

A decorative graphic is present on the page, featuring a large, thin, light-colored arc that starts near the top right and curves towards the bottom right. A horizontal line and a vertical line intersect at the bottom right end of this arc, with a small yellow square at the intersection point. Another small yellow square is located at the bottom left corner of the page, near the green header area.

Perceptions Regarding the Quality of Patient Care in South Carolina: An AARP Member Survey

November 2008



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**Report Prepared by Joanne Binette and
Erica Dinger, J.D.**

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South Carolina AARP Members Are Strong Supporters of Health Care Reform and Patient Advocacy

The older population in South Carolina is growing rapidly. The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by the year 2030, the state's 65 and older population will be nearly double what it was in 2000. About 1.1 million people who are 65 and over are expected to live in South Carolina in 2030, compared with 485,333 people in 2000. In 2000, South Carolina ranked 32nd in the nation for the highest percentage of people aged 65 and older. By 2030, the state is projected to rank 15th in the nation. This marks a major shift in population from the 2000 Census, which showed twice as many children younger than 18 as adults aged 65 and over.¹

As the population in South Carolina ages more and more older residents will need health care services including hospital care and long-term care services. Nationally, older adults account for over 60 percent of all adult ambulatory visits, 80 percent of home care visits, 49 percent of all hospital days, and comprise 85 percent of all long-term care residents.² As hospital utilization rates increase among the older population it is important to note that medical errors are responsible for injury in as many as one out of every 25 hospital patients; an estimated 48,000 to 98,000 patients die from medical errors each year. Errors in health care have been estimated to cost more than five million dollars per year in a large teaching hospital, and preventable health care-related cost the economy from \$17 to \$29 billion each year. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) research has shown that medical errors may result most frequently from systems errors—organization of health care delivery and how resources are provided in the delivery system.³

AARP worked with members of the South Carolina State Legislature to pass three new bills to improve patient safety and health care quality for all South Carolina residents. The first is the Lewis Blackman Act, which fosters open communication between hospitals and patients, ensures that patients know who is providing their hospital care, and assures that patients have timely access to fully qualified and experienced physicians. The second is the Hospital Infection Disclosure Act which requires hospitals to publicly disclose infection rates. The third is the Loan Forgiveness Program that encourages medical doctors to receive specialty training in geriatrics by reimbursing them up to \$35,000 for their tuition costs. In exchange, geriatricians must agree to practice in South Carolina for five years.⁴

In an effort to continue to improve the quality of health care services and patient safety in the state, the AARP South Carolina State Office commissioned a survey of AARP members in the state to examine their perceptions about and experience with South Carolina's health care system and health care they received in hospitals. Specifically the survey polled members about their experiences with doctors, nurses and other hospital staff, tests, and surgical procedures. This mail survey of randomly selected AARP members in South Carolina was conducted in September and October, 2008. Of the 3,000 members surveyed, 1,080 questionnaires were returned yielding a response rate of 36 percent and a sampling error of

¹ South Carolina Mature Adults 2006 State Report based on U.S. Census Bureau Interim State Population Projections, 2005, <http://www.scmatureadults.org/report06/trend06.asp>.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2002). National center for health statistics: Data warehouse on trends in health and aging. Retrieved April 24, 2003, from www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/otheract/aging/trenddata.htm.

³ *Reducing Errors in Health Care. Translating Research into Practice*, April 2000. AHRQ Publication No. 00-PO58. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD. <http://ahrq.gov/research/>.

⁴ The American Geriatrics Society: http://www.americangeriatrics.org/policy/geriatrician_shortage.shtml.

plus or minus 3.0 percent.⁵ As of September 2008, the number of AARP members in South Carolina was 582,823. The survey found:

- ✚ Ninety percent South Carolina AARP members surveyed say that the current health care system needs change. Of these members over half say major changes are needed and one-quarter say the health care system needs a complete overhaul.
- ✚ Eighty-five percent of South Carolina AARP members polled support ensuring access to affordable, quality health care for all state residents.
- ✚ More than 80 percent of South Carolina members polled say that controlling the cost of prescription drugs, improving the quality and safety of medical care, and improving the quality of nursing homes and long-term care are extremely or very important to them personally.
- ✚ Sixty-five percent of South Carolina members surveyed say they or a family member have received medical care at a South Carolina hospital in the past three years.
 - In four out of five cases the patient receiving care had an advocate with them at the hospital and this advocate was most often their spouse.
 - One in five say the hospital staff did not always take care of the patient's basic personal needs in a timely fashion and the patient was not informed of possible side effects of their prescribed medication.
 - Three in ten believe that the doctors and nurses did not spend enough time with the patient.
 - Three in ten say that patients and/or their advocates were not given written information about how to get help if nursing staff did not respond quickly or who to contact in the event the needed care was not received even though this type of written information is legally required as part of the Lewis Blackman Act.
- ✚ One in eight South Carolina members polled say that they or their family members have experienced physical or emotional problems as a result of the care they received from a South Carolina hospital in the past three years.
- ✚ Three-quarters of South Carolina members polled, with recent hospital experience say that having an advocate with them would make them much more comfortable.

The findings from this study reveal strong support among AARP members in South Carolina for changes in the current health care system. South Carolina policymakers need to examine ways to improve the quality and safety of health care as this is an extremely important issue to South Carolina AARP members. South Carolina AARP members are experiencing problems with hospital care that could lead to serious health issues. Moreover, there is a strong desire among members to have a health care advocate that can be a voice for the patient and help ensure they receive the appropriate medical care when they need it. State officials should continue to work on expanding and developing programs that improve patient safety and health care quality for all South Carolina residents.

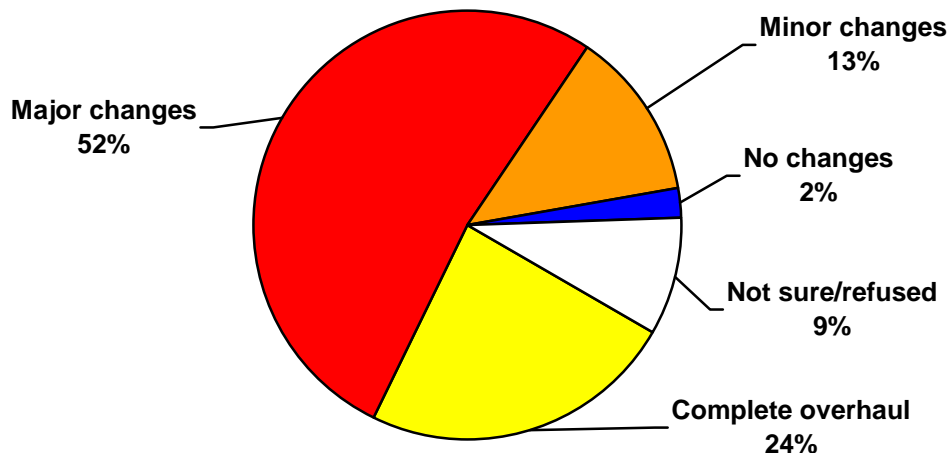
⁵ See page 13 for a detailed methodology.

