



Seniors' Opinions About Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

9th Year Update

July 2014



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Method

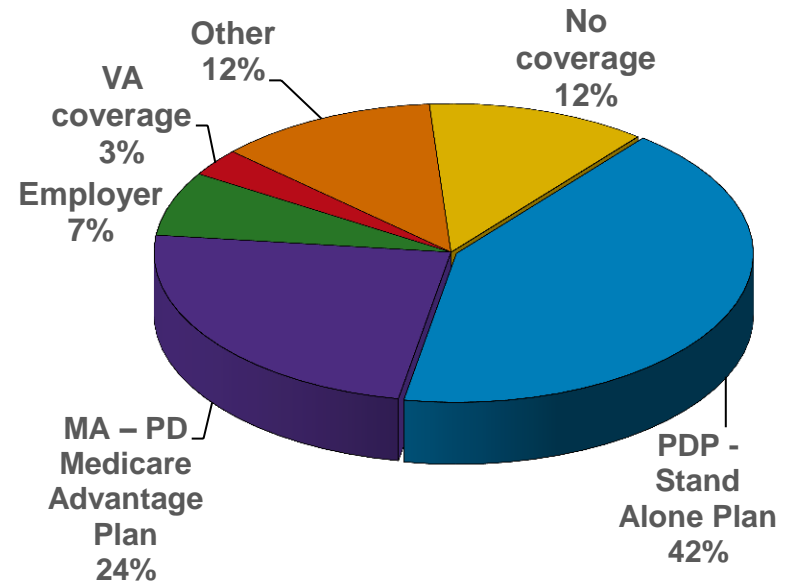
Method

Nationally representative landline telephone sample of 1,619 seniors 65+ conducted June 25–July 6, 2014. The margin of error for the full sample is ± 2.4 percentage points (pps). The primary focus of this report is **seniors with Medicare Part D**.

Seniors

- **All with prescription drug coverage** (N=1,433 MOE is ± 2.6 pps.)
- **All with Medicare Part D coverage (both PDP and MA-PD plans)** (N=601 MOE is ± 4.0 pps.)
- **Medicare PDP (stand-alone) plans**
 - (N=305 MOE is ± 5.6 pps.)
- **Medicare Advantage (MA-PD) plans**
 - (N=296 MOE is ± 5.7 pps.)
- **Low income <\$15K** (N=231 MOE is ± 7.2 pps.)
- **Take 6+ prescriptions** (N=198 MOE is ± 7.0 pps.)
- **Have a disability** (N=175 MOE is ± 7.4 pps.)
- **Dual eligibility** (N=90 MOE is ± 10.3 pps.)
- **Chronic condition** (N=430 MOE is ± 4.7 pps.)

Seniors with Medicare



Medicare Part D – 66%

Method

Tracking is based on identical questions asked 12 times since the program was launched in 2006.

	Mar. 2006	Sept. 2006	Jan. 2007	Sept. 2007	Sept. 2008	Mar. 2009	Oct. 2009	Aug. 2010	Oct. 2011	Sept. 2012	Aug. 2013	July 2014	
Interview dates	Mar. 15 to 20	Sept. 1 to 7	Jan. 5 to 9	Sept. 8 to 16	Sept. 16 to 22	Mar. 19 to 25	Oct. 16 to 25	Aug. 26 to 29	Oct. 3 to 6	Aug. 31 to Sept. 10	July 22 to Aug. 4	Jun. 25 to July 6	
Source and Sample	KRC Research												
Sample	Seniors 65 and older enrolled in Medicare												
# of interviews	896	802	1,003	1,001	1,007	1,063	945	1,243	992	2,363	2,274	1,619	
MOE total sample (pps)	±3.3	±3.5	±3.1	±3.1	±3.1	±3	±3.2	±2.8	±3.1	±2.0	±2.1	±2.4	
Key questions	Experience of seniors enrolled in a Medicare drug plan Opinions and information needs of those not enrolled	Satisfaction of enrollees Aware of upcoming enrollment period and coverage gap Likelihood to change plans	Satisfaction of enrollees Attitudes and outcomes from the second enrollment period	Satisfaction of enrollees Aware of low-income subsidy Likelihood to change plans	Satisfaction of enrollees Advice to other seniors Likelihood to change plans	Satisfaction of enrollees Rating of benefit features	Satisfaction of enrollees Aware of coverage gap Opinions of coverage gap proposal	Satisfaction of enrollees Aware of and opinions about coverage gap Intent to compare plans during annual enrollment	Satisfaction of enrollees and reasons Rating of benefit features Intent to compare plans Recent news about Medicare drug benefits	Satisfaction of enrollees and reasons Rating of benefit features Intent to compare plans Recent news about Medicare drug benefits	Satisfaction of enrollees and reasons Rating of benefit features Intent to compare plans Important information for comparing plans	Satisfaction of enrollees and reasons Rating of benefit features Intent to compare plans Important information for comparing plans	Satisfaction of enrollees and reasons Rating of benefit features Intent to compare plans Important information for comparing plans

Snapshot of our Sample of Seniors with Medicare Part D Plans

Percentages

Gender	Male	44	Population Density	Large City	17
	Female	56		Suburban Area	22
Region	Northeast	18		Small Town	34
	South	35		Rural Area	25
	Midwest	25	Take prescriptions daily	89	
	West	21	Spend over \$30 p/month on premium	38	
Race/ Ethnicity	Caucasian	82	Other	Spend over \$50 p/month out-of-pocket	34
	African American	9		Have difficulty paying for prescriptions	13
	Asian/Pacific Islander	1		Have disability	29
	American Indian/Native	2		Have chronic condition	72
	Hispanic/Latino	7		Take more than 10 scripts	9
Age	65-74	50			
	75+	50			



Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Medicare Part D continues to deliver on its promise, according to 89% of seniors with plans.

- Most seniors (86%) are satisfied with their Medicare prescription drug plans because most of their prescription needs are met.
 - Satisfaction crosses all demographic groups and political party lines.
 - Main reasons: cost is reasonable, coverage is good, plans are hassle free.
- Nearly all who use their drug plans say they work well (95%).
- Medicare plans are saving seniors money.
 - 90% agree that without their Part D coverage, their costs would be much higher—80% strongly agree.
- Medicare plans are helping seniors maintain their health.
 - Without their Part D plan, 67% would be unable to fill all their prescriptions and 62% would be more likely to cut back or stop taking their medicine.
- Medicare plans are giving seniors peace of mind.
 - 95% feel peace of mind knowing they're covered—71% a great deal.
- Seniors highly recommend Medicare drug plans to their peers (90%).

Executive Summary

Seniors are savvy about the Part D program. Forty-one percent plan to shop around for plans during open enrollment this year, up from 35% last year.

- Seniors who shop around for plans are looking at costs, coverage, pharmacy availability, and information about the quality of the plan.
 - 31% of those *without drug coverage* expect to shop for a plan this year, but most without coverage say they don't need one because they don't use any or many prescriptions.
- Since they enrolled, 42% say they have shopped around. Nearly 4 in 10 have switched plans—most who switched (81%) said it wasn't difficult to do.
 - Reasons for switching: found a lower-cost plan (47%), got better coverage (31%).
- Seniors value having a variety of plans to compare and choose. Most find the idea of fewer plan choices concerning.
- Seniors get most information from plan providers, Medicare, or a pharmacist.
 - 63% are aware of extra financial help from Medicare. However, most seniors have not heard about Medicare's Plan Finder (71%) or its plan quality ratings (72%), and 62% do not know they can get help from SHIP counselors.



