



The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio
(AMCNO)

Health Care Reform Survey

September 2009

Prepared and compiled by:
The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio
(AMCNO)

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BACKGROUND

The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio (AMCNO) health care reform survey was conducted over a two week period in September 2009. The survey was sent out to all AMCNO members with a 5% return.

It should be noted that this survey did not contain a question regarding the issue of tort reform. There was no need to address this question since the AMCNO already had information from our membership and is on record with regard to our strong stance on this issue, noting that there is a need for additional tort reform proposals both at the state and federal levels. There is verifiable data that physicians in the Northern Ohio community are still experiencing high medical malpractice rates and higher claims filings and this issue must be addressed in any health care reform legislation under review at this time.

This survey was conducted to obtain a snapshot of the opinions of practicing physicians in the Northern Ohio area with regard to health care reform. Questions revolved around the type of insurance options to consider, Medicare and Medicaid participation decisions, utilization issues and insurance costs.

SURVEY RESPONSE OVERVIEW

Respondents overwhelmingly opposed a government run single payer system; however, there appeared to be some support for a combination of a private health plan system with a government run (but not government subsidized) option. In addition, respondents overwhelmingly favored a mandate that everyone be required to purchase catastrophic insurance coverage.

Responses were mixed on supporting a mandate requiring employers with less than 10 employees to purchase health insurance for their employees; however, there was overwhelming support for the creation of a health insurance exchange to allow the uninsured or small business employees (less than 10 employees) to purchase health insurance. Responses were also mixed on the issue of how to pay for coverage for the under-insured and uninsured.

Respondents strongly favored reforms that would prohibit health insurance companies from cancelling or denying coverage due to health status or conditions as well as showing strong support for limiting health insurance company profits and overhead to 15%.

Over 85% of the respondents indicated that they participated in Medicare with over half of those respondents indicating that Medicare rates in their specialty were poor or unsustainable. In addition, over 40% of the respondents indicated that if Medicare payments are cut by 21% (as the existing formula calls for on January 1, 2010) they would either reduce their Medicare patient load or reduce and/or eliminate seeing Medicare patients altogether.

Close to 88% of the respondents are currently taking Medicaid patients and of those over 70% noted that Medicaid rates in their specialty are poor or unsustainable. Over 35% of those respondents indicated that if Medicaid rates are cut even further they would either reduce or eliminate their Medicaid patient load.

Over 60% of the respondents agreed that physician driven over-utilization of services is part of the cost problem with over 87% of the respondents noting that patient driven demand is another part of the cost problem in American health care.

An overwhelming percentage of respondents believe that physicians practicing defensive medicine is a cost problem in American health care. This response, coupled with the need for medical liability data noted above illustrates a definitive need for the inclusion of tort reform as a part of the health care reform legislation.

In response to a final question, over 70% of the respondents believe that cost shifting (defined as charging insured or private pay patients more to compensate for uninsured or underinsured patients) is part of the cost problem in American health care.

AMCNO Health Care Reform Survey Results

1. Are you a member of the AMCNO?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	86.3%
No	13.7%

2. What is your gender?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Male	70.6%
Female	29.4%

3. How long have you been in active practice?

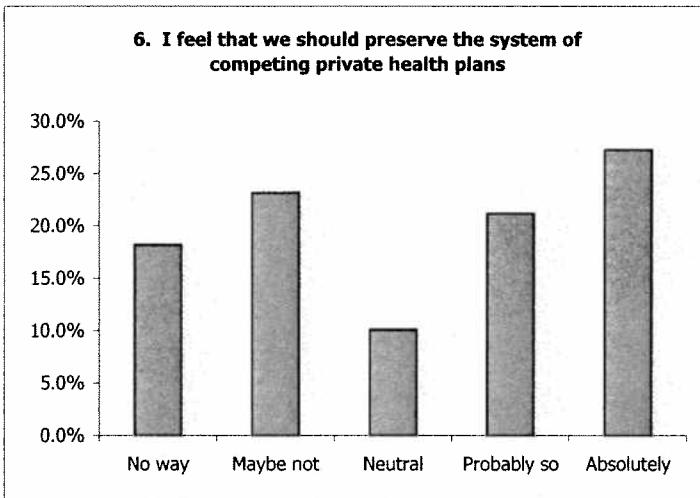
Answer Options	Response Percent
less than 5 years	12.7%
6 to 20 years	38.2%
more than 20 years	49.0%

