

Public Perception of Healthcare: Quality Vs. Cost



While people in general consider their healthcare experiences positive, they however regret being not empowered to control their healthcare journeys, new research from Maestro Health reveals.

The study, titled “The Consumer Healthcare Paradox”, surveyed 1,000 U.S. consumers aged 25 years and older to evaluate the public’s perception on high-quality healthcare versus how much it costs. Interestingly, 78% of respondents describe their healthcare as positive, but only half (50%) feel the quality of care they receive is equal to or greater than what it costs.

These findings highlight the need for hospitals and payers to increase transparency when communicating with patients about healthcare costs, expectations and what will truly improve overall wellbeing.

“While cost is an industry-wide issue, providers and health plan administrators must work on better communicating (or as we like to think about it, marketing) to patients and members,” says Nancy Reardon, chief strategy and product officer, Maestro Health.

Reardon and colleagues were surprised to see such a high number of people with positive views of their healthcare experiences, despite these other survey findings:

- 55% of respondents report receiving a higher-than-anticipated medical bill
- 69% feel they have very little control over their healthcare journeys
- 50% don’t think the care they receive is equal to what it costs

“How do people consider this a positive experience?” asks Reardon.

According to the survey study, over half of respondents think the healthcare system “is what it is,” or is impossible to change. Those in this group cite one root cause: lack of sufficient support in a system they don’t believe is looking out for their wellbeing.

The study findings further show consumers are conditioned to do what it takes to ensure optimal health and wellbeing. This means regularly seeking out quality care but without fully understanding what they are paying for and why.

“When we drill deeper into the data, we see that the majority of folks have grown accustomed to not understanding their medical bills or what visits and procedures should actually cost,” Reardon says, adding that “there is room for improvement” across the entire healthcare industry.

When asked about what should be done to improve upon their healthcare experience, consumers said these key changes are needed: reduction of costs (52%); the ability to seek out care from any healthcare provider (37%); and having one resource to select a doctor, manage claims, and pay bills (28%).

Source: [Managed Healthcare Executive](#)

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