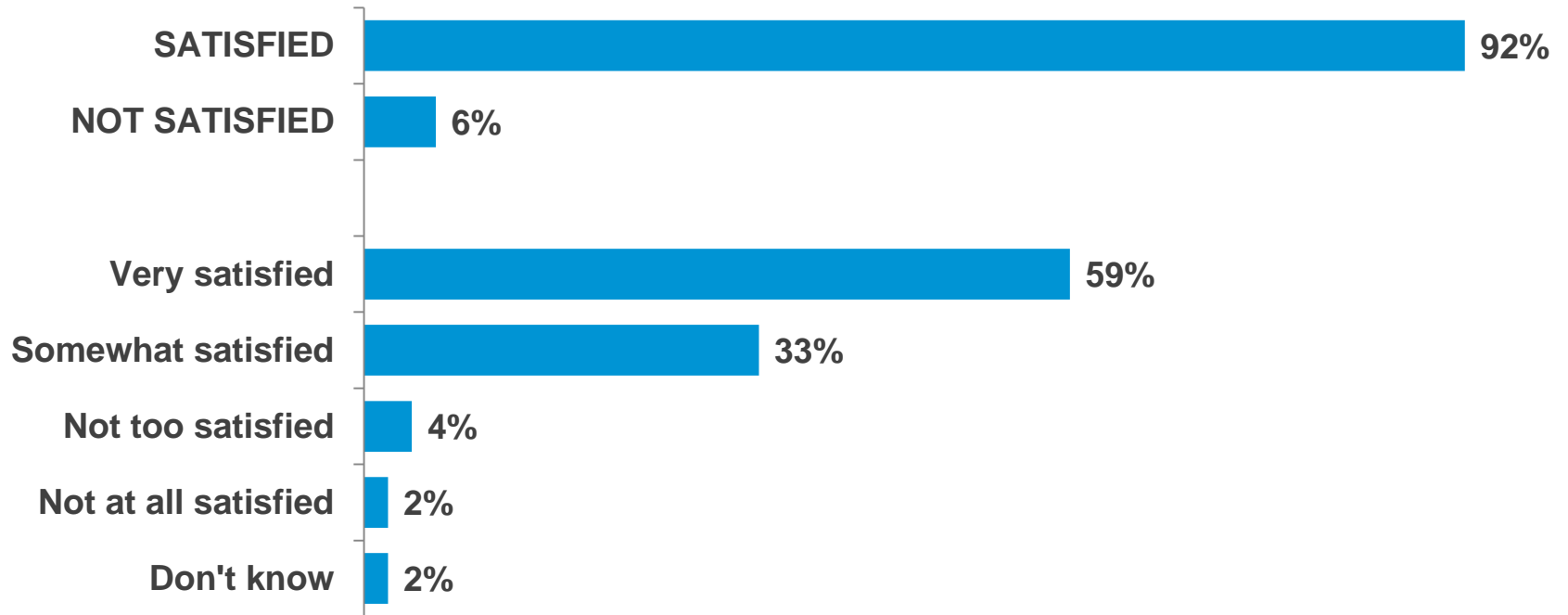
Detailed Findings

Satisfaction with Medicare

Nearly all seniors continue to be satisfied with Medicare.

Over 90% of seniors are satisfied with Medicare, with 6 in 10 very satisfied.

Satisfaction with Medicare



Overall, how satisfied are you with your Medicare health care coverage these days?

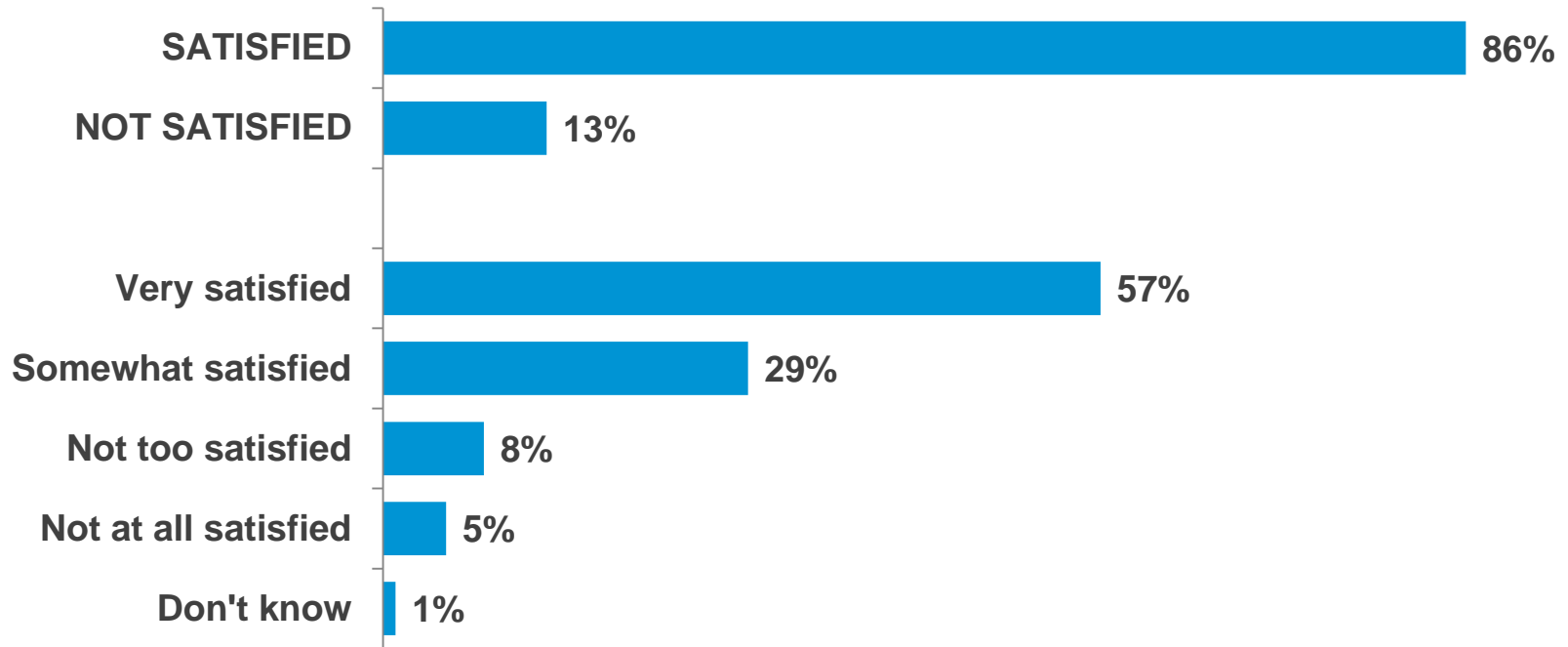
Base: (N=1,619) Total Seniors 65+ with Medicare

Satisfaction with Medicare Part D

Seniors are also satisfied with their prescription drug plans.

86% of seniors are satisfied with Medicare Part D—57% are very satisfied.