4. Please select your mode of practice

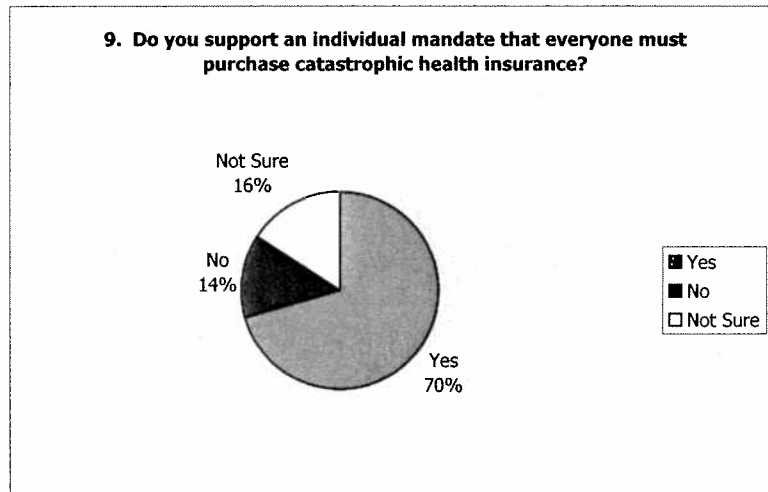
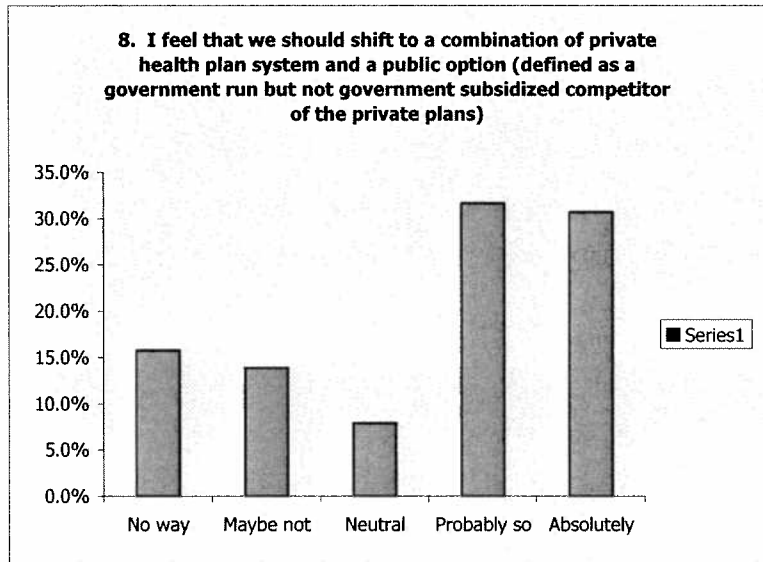
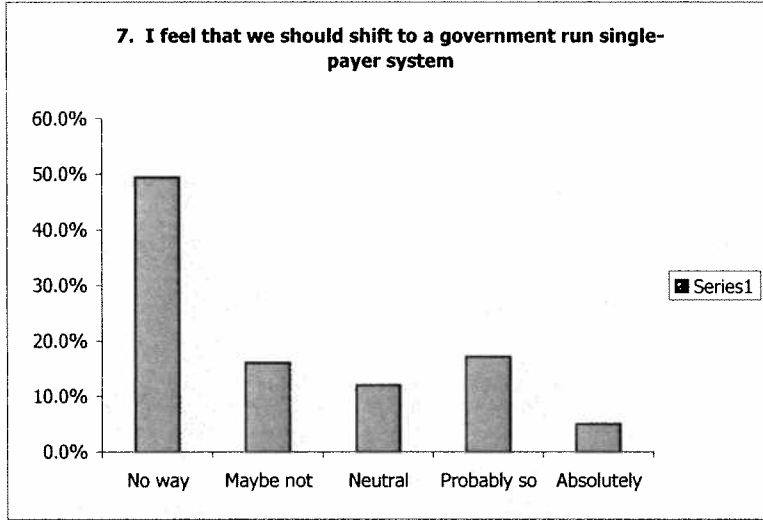
Answer Options	Response Percent
Solo or very small group (under 5 physicians)	21.8%
Small Group Practice (6 - 25 physicians)	24.8%
Medium Group Practice (26 - 150)	5.0%
Large Group Practice (> 150)	33.7%
Community Clinic	0.0%
Other (please specify)	14.9%

