



To: Interested Parties
 From: Margie Omero, Purple Insights
 Date: June 11, 2014
 RE: Recent Polling, Compassion and Choices

Methodology: Purple Insights conducted a national survey of 1,007 interviews by phone among adults 50 years of age or older. All interviews were conducted between January 31 and February 7, 2014. The margin of error is +/- 3.1%.

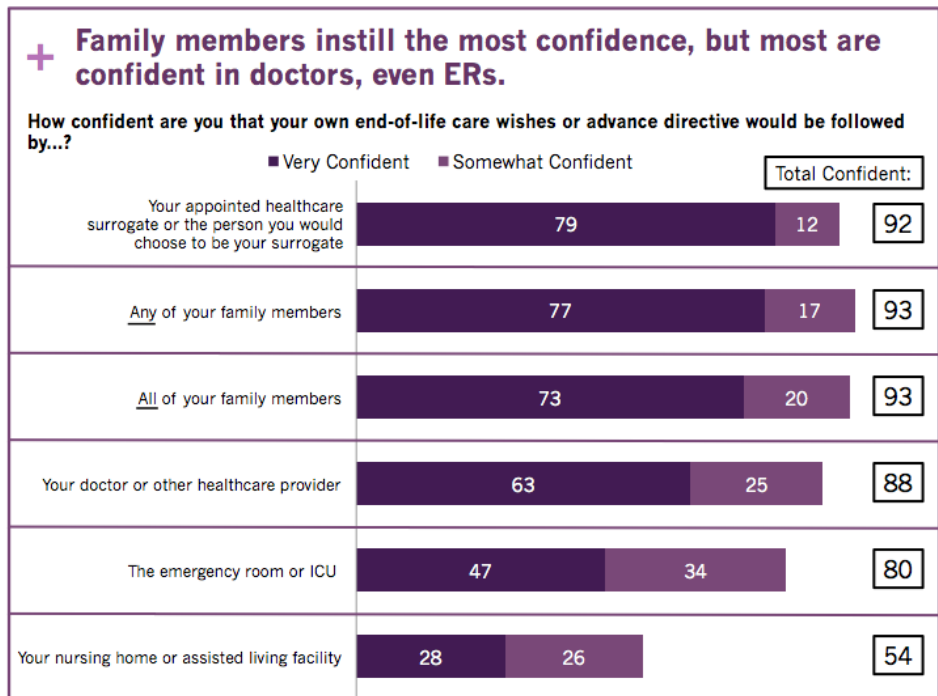
Purple Insights is the in-house opinion research group at Purple Strategies. Since its founding, Purple Insights has provided opinion research and strategic counsel to some of the most recognizable brands in the world. Purple Insights also created the PurplePoll to provide a bipartisan look at the critical electorate that would determine the 2012 election outcome. The PurplePoll was cited as one of the most accurate pollsters of 2012 – ahead of many news outlets and polling operations, including CBS, NBC, CNN, Politico and Gallup.¹

End-of-life wishes are incredibly important to older Americans

Older adults overwhelmingly feel it is important their end-of-life medical treatment wishes are followed (95%). Almost eight in ten (79%) would be angry if they knew these wishes were not respected.

Majorities are confident these wishes would be followed

Most older Americans are confident family, surrogates, doctors, ERs and ICUs would respect their end-of-life choices. Even a bare majority (54%) feel confident a nursing home or assisted-living facility would honor their wishes. But facilities (like ERs or nursing homes) instill slightly



less intense confidence, as fewer than half are very confident either will honor their end-of-life wishes.