Satisfaction with Medicare Prescription Plans

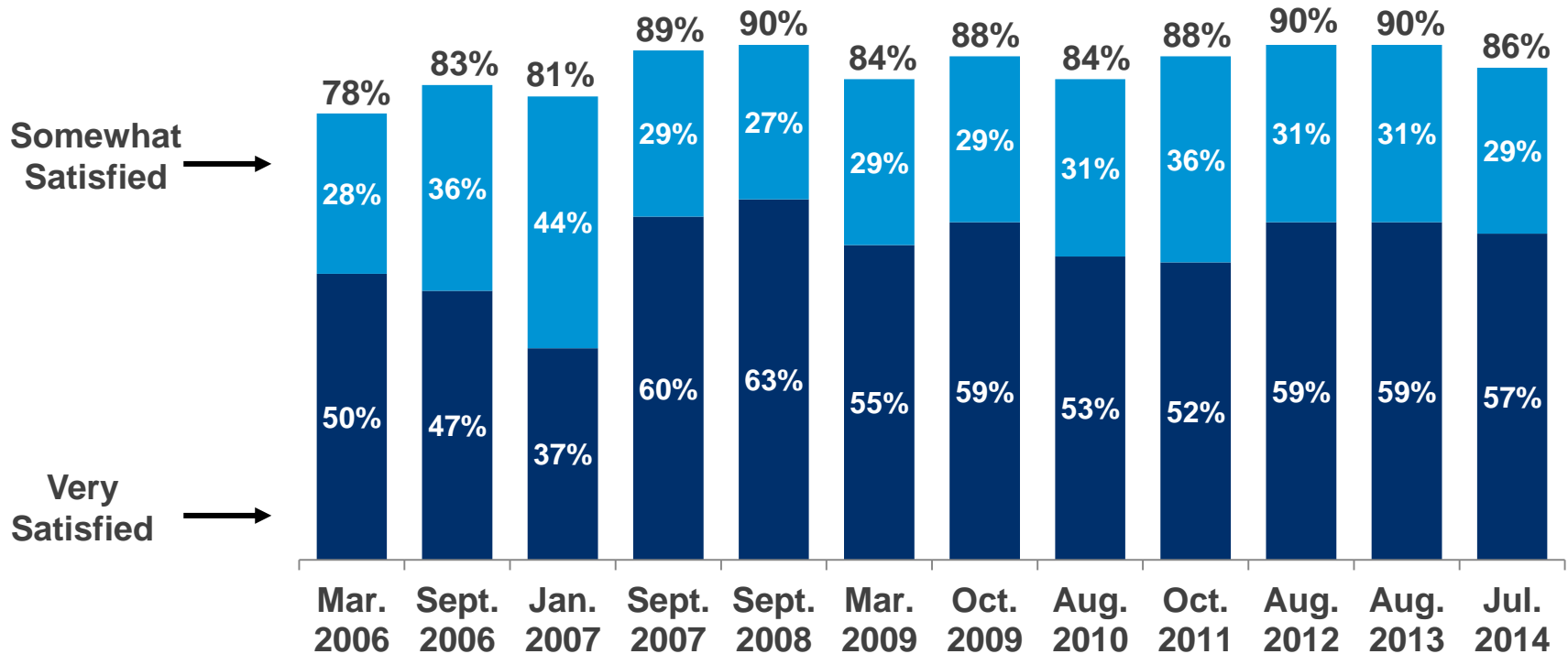


Overall, how satisfied are you with your prescription drug coverage?

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Plan satisfaction has remained at peak levels for many years.

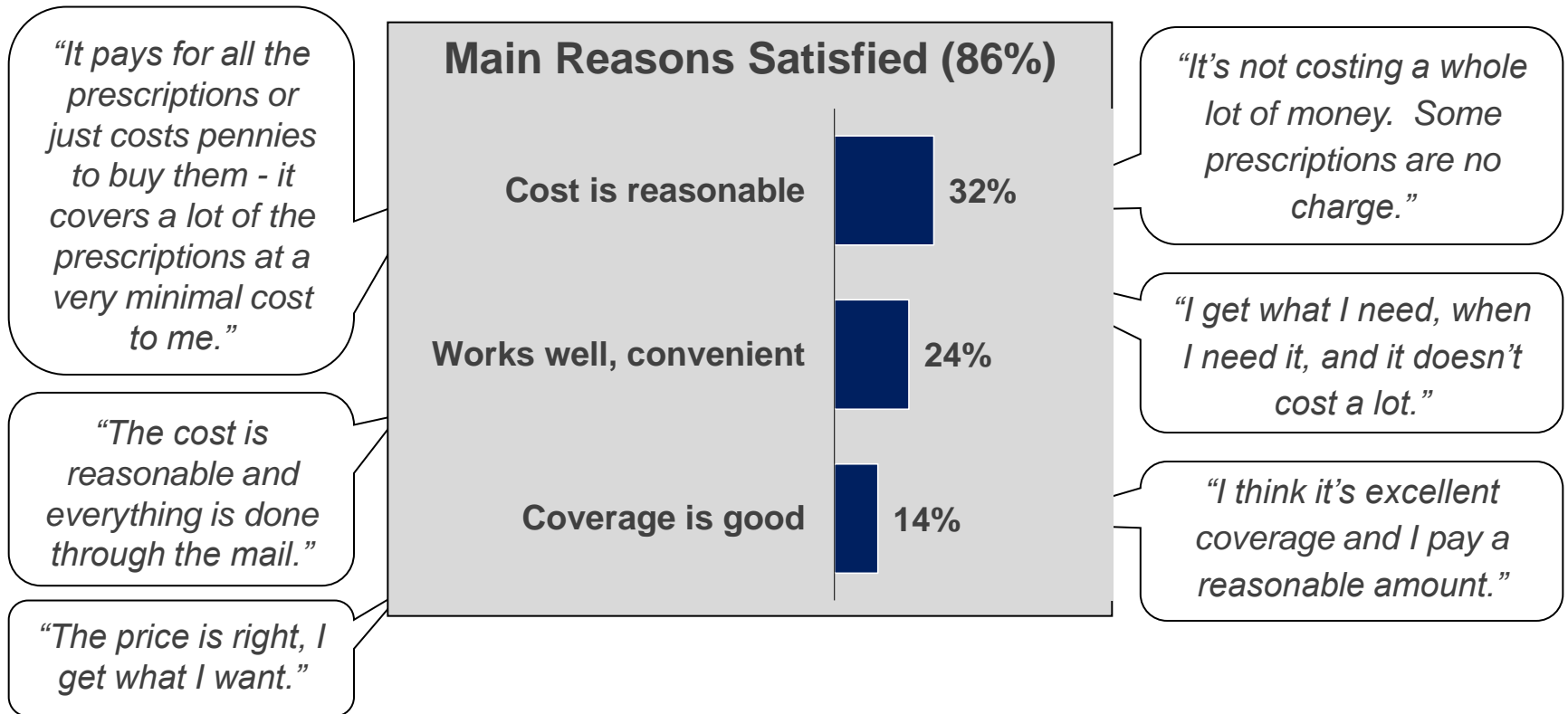
The average level of satisfaction since the program started is 86%, with the peak at 90% and the low at 78%.



Overall, how satisfied are you with your prescription drug coverage?