5. I am a:

Answer Options	Response Percent
Primary Care Physician (Family Medicine, Internal OBGYN)	25.7%
Specialist	4.0%
Emergency Room Physician	51.5%
Hospital Based Physician (hospitalist, anesthesia, Other (please specify)	3.0%
	15.8%

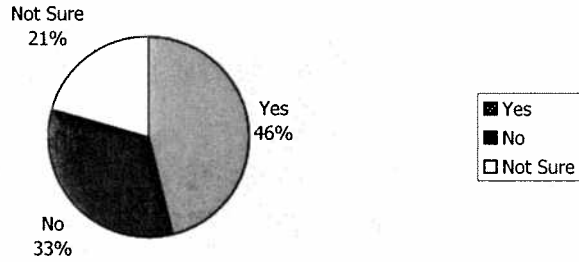


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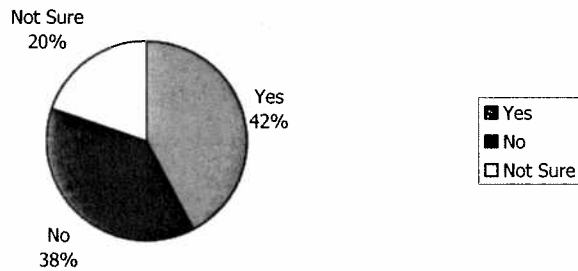


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10. Do you support an individual mandate that everyone must purchase comprehensive health insurance?



