The government should not make this cut; the industry has been cut too much already.
- 46% The government shouldn't make this cut, and in fact, should provide more money to nursing homes to care for the aging baby boom generation.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

“Nursing homes in this country are facing a crisis because the government is cutting funds.”



- 36% **Strongly Agree**
- 48% **Somewhat Agree**
- 13% **Somewhat Disagree**
- 3% **Strongly Disagree**

- 57% agree the **quality of care provided** by nursing homes **has improved** during the last 20 years and 46% believe residents of nursing homes receive high quality care.
- **Four in five (84%) agree nursing homes are facing a crisis because of government funding cuts.**
- **Thirty-seven percent (37%) believe cutting Medicare payments to nursing homes is the least acceptable** way for Congress to deal with the deficit. Twenty percent find raising the Social Security retirement age to 70 as the least acceptable, 19% for raising taxes on those earning more than \$250,000 annually, and 16% who believe cutting military and defense spending as least acceptable.
- Not only do respondents believe the government should avoid making Medicare payment cuts to nursing homes, **46% believe the government should provide more funding** to the facilities to **care for the aging baby boomer population.**
- **Sixty-five percent (65% - 44% much less likely and 21% somewhat less likely)** of respondents indicate they would be **less likely to vote for a *Member of Congress who voted to cut \$15 billion in Medicare payments to nursing homes to care for seniors.*** Partisanship had little impact on responses to this question as 71% of Democratic voters say they would be less likely compared to 63% of Independent voters and 62% of GOP voters.