Detailed Findings

South Carolina AARP members are concerned about the current state of health care.

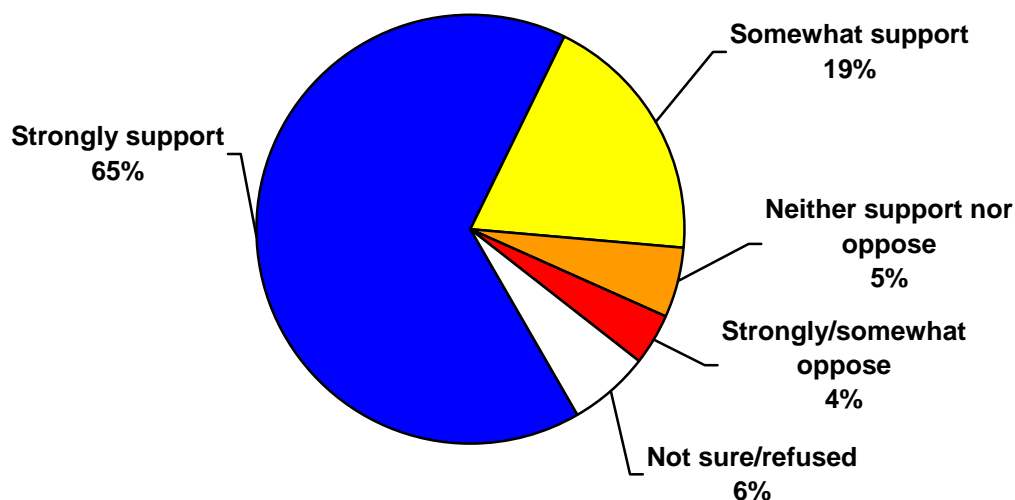
Many members surveyed do not appear to be happy with the current state of the country's health care system. Over half (52%) say we need to make major changes and one-quarter (24%) say we need a complete overhaul of the health care system.

Perception of the Current State of Health Care
(N=1,080)



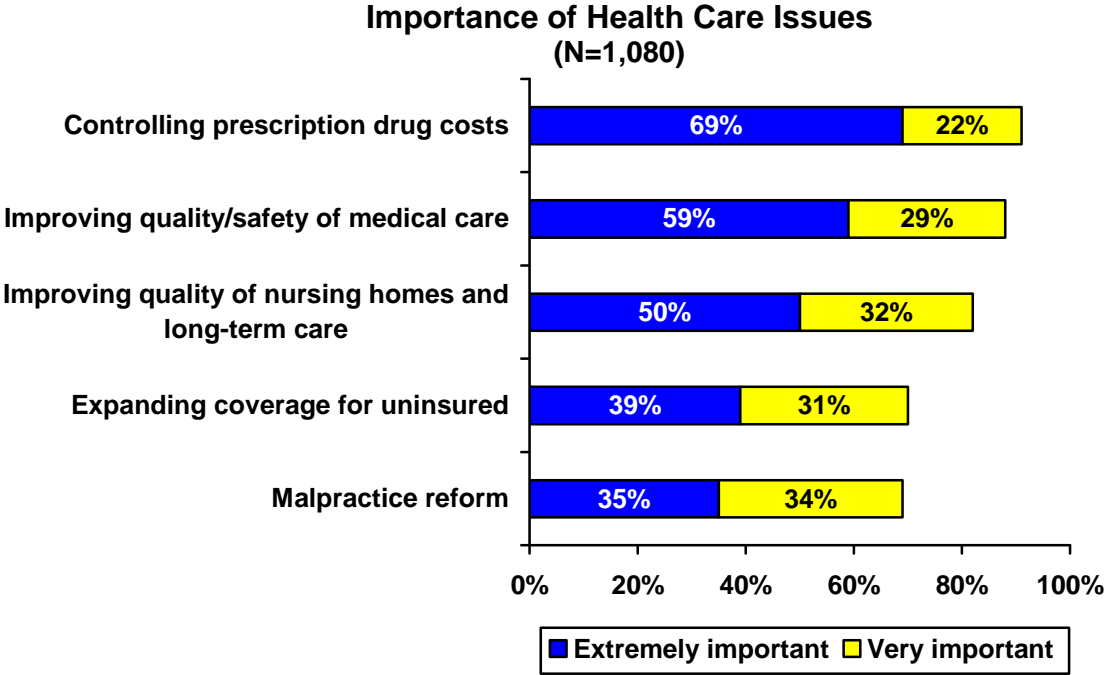
Eighty-five percent of South Carolina AARP members polled strongly or somewhat support ensuring access to affordable, quality health care for all state residents. Younger members are more likely than older members to support this idea (50-59, 91%; 60-74, 85%; 75+, 80%).

Support for Access to Affordable, Quality Health Care for All State Residents*
(N=1,080)



*Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

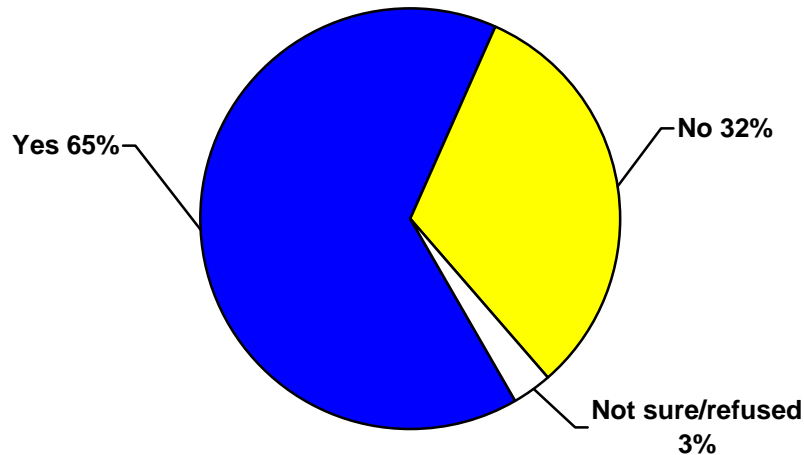
South Carolina members polled say that controlling the cost of prescription drugs, improving the quality and safety of medical care, and improving the quality of nursing homes and long-term care are extremely or very important to them personally.



South Carolina AARP members have experience with hospital care.