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

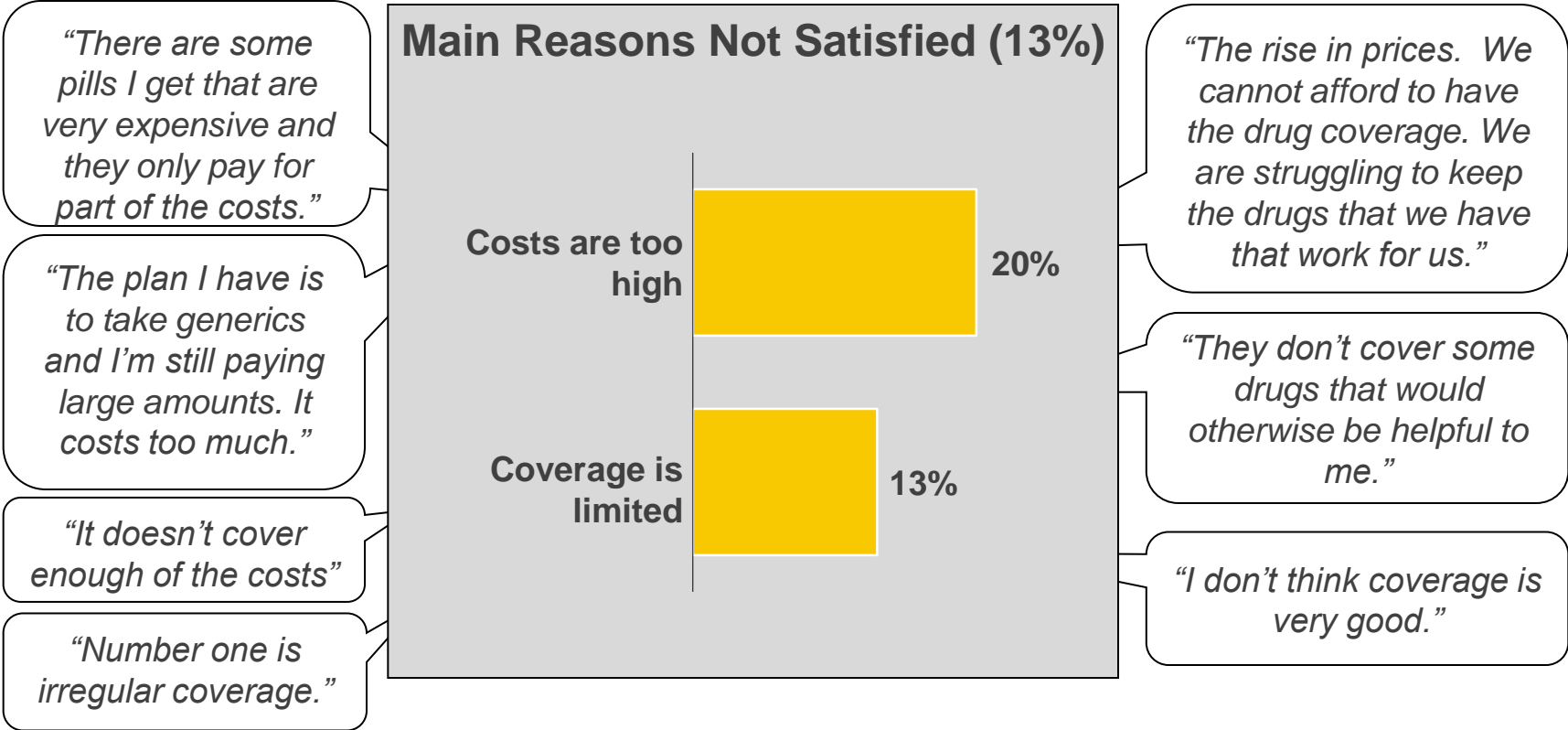
Reasonable cost is the primary reason seniors are satisfied with Medicare prescription drug coverage (unaided).



What are the main reasons you’re satisfied? – Asked of those who were satisfied

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

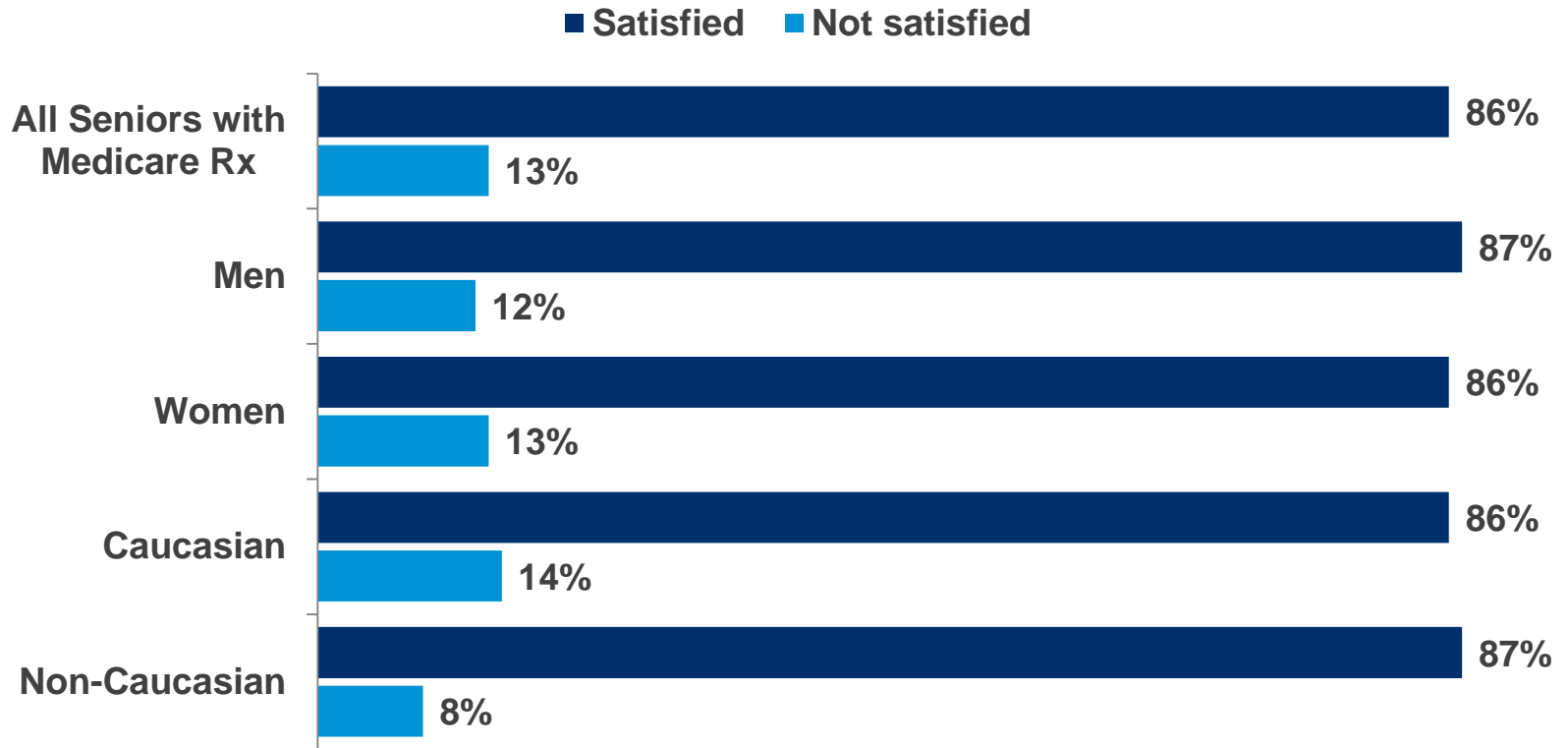
Those who are not satisfied (13%) most often say their costs are too high or their coverage is too limited (unaided).