11. Do you support a mandate that employers (>10 employees) purchase health insurance for their employees?



12. Do you support the creation of a health insurance exchange

Answer Options

**Response
Percent**

Yes

82.4%

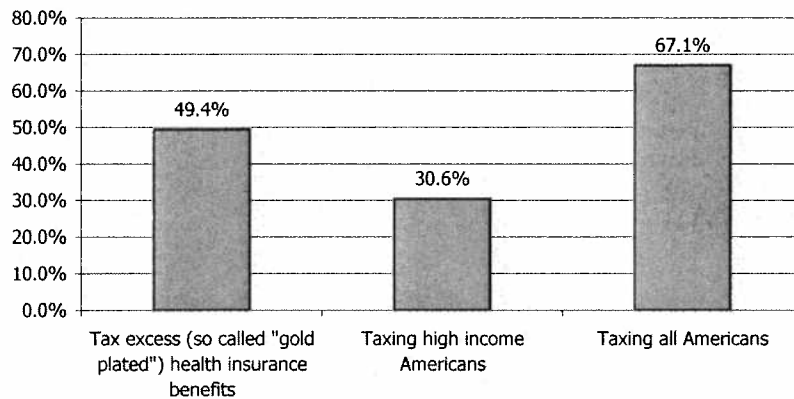
No

2.9%

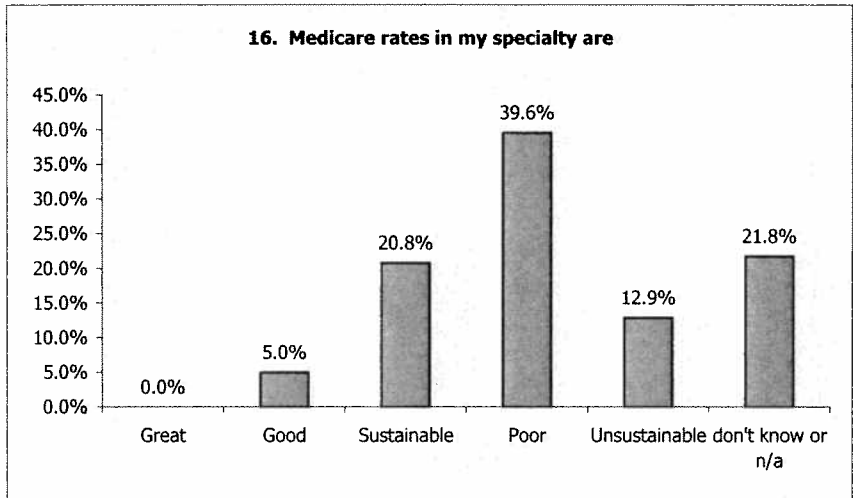
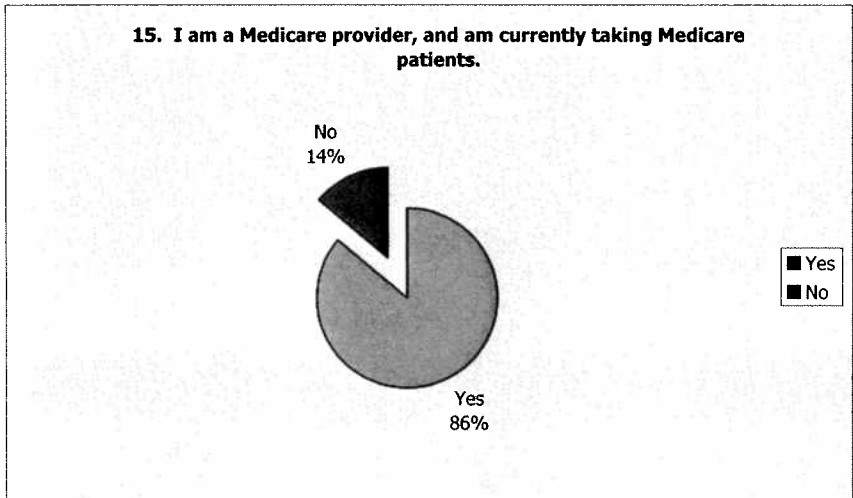
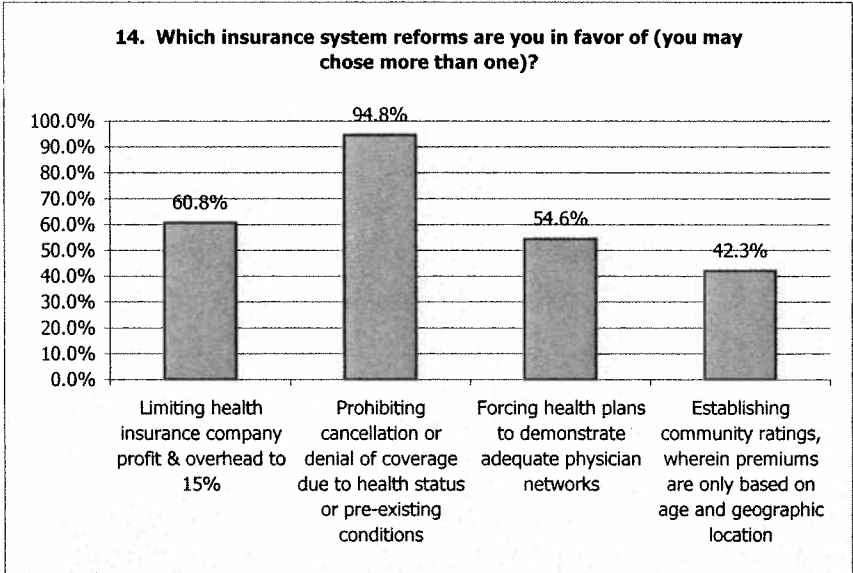
Not Sure