Three-quarters of South Carolina AARP members surveyed describe their own health as excellent (11%), very good (30%), or good (34%). Still, 65 percent say they or a family member have received medical care at a South Carolina hospital in the past three years. Members age 75+ are more likely than younger members to say they have received medical care (71% versus 64%) and are less likely to say their health is at very good or excellent (50-59, 48%; 60-74, 44%; 75+, 27%).

Whether Respondent or Family Member Received Medical Care at Hospital in Past Three Years (N=1,080)



Of those respondents who said they or a family member had received hospital care in the past three years, 91 percent (n=642) were familiar enough with the details of the care to answer questions about it. Most often the respondent (52%) or his or her spouse (27%) was the patient who had hospital care in the past three years. In four cases out of five (79%), the patient had an advocate or someone at the hospital to ensure that they received appropriate care in a timely fashion (n=505). Usually, the advocate was a spouse (58%) or child (19%). The patient most often received emergency care (49%) or inpatient, non-emergency care (42%) followed by outpatient, non-emergency care (25%).

Patient and Patient Advocate Relationship		Type of Hospital Care (n=642 Respondents familiar with the details of hospital care received)	
Patient (n=642)		Emergency	49%
Yourself	52%	Inpatient, Non-Emergency	42%
Spouse	27%	Outpatient, Non-Emergency	25%
Advocate (n=642)		Other	7%
Yes	79%		
No	18%		
Advocate/Patient Relationship (n=505)			
Spouse	58%		
Child	19%		

South Carolina AARP members perceive problems with the care they or their family members receive in hospitals.

Survey respondents were given a list of medical problems and asked if they or a family member experienced these while receiving care in South Carolina hospital in the past three years.

Approximately one in five respondents say there were times when the hospital staff did not take care of the patient's basic personal needs, such as bathing, using the bathroom, or changing bed linens, in a timely fashion (22%) or the patient was not informed of possible side effects of their prescribed medication (18%). About one in seven respondents say that the patient did not receive their prescribed medication at the appropriate time (14%), or the hospital staff failed to share test results with the patient (13%). Six percent say the patient did not receive a prescription drug that the patient or their family thought was needed. Another six percent report that the patient received a treatment that the patient or their family thought was not needed. Additionally, six percent report that the patient got a hospital acquired infection. When projected to the South Carolina AARP membership, potentially anywhere from 35,000 to 128,000 members could experience these problems during a hospital stay.

Type of Problem Experienced in the Hospital (n=642 Respondents familiar with the details of hospital care received)	
Staff did not take care of patient's personal needs in a timely fashion	22%
Patient not informed of side effects of prescribed medications	18%
Patient did not receive prescribed medication at appropriate time	14%
Staff failed to share test results with patient	13%
Patient did not receive a prescription drug that was thought to be needed	6%
Patient received a treatment that was <u>not</u> needed	6%
Patient got a hospital acquired infection	6%

Next survey respondents were given a list of statements concerning hospital staff behaviors and asked how strongly they agree or disagree with each statement. Again, respondents were asked to think about their experiences with hospital care in the past three years.

Three in ten respondents believe that the doctors and nurses did not spend enough time with the patient. One in four feels that there was a lack of communication among the doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff taking care of the patient.

Statement on Hospital Staff Behavior (n=642 Respondents familiar with the details of hospital care received)	Percent of Respondents who Strongly or Somewhat <u>Agree</u>
The <u>doctors</u> did <u>not</u> spend enough time with the patient	31%
The <u>nurses</u> did <u>not</u> spend enough time with the patient	28%
There appeared to be a lack of communication or coordination among the doctors, nurses, and other hospital personnel taking care of the patient	26%

In 2005 the Lewis Blackman Patient Safety Act was enacted in South Carolina. This act fosters open communication between hospitals and patients, ensures that patients know who is providing their hospital care, and assures that patients have timely access to fully qualified and experienced physicians. Further, this act requires that patients receive written information on how to contact the patient’s attending physician when the patient has concerns or questions about the care they are receiving. Notably, three in ten South Carolina members polled say that the patient and/or their advocate were not given written instructions about what to do to get help if the nursing staff did not quickly respond and did not receive written information about who to contact if they felt they were not receiving the care they needed.

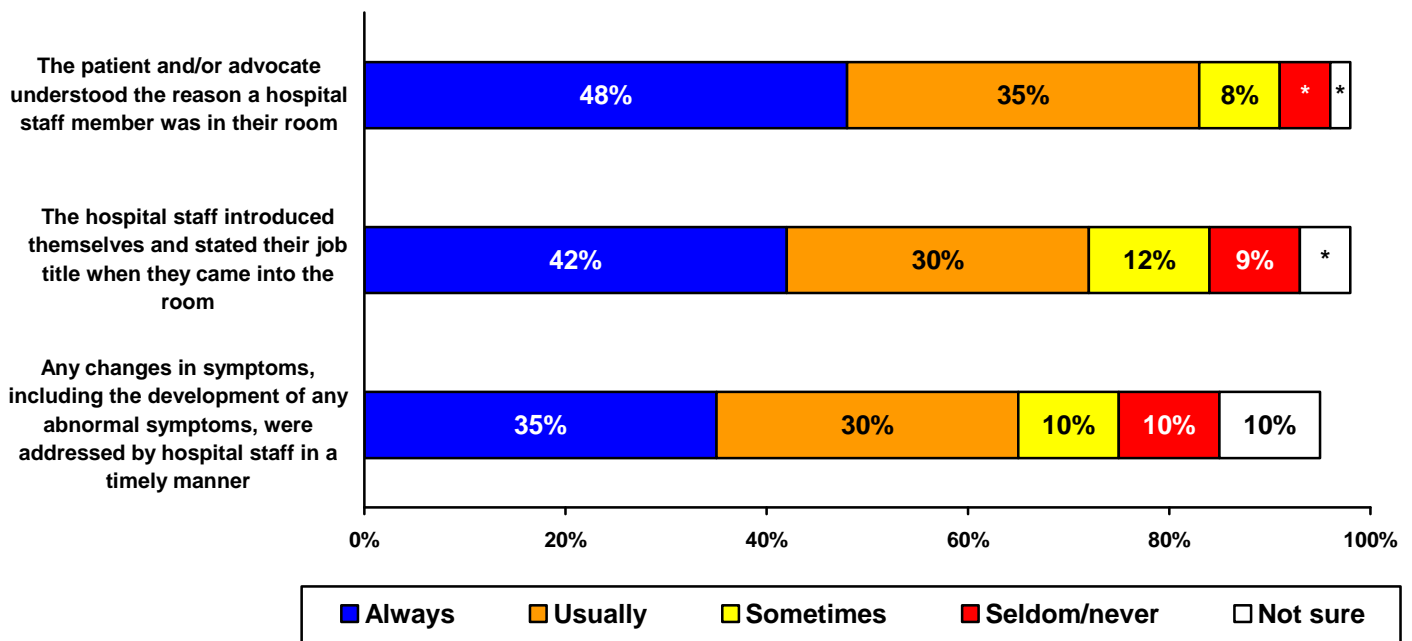
Statement on Hospital Staff Behavior (n=642 Respondents familiar with the details of hospital care received)	Percent of Respondents who Strongly or Somewhat <u>Disagree</u>
The patient and/or their advocate received in writing instructions about what to do to get help if the nursing staff did not respond in a timely fashion.	31%
The patient and/or their advocate received in writing information about who to contact if they felt they were not receiving the care they needed from either the nursing staff or their current doctor(s)	28%

South Carolina AARP members have mixed perceptions about their interactions with hospital staff.