What are the main reasons you're not satisfied? - Asked of those who were not satisfied

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Satisfaction is high across demographic groups.

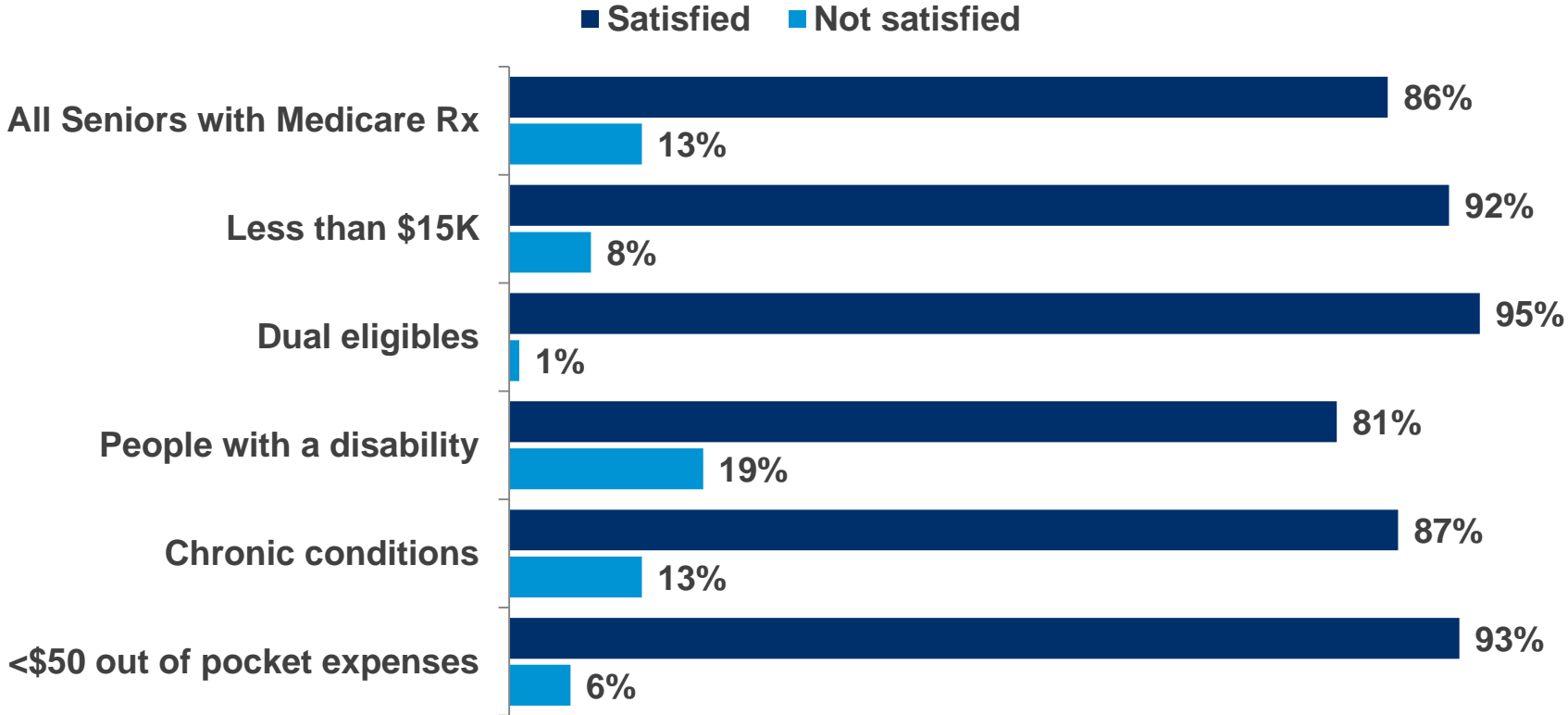


Overall, how satisfied are you with your prescription drug coverage?

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

The vast majority of beneficiaries with low incomes, dual-eligibles, and people living with a disability are satisfied.

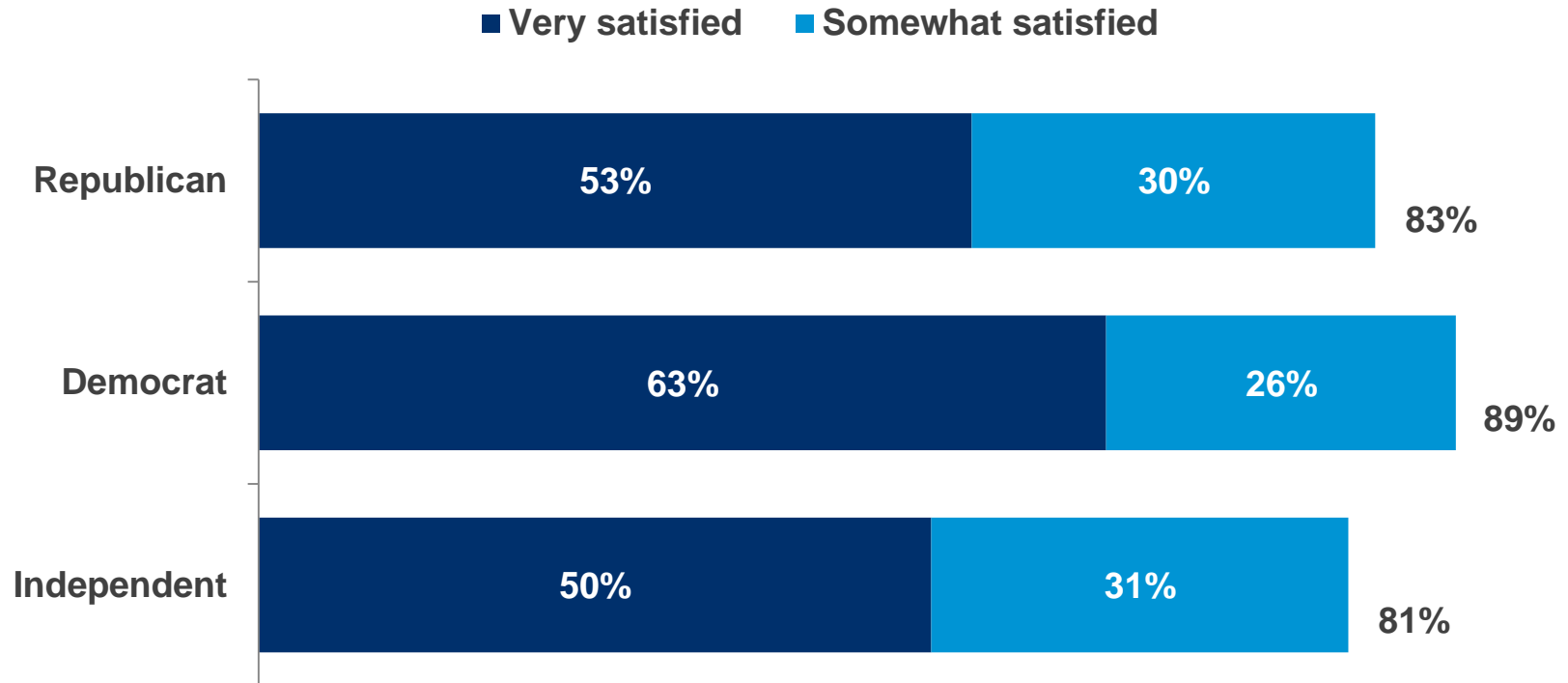
Dual eligibles express the highest levels of satisfaction.