14.7%

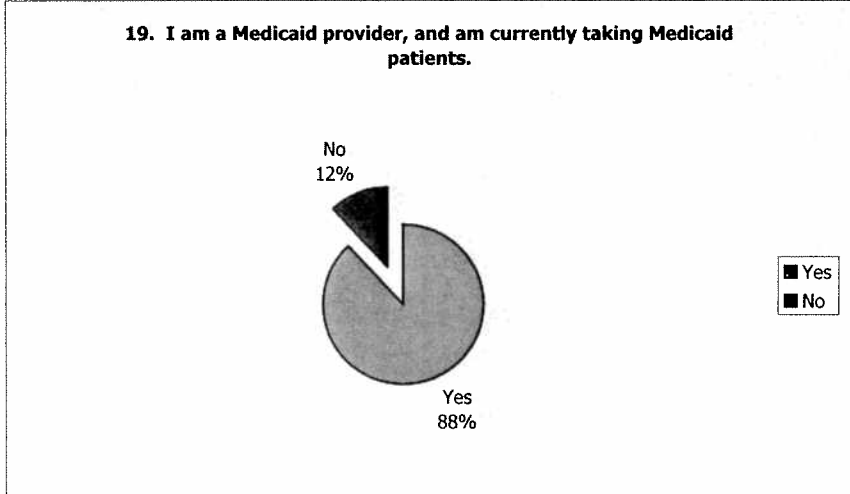
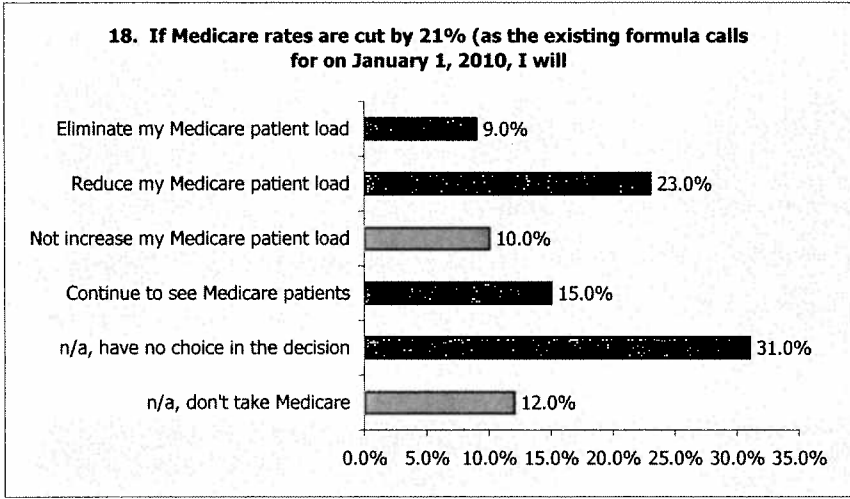
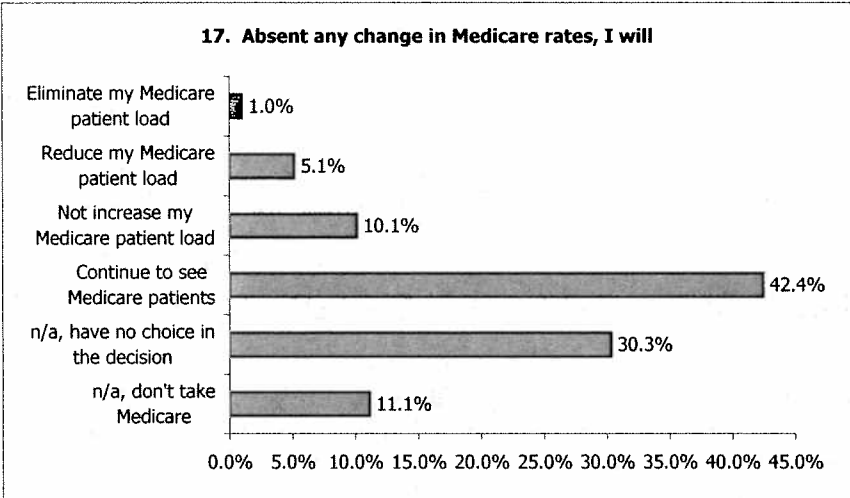
13. The cost of increasing coverage for the under-insured and un-insured should be paid for as follows (you may choose more than one)