Survey respondents were given a list of ways hospital staff interact with patients and asked how frequently these events occurred during a hospital stay in the past three years.

According to respondents, some of these staff and patient interactions occurred more frequently. More than eight in ten say the patient and/or advocate always or usually understood why a hospital staff member was in the patient’s room. Over seven in ten believe that the hospital staff always or usually introduced themselves and stated their job title; however, one in four say this only occurred sometimes, seldom or never, or they were unsure. While about two in three state that any changes in symptoms were always or usually addressed by hospital staff in a timely manner; about three in ten say this only occurred sometimes, seldom or never, or they were unsure.

Hospital Experiences that Occurred *More Frequently**
(n=642 Respondents familiar with the details of hospital care received)

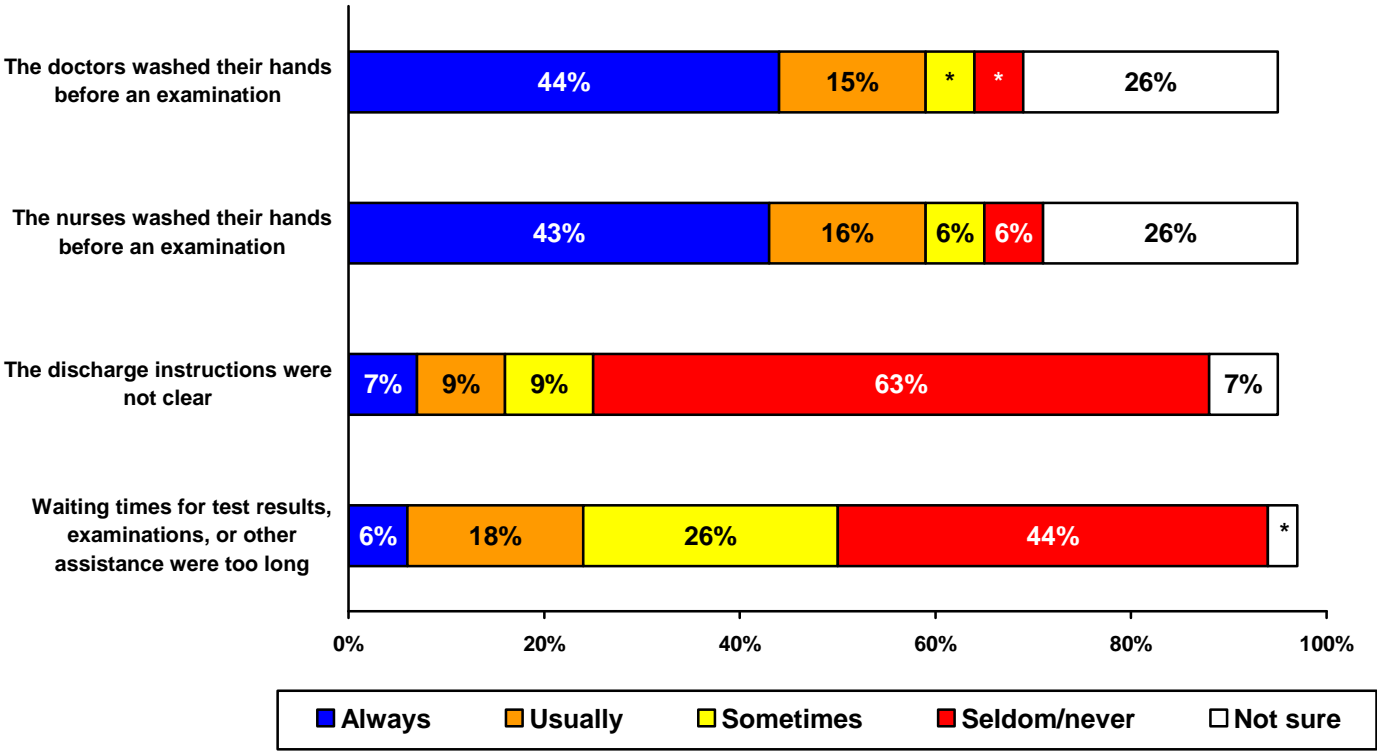


*** denotes a response of 5% or less.

*Percentages may not add up to 100% due to the exclusion of missing responses

On the other hand, according to respondents, some of these staff and patient interactions occurred less frequently. Less than half report that doctors and nurses always washed their hands before examining the patient. Another one in six says doctors and nurses usually washed their hands. Further, about one in four say they were not sure and another ten percent say hand-washing by doctors and nurses only occurred sometimes, seldom or never. Sixteen percent report that the hospital discharge instructions were always or usually unclear and another nine percent say they were only clear sometimes. Half say that waiting times for test results and examinations were always, usually, or sometimes too long.

Hospital Experiences that Occurred Less Frequently*
(n=642 Respondents familiar with the details of hospital care received)



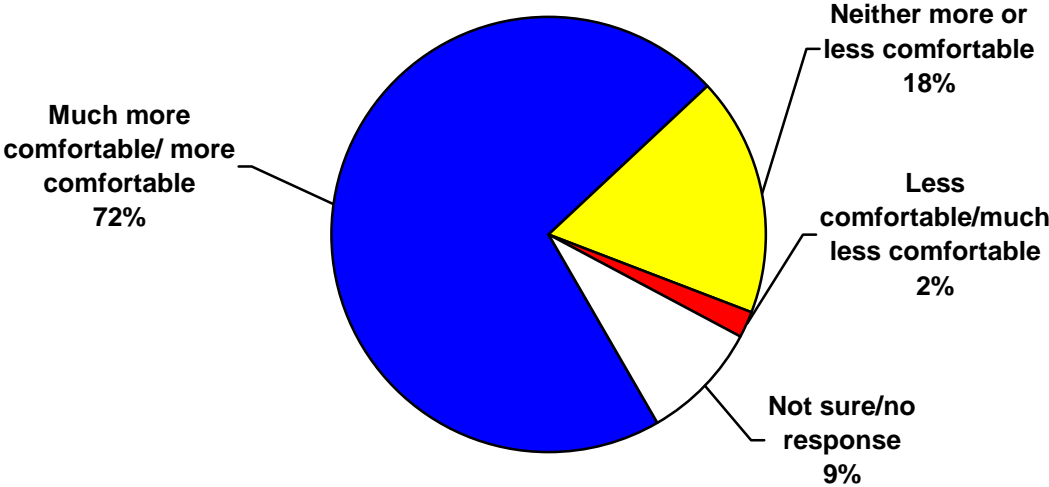
**" denotes a response of 5% or less.
 *Percentages may not add up to 100% due to the exclusion of missing responses.