Overall, how satisfied are you with your prescription drug coverage?

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

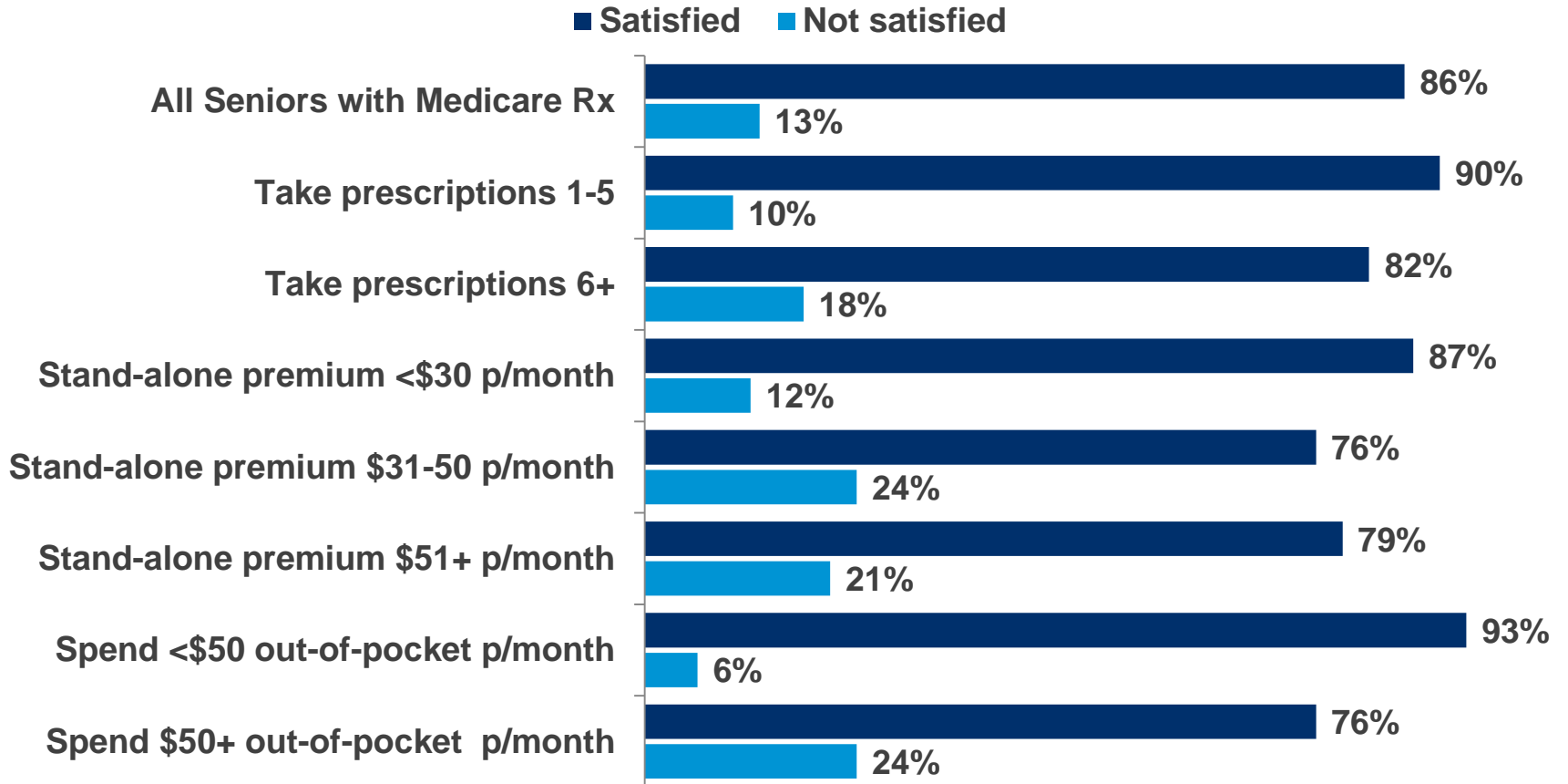
Plan Satisfaction crosses political parties.



Overall, how satisfied are you with your prescription drug coverage? Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or something else? [If independent, other, or don't know] Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Those with low monthly costs and those who take 5 or fewer prescriptions are the most satisfied.



Overall, how satisfied are you with your prescription drug coverage?

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

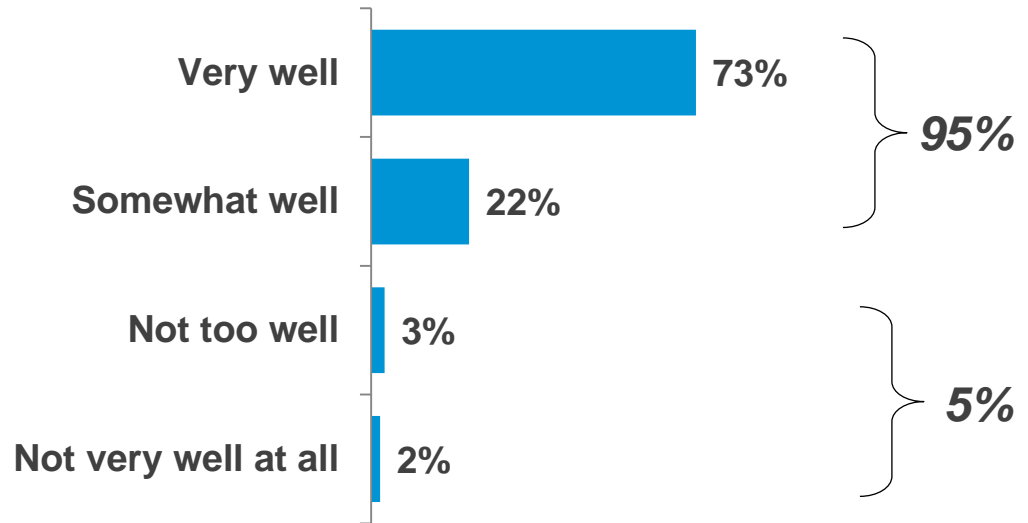
Nearly all (95%) say their plans work well—over 7 in 10 say they work very well.

More than 7 in 10 say their plans work very well.

86%

received medicines through their Medicare prescription drug plans.