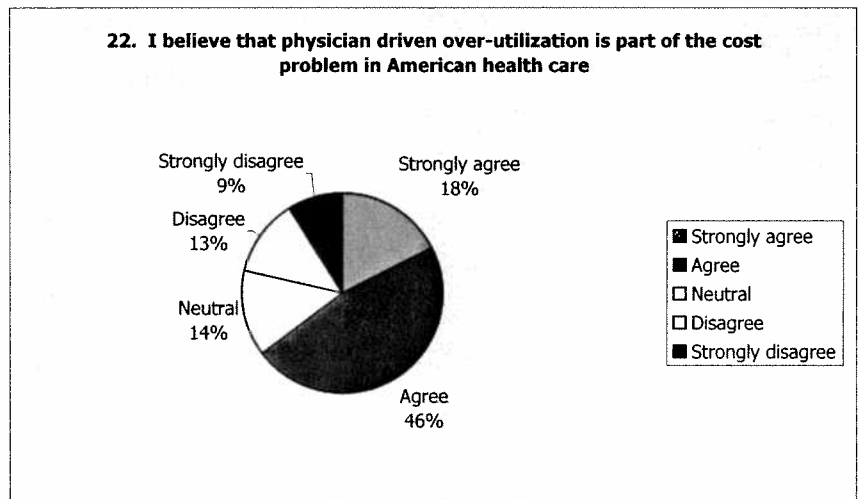
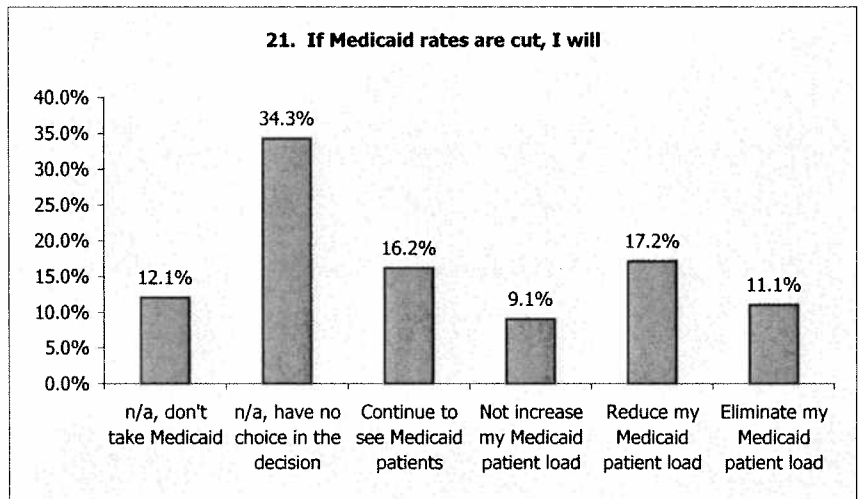
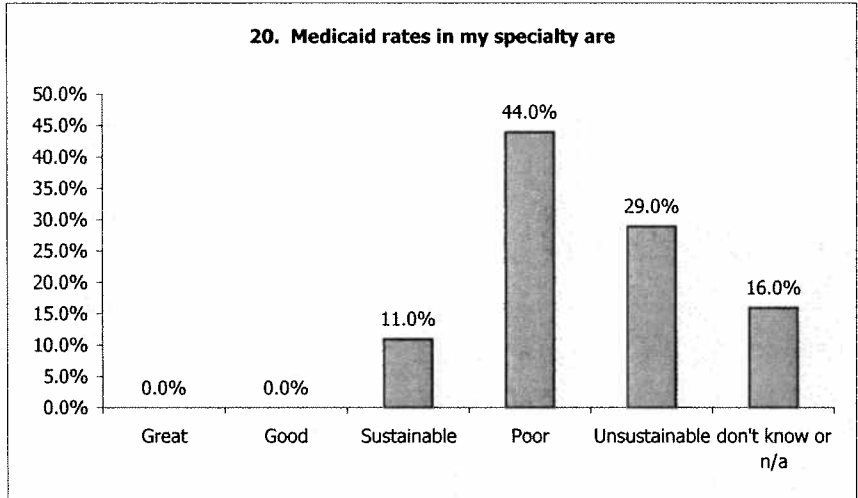
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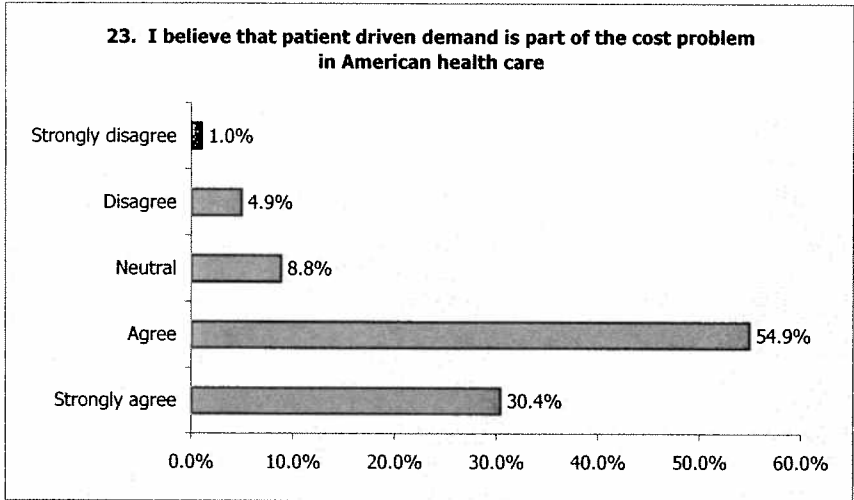
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24. I believe that physicians practicing defensive medicine is part of the cost problem in American health care

Answer Options

Response Percent

Strongly agree	44.6%
Agree	52.5%
Neutral	1.0%
Disagree	1.0%
Strongly disagree	1.0%