South Carolina members were asked whether or not they or their family members have experienced physical or emotional problems as a result of the care they received from a South Carolina hospital in the past three years. Physical and emotional problems were described to respondents as physical or emotional discomfort or pain that was not a result of their medical condition or of appropriate medical treatment. Over one in eight respondents says that they or their family members have experienced these types of physical or emotional problems. When projected to the South Carolina AARP membership, approximately 70,000 members could experience physical or emotional problems during a hospital stay.

South Carolina AARP members want an advocate to help them manage their hospital care.

If South Carolina members had to go to the hospital for medical care in the future, nearly three in four respondents say that having an advocate with them to help them manage their care would make them more comfortable.

Impact of Having an Advocate on Level of Comfort During Hospital Visits*
(n=642 Respondents familiar with the details of hospital care received)

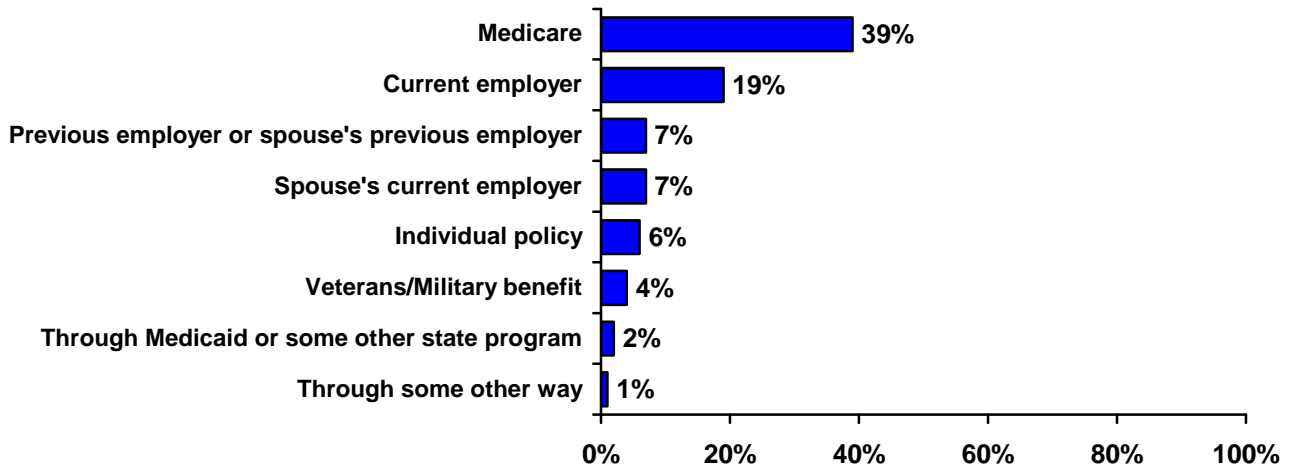


*Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

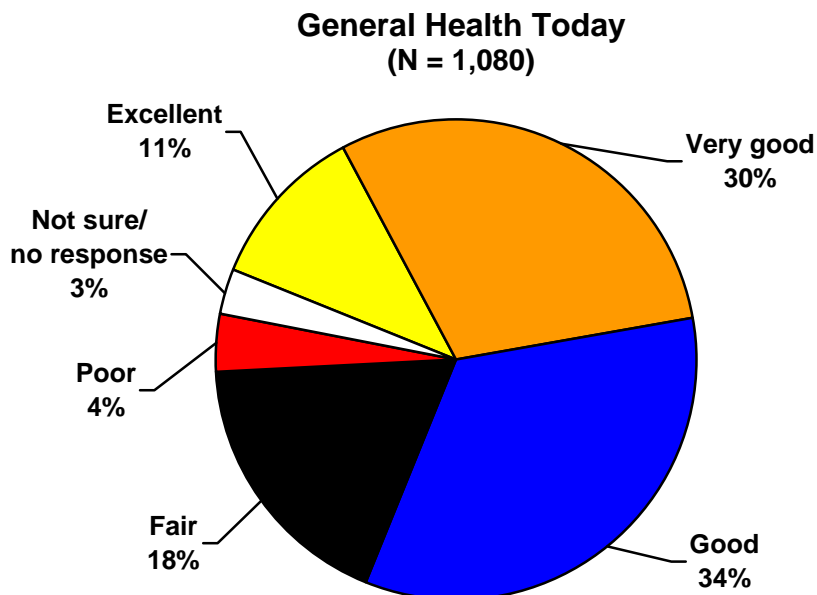
Health Care Coverage and Health Status of South Carolina AARP Members

It is important to note that seven percent of AARP members surveyed in South Carolina surveyed do not have any kind of health care coverage, including health insurance or government plans such as Medicare or Medicaid. Of the 89 percent who have health care coverage, most maintain such coverage through Medicare or their current employer. Notably, six percent have health coverage through an individually purchased policy.