How Well Prescription Drug Plan Has Worked For Those Who Received Medicines

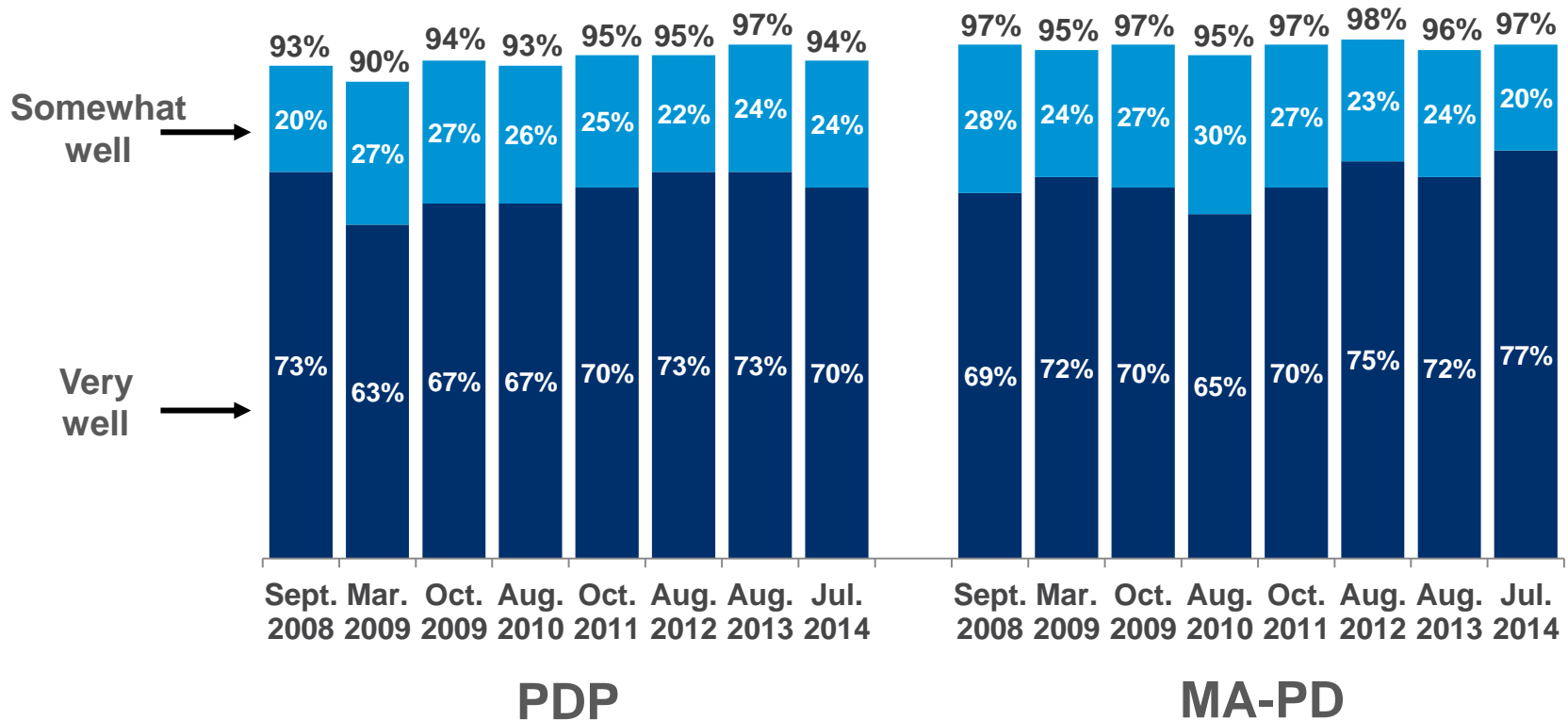


IF RECEIVED MEDICINES THROUGH PLAN : And how well has your prescription drug plan worked for you—has it worked very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not very well at all?

Base (N=523): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Both PDP and MA-PD plans perform at high levels.

How Well Prescription Plans Work

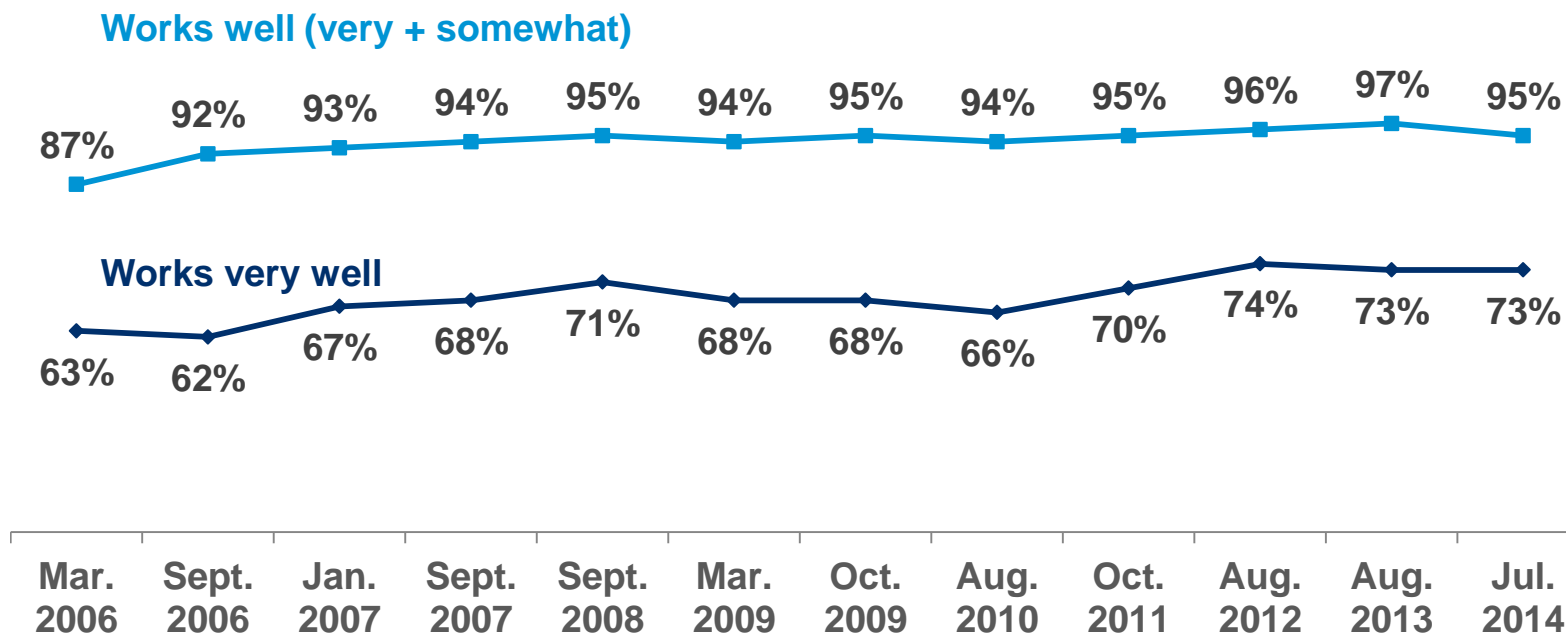


IF RECEIVED MEDICINES THROUGH PLAN : How well has your prescription drug plan worked for you?

Base (N=523): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Prescription plans have been working very well for many years.