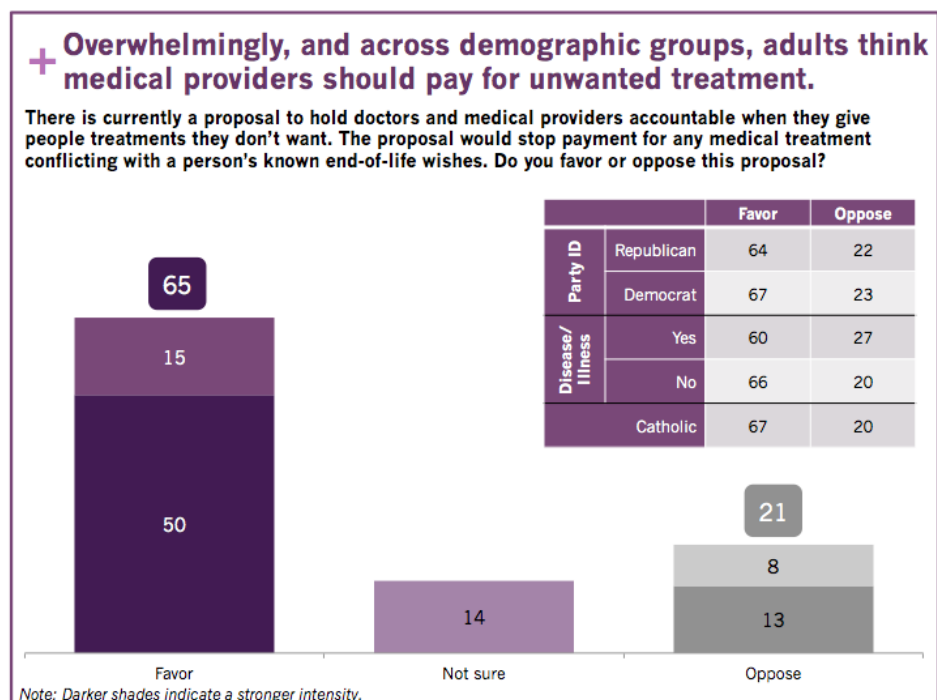
Millions of Americans report having personal experiences with unwanted or excessive medical treatment

Despite widespread trust of surrogates and doctors, a quarter of respondents say they or a family member have personally experienced either “unwanted” (12%) or “excessive” (19%) medical treatment (24% either). Extrapolating using 2012 Census totals of adults 50 and older, this translates to approximately 24.6 million Americans who say they or a family member have personally received either unwanted or excessive medical treatment.²

Respondents say doctors should be encouraged to talk about patients’ end-of-life wishes, and also held accountable for not following those wishes

Older adults want to see doctors engage patients on end-of-life choices. Two-thirds (68%) say they are very likely to speak to their primary doctor about their end-of-life wishes (16% somewhat likely). A majority (61%) feel physicians should be reimbursed for time spent on these discussions.

Large numbers also feel doctors should be held accountable for unwanted medical treatment. There is broad support (65%) for a proposal to withhold payment for unwanted medical treatment that violates a patient’s known end-of-life wishes. Support extends across every subgroup (Republican: 64%, Democrat: 67%, Currently have disease/terminal illness: 60%, No current disease/illness: 66%, Catholic: 67%).



Adults support “all of the above” solutions to avoid or react to unwanted medical treatment—including legal and political action

The majority of seniors are very willing to take independent action to avoid unwanted medical treatment. The most attractive solutions are personal ones, like writing down one’s end-of-life

+ Older adults would take a variety of actions to avoid unwanted treatment, including communicating with family and changing doctors or hospitals.

How likely would you be to take the following actions to avoid unwanted medical treatment?



choices, or talking to a doctor, or friends and family about one's choices. Most are unafraid of changing practices if unsatisfied with their treatment options.

However, older Americans are also willing to take political action. Two-thirds (66%) are likely to take political action in order to protect patients' rights to choose their end-of-life care.

Political action is actually more popular than seeking counseling or conducting online research about end-of-life options (59%, 58%, respectively).

Similarly, older Americans say they'd take a variety of actions in response to any unwanted medical treatment they might experience. Half (50%) would change doctors or medical providers. But about four in ten would "take legal action" (41%), "notify the AMA" (41%), "not pay for the treatment" (40%) or "fight the charges from the insurance company" (38%). (In this question respondents could pick as many answer categories as they liked.)

Conclusion

End-of-life wishes are extremely important to older Americans. While most are confident their doctors and families will honor their wishes, there are nonetheless likely millions who have personal experience with unwanted or excessive medical treatment. So it's no surprise there is a call to give doctors both positive and negative incentives to discuss and follow patients' choices. Older Americans are also willing to take both personal and political action to avoid and respond to unwanted medical treatment. Both the medical community and political leaders should take note.

¹ http://www.fordham.edu/Campus_Resources/enewsroom/topstories_2590.asp

² Approximately 104,310,817 Americans are 50 years of age or older, calculated using 2012 population estimates from this table: <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>.