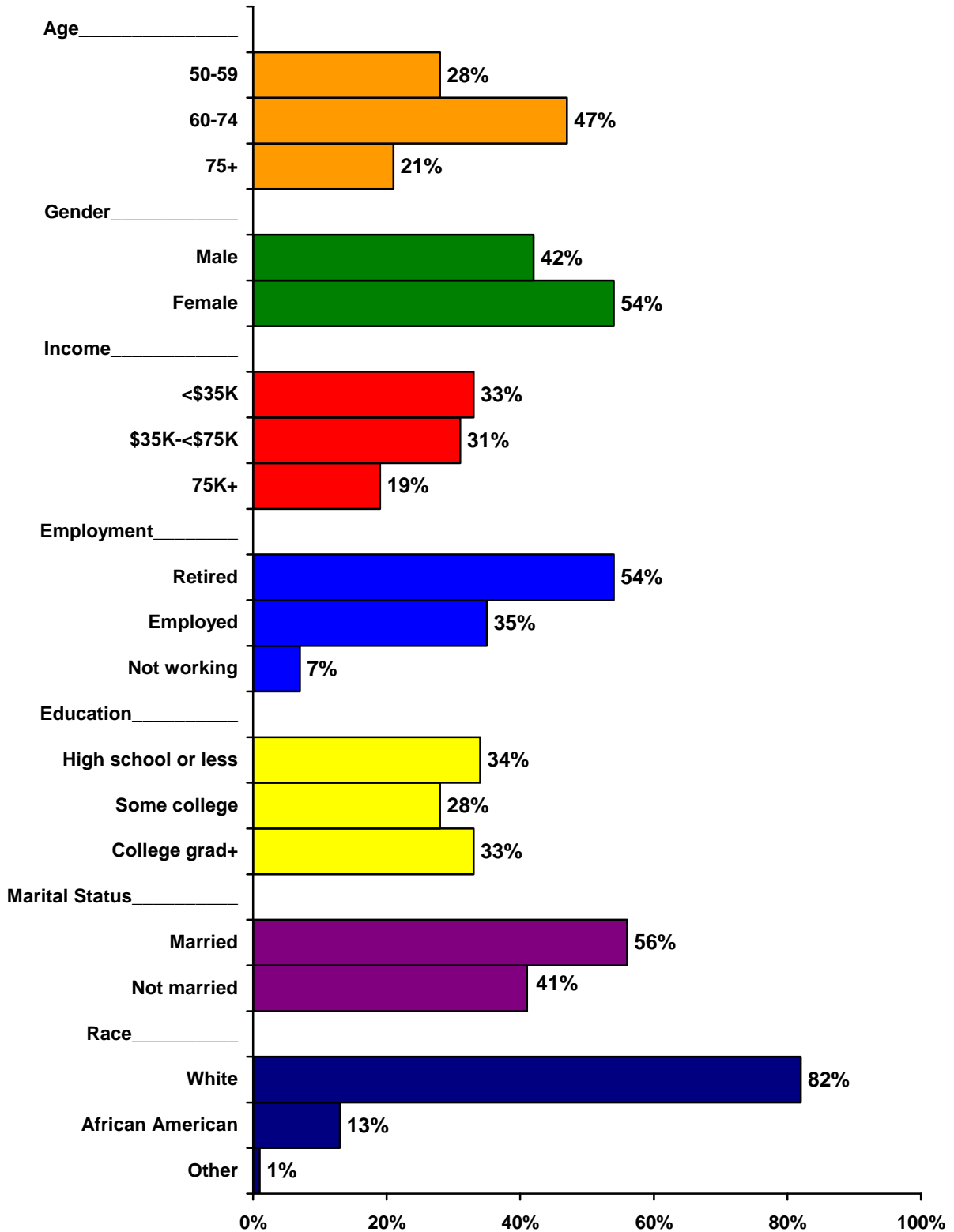
**Health Care Coverage for South Carolina AARP Members Age 50+
(n = 958 respondents with health care coverage)**



Three-quarters (75%) of South Carolina members polled report that they are in excellent, very good, or good health.



Demographics of South Carolina AARP Members (N = 1,080)



* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding effects, as well as the exclusion of not sure and missing responses.

Methodology

AARP conducted the South Carolina Member Survey on Health Care Quality between September 9 and October 7, 2008. Mail surveys were sent to a randomly selected sample of 3,000 members age 50 and older. Each sampled member was contacted about the survey in four ways: a pre-notification postcard, an initial questionnaire, a reminder postcard, and a second questionnaire for those who did not respond to the first one.

Of those surveyed, 1,080 returned completed questionnaires by the survey end date, yielding a response rate of 36 percent. The survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 3.0 percent. Survey responses were weighted to reflect the actual distribution of members by age. Throughout the report, statistics representing member responses are reported in percentages. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding. As of September 2008, the number of AARP members in South Carolina was 582,823.

Annotated Questionnaire

2008 AARP South Carolina Member Survey
On Health Care Around the State
(Weighted N= 1,080; Response Rate: 36%, Sampling Error: +/- 3.0%)

1. How would you describe your health today?

- 11% Excellent
- 30% Very good
- 34% Good
- 18% Fair
- 4% Poor
- <0.5% Not Sure
- 3% Missing / No Answer

2. One of the frequently mentioned goals of improving the health care system is to ensure access to affordable, quality health care for all state residents. In general, how strongly do you support or oppose the idea of ensuring access to affordable, quality health care for all state residents? N=1,080

- 65% Strongly Support
- 19% Somewhat Support
- 5% Neither Support nor Oppose
- 3% Somewhat Oppose
- 1% Strongly Oppose
- 3% Not Sure
- 3% Missing / No Answer

3. There is a lot of discussion nowadays about the need to improve health care in this country. Which of the following comes closest to your view about the country's health care system? N=1,080

- 24% We need a complete overhaul
- 52% We need to make major changes
- 13% We need to make minor changes
- 2% We do not need to make any changes
- 6% Not Sure
- 3% Missing / No Answer

4. How important is each of the following health care issues to you personally?
N=1,080

	Extremely Important ▼	Very Important ▼	Somewhat Important ▼	Not Very Important ▼	Not Important At All ▼	Not Sure ▼	Missing/ No Answer ▼
a. Controlling the rising cost of prescription drugs	69%	22%	6%	1%	<0.5%	1%	1%
b. Improving the quality of nursing homes and long-term care.....	50%	32%	12%	1%	1%	2%	2%
c. Improving the quality and safety of medical care.....	59%	29%	8%	1%	<0.5%	1%	2%
d. Expanding health care coverage for the uninsured	39%	31%	18%	3%	2%	4%	3%
e. Implementing malpractice reform	35%	34%	17%	3%	1%	8%	3%

This next section includes questions about specific health care experiences you or a family member have had in South Carolina.

5. Have you or a family member received medical care at a South Carolina hospital in the past three years? N=1,080

- 65% Yes
- 32% No → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 20]
- <0.5% Not Sure → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 20]
- 3% Missing / No Answer

6. In your opinion, are you familiar enough with the details of at least one of the hospital experiences you or your family members had in the past three years in order to provide information about both the type of care received and the quality of that care? N=703

- 91% Yes
- 4% No → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 20]
- 2% Not Sure → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 20]
- 3% Missing / No Answer

For the remainder of the survey, please answer all questions based on the hospital experience over the past three years that you are the most familiar with, whether the patient during that experience was you or someone in your family.