How Well Prescription Plans Work

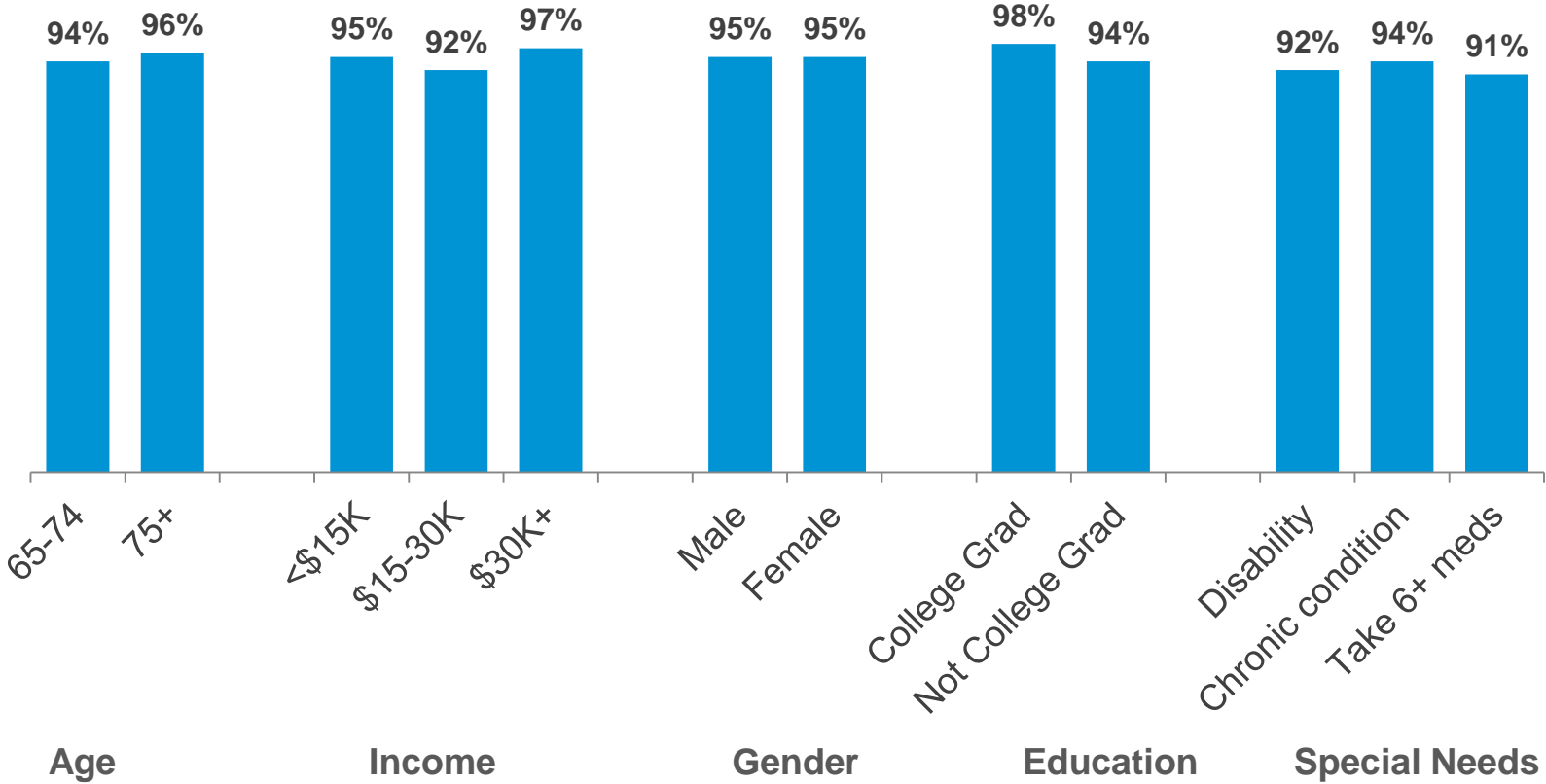


IF RECEIVED MEDICINES THROUGH PLAN : How well has your prescription drug plan worked for you?

Base (N=523): Medicare drug plan enrollees who received medicines through plan

All demographic and special needs groups agree their Medicare drug plans work well.

How Well Prescription Plans Work

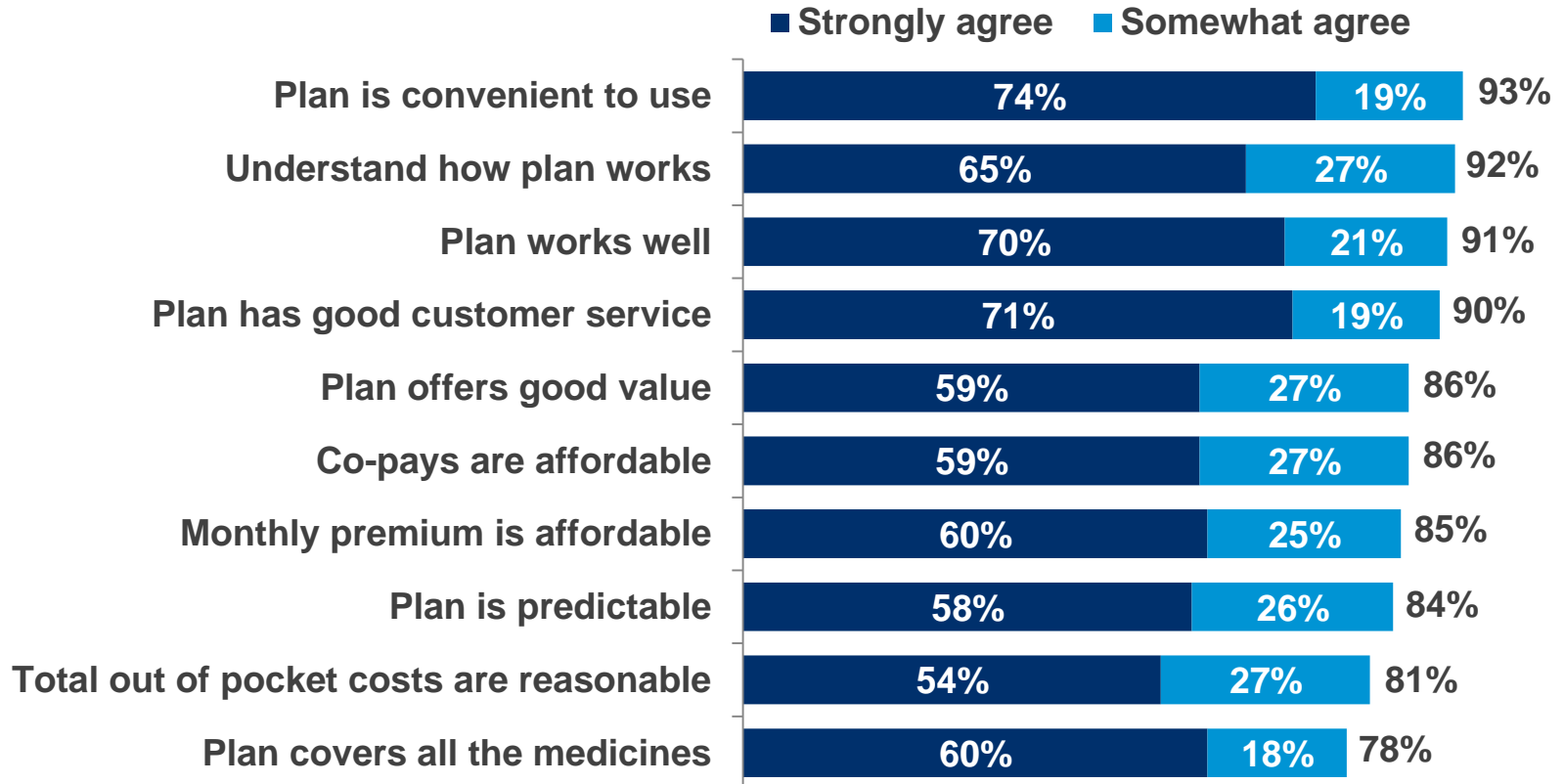


IF RECEIVED MEDICINES THROUGH PLAN : How well has your prescription drug plan worked for you?

Base(N=523) : Medicare drug plan enrollees who received medicines through plan

The large majority say their plans offer good value, affordable premiums and co-pays, and cover their medicines.

Dimensions of Plan Satisfaction