7. Who was the patient during this particular hospital experience that you are most familiar with? Please check ✓ only one box below. N=642

- 52% Yourself
- 27% Husband/Wife
- 1% Partner/Significant Other
- 5% Son/Daughter
- 7% Parent
- 4% Other Family Member [Please specify relationship to this person]:_____
- 1% Not Sure
- 5% Missing / No Answer

8. Did the patient have an advocate or someone with them at the hospital who was there most of the time to make sure they got appropriate care in a timely fashion? N=642

- 79% Yes
- 18% No → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 11]
- 1% Not Sure → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 11]
- 3% Missing / No Answer

9. What was the relationship of the advocate to the patient? N=505

- 58% Husband/Wife
- 2% Partner/Significant Other
- 6% Parent
- 19% Son/Daughter
- 4% Close Friend
- 2% Someone Else [Please specify patient's relationship to this person]:_____
- 1% Not Sure
- 9% Missing / No Answer

10. Were you the advocate for this person? N=505

- 51% Yes
- 44% No
- 2% Not Sure
- 3% Missing / No Answer

11. What type of hospital care did the patient receive during this experience? Please check all that apply. N=642

- 49% Emergency Hospital Care
- 42% Inpatient Non-Emergency Hospital Care
- 25% Outpatient Non-Emergency Hospital Care
- 13% Some other type of Hospital Care [Please describe in as much detail as possible]:
- <0.5% Not Sure
- 2% Missing / No Answer

12. Below is a list of items that someone receiving care at a hospital might experience. Read each one carefully and indicate whether the patient experienced any of these during their hospital experience.

Remember: Please answer all questions based on the hospital experience over the past three years that you are the most familiar with, regardless of whether the patient during that experience was you or someone in your family. N=642

	Yes ▼	No ▼	Not Sure ▼	Not Applicable ▼	Missing/ No Answer ▼
a. Was the patient prescribed drugs that they were known to be allergic to	2%	93%	2%	1%	2%
b. Was the patient prescribed drugs that were not safe to take when combined with other drugs they were already taking .	5%	83%	8%	2%	2%
c. Did the patient <u>not</u> receive a prescription for medicine that they or their family thought they needed.....	6%	83%	4%	4%	2%
d. Was the patient given medication that they were not supposed to take	3%	87%	4%	2%	4%
e. Did the patient not receive their prescribed medication at the appropriate time.....	14%	71%	7%	6%	3%
f. Was the patient not informed of the possible side effects of their prescribed medications	18%	62%	9%	6%	4%
g. Did the patient receive treatment that either they or their family member(s) did not think was necessary	6%	88%	4%	1%	2%
h. Was the patient given a test that either they or their family member(s) did not think was necessary.....	5%	87%	5%	1%	2%
i. Did the staff ever fail to share test results with the patient ...	13%	78%	5%	2%	2%
j. Was the patient unintentionally given the same test twice ...	2%	90%	5%	1%	2%
k. Were there times when the staff did not take care of the patient's basic personal needs in a timely fashion (such as bringing meals, bathing, using the bathroom, changing bed linens, etc.).....	22%	68%	3%	5%	2%
l. Did the patient get a hospital-acquired infection	6%	90%	1%	1%	2%
m. If surgery was performed: was the wrong surgery performed on the patient or was surgery performed on the wrong body part.....	<0.5%	80%	<0.5%	17%	3%
n. If surgery was performed: was a foreign object (such as a sponge or needle) inadvertently left in patient during surgery	<0.5%	78%	1%	18%	3%
o. If a blood transfusion was given: did the patient receive the wrong type of blood during a blood transfusion	<0.5%	62%	1%	33%	4%

13. For the next series of items, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

Remember: Please continue to think about the hospital experience from the past three years that you are the most familiar with, regardless of whether the patient during that experience was you or someone in your family. N=642

	Strongly Agree ▼	Somewhat Agree ▼	Neither Agree nor Disagree ▼	Somewhat Disagree ▼	Strongly Disagree ▼	Not Sure ▼	Missing/ No Answer ▼
a. The <u>nursing staff</u> took questions and concerns seriously.....	53%	31%	5%	4%	3%	1%	4%
b. The <u>doctors</u> took questions and concerns seriously	61%	25%	2%	4%	3%	1%	4%
c. Overall, the medical staff was careful about safety.....	58%	26%	6%	3%	2%	2%	4%
d. The patient’s condition and treatment were explained clearly ...	58%	25%	5%	4%	3%	1%	4%
e. The staff explained clearly the symptoms that could indicate a dangerous complication or medical condition	46%	24%	10%	6%	4%	5%	6%
f. The <u>nurses</u> did <u>not</u> spend enough time with the patient.....	10%	18%	17%	13%	33%	2%	7%
g. The <u>doctors</u> did <u>not</u> spend enough time with the patient.....	14%	17%	14%	14%	33%	2%	5%
h. There appeared to be a lack of communication or coordination among the doctors, nurses, and other hospital personnel taking care of the patient.....	10%	16%	13%	13%	40%	3%	5%
i. The patient and/or their advocate received in writing instructions about what to do to get help if the nursing staff did not respond in a timely fashion	17%	13%	18%	10%	21%	17%	6%
j. The patient and/or their advocate received in writing information about who to contact if they felt they were not receiving the care they needed from either the nursing staff or their current doctor(s).....	21%	15%	14%	9%	20%	16%	6%

14. For the next series of items, please indicate how frequently each of the following occurred. Remember: Please continue to think about the hospital experience from the past three years that you are the most familiar with, regardless of whether the patient during that experience was you or someone in your family. N=642

	Always ▼	Usually ▼	Sometimes ▼	Seldom ▼	Never ▼	Not Sure ▼	Missing/No Answer ▼
a. Waiting times for test results, examinations, or other assistance were too long.....	6%	18%	26%	25%	20%	3%	3%
b. Any changes in symptoms, including the development of any abnormal symptoms, were addressed by hospital staff in a timely manner.....	35%	30%	10%	5%	6%	10%	6%
c. The <u>nurses</u> washed their hands before an examination.....	43%	16%	6%	4%	2%	26%	3%
d. The <u>doctors</u> washed their hands before an examination.....	44%	15%	5%	3%	3%	26%	4%
e. The discharge instructions were <u>not</u> clear	7%	9%	9%	13%	50%	7%	5%
f. The hospital staff introduced themselves and stated their job title when they came into the room	42%	30%	12%	5%	4%	5%	3%
g. The patient and/or advocate understood the reason a hospital staff member was in their room	48%	35%	8%	3%	1%	2%	3%

15. In the space below, please provide any additional information about the hospital experience you have been reporting that you think is important for understanding the problems, complications, and errors that people sometimes experience during a hospital stay. N=642

- 7% Excellent care / very good service
- 3% Lack of service from hospital areas / long waits between requests and services
- 3% Improper care / lack of care
- 2% Nurses didn't seem to have enough time for patient / nurses understaffed
- 2% None at this time
- 2% Not enough emphasis on cleanliness / room was a mess / prone to infections
- 2% Hospital staff cold / impersonal / inattentive
- 2% Nurses / doctors know their jobs
- 2% I'm/we're satisfied
- 2% ER is slow
- 24% All other mentions
- 67% Missing / No Answer

16. Would you be willing to be contacted by someone in the AARP South Carolina State Office to talk more about this and other hospital experiences you have had in the past three years? N=642

33% Yes

60% No → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 18]

7% Missing / No Answer

17. Please provide the information below so that someone can contact you, or, if you prefer, call the AARP South Carolina State Office at 803.765.7382 and someone will get back to you.

First Name: _____

Telephone Number Where You Can Be Reached: _____

18. In the future, if you personally had to go to the hospital for medical care, what impact would having an advocate with you to help manage your care have on the level of comfort you feel about going to the hospital? Would it make you... N=642

45% Much More Comfortable

27% More Comfortable

18% Neither More or Less Comfortable

1% Less Comfortable

1% Much Less Comfortable

5% Not Sure

4% Missing / No Answer

19. In the past three years, have you or a family member experienced any physical or emotional problems as a result of the care or treatment you received from a South Carolina hospital? By “problems” we mean either physical or emotional discomfort or pain that was not a result of your medical condition or of appropriate medical treatment. N=642

12% Yes → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 22]

80% No → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 22]

3% Not Sure → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 22]

5% Missing / No Answer

20. Below is a list of things that someone receiving either medication from a pharmacy or medical care from a physician’s office or health care clinic might experience. Please carefully read each one and indicate whether you personally have experienced this in the past three years. N=438

	Yes ▼	No ▼	Not Sure ▼	Missing/ No Answer ▼
a. Were you prescribed drugs that you were known to be allergic to?.....	1%	90%	1%	7%
b. Were you prescribed drugs that were not safe to take when combined with other drugs you were already taking?.....	2%	83%	8%	8%
c. Were you not given a prescription for medicine that you thought you needed?	8%	79%	3%	10%
d. Were you given medication you were not supposed to take?	2%	87%	2%	10%
e. Were you given the wrong dosage of a prescribed medication?	3%	87%	2%	9%
f. Were you <u>not</u> informed of the possible side effects of your prescribed medications?	15%	72%	4%	9%
g. Did you receive treatment that you did not think was necessary?	7%	81%	4%	8%
h. Were you given a test that you did not think was necessary?	8%	80%	5%	8%
i. Did the staff fail to share test results with you?.....	6%	84%	3%	8%
j. Were you unintentionally given the same test twice?...	1%	89%	3%	7%
k. Did the staff make a surgical or medical error in your treatment or overall care?.....	2%	87%	4%	7%

21. In the future, if you personally had to go to the hospital for medical care, what impact would having an advocate with you to help manage your care have on the level of comfort you feel about going to the hospital? Would it make you... N=438

- 26% Much more comfortable
- 25% More comfortable
- 28% Neither more or less comfortable
- 2% Less comfortable
- 1% Much less comfortable
- 10% Not Sure
- 8% Missing / No Answer

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following questions are for classification purposes only and will be kept entirely confidential.

22. Are you male or female? N=1,080

- 42% Male
- 54% Female
- 3% Missing / No Answer

23. What is your age as of your last birthday? _____ (in years) N=1,080

- 28% 50 – 59
- 47% 60 – 74
- 21% 75+
- 4% Missing / No Answer

24. What is your 5-digit Zip Code? _ _ _ _ _

25. What is your current marital status? N=1,080

- 56% Married
- 2% Not married, living with partner
- 1% Separated
- 13% Divorced
- 21% Widowed
- 4% Never married
- 4% Missing / No Answer

26. Do you have any kind of health care coverage, including health insurance or government plans such as Medicare, Medicaid, or military benefits? N=1,080

- 89% Yes
- 7% No → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 28]
- 0% Not Sure → [PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 28]
- 4% Missing / No Answer

27. What is your primary source of health care coverage? N=958

- 19% Current Employer
- 7% Spouse's Employer
- 6% Individual Insurance Policy You Pay for Yourself, such as COBRA
- 7% Previous Employer or Spouse's Previous Employer
- 4% Veteran or Military benefits
- 39% Medicare
- 2% Medicaid/South Carolina Healthy Connections Program
- 1% Other [Please Specify: _____]
- <0.5% Not Sure
- 17% Missing / No Answer

28. What is the highest level of education that you completed? N=1,080

- 8% 0-12th grade (no diploma)
- 26% High school graduate (or equivalent)
- 16% Post-high school education (no degree)
- 12% 2-year college degree
- 14% 4-year college degree
- 6% Post-graduate study (no degree)
- 14% Graduate or professional degree (s)
- 5% Missing / No Answer

29. Which of the following best describes your current employment status? N=1,080

- 3% Self-employed, part-time
- 5% Self-employed, full-time
- 7% Employed, part-time
- 20% Employed, full-time
- 54% Retired, not working at all
- 5% Not in labor force for other reasons
- 2% Unemployed but looking for work
- 3% Missing / No Answer

30. Are you of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent? N=1,080

- 2% Yes
- 94% No
- <0.5% Not sure
- 4% Missing / No Answer

31. What is your race and/or ethnicity? N=1,080

- 82% White or Caucasian
- 13% Black or African American
- <0.5% American Indian or Alaska Native
- <0.5% Asian
- <0.5% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- <0.5% Other: (Specify) _____
- 4% Missing / No Answer

32. In general, how often do you go online to access the Internet or World Wide Web or to send and receive email? N=1,080

- 28% Several times a day
- 15% About once a day
- 12% 3-5 days a week
- 4% Once every few weeks
- 5% Once a month or less
- 31% I never go online to use the Internet or World Wide-Web
- 2% Not Sure
- 3% Missing / No Answer

33. Do you or does anyone living in your household have a working cellular telephone? N=1,080

- 86% Yes
- 11% No
- <0.5% Not Sure
- 3% Missing / No Answer

34. Do you have at least one phone inside your home that is currently working and is NOT a cell phone? N=1,080

- 93% Yes
- 5% No
- <0.5% Not Sure
- 2% Missing / No Answer

35. What was your annual household income before taxes in 2007? N=1,080

- 5% Less than \$10,000
- 12% \$10,000 to less than \$20,000
- 16% \$20,000 to less than \$35,000
- 15% \$35,000 to less than \$50,000
- 9% \$50,000 to less than \$60,000
- 8% \$60,000 to less than \$75,000
- 19% \$75,000 or more
- 8% Not Sure
- 10% Missing / No Answer

Thank you for completing this survey.
Please use the postage-paid envelope and return it to the State Research Surveys,
AARP, 601 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20049, by **October 7, 2008.**



AARP

Knowledge Management

For more information, please contact Joanne Binette at:

202.434.6303 or e-mail jbinette@aarp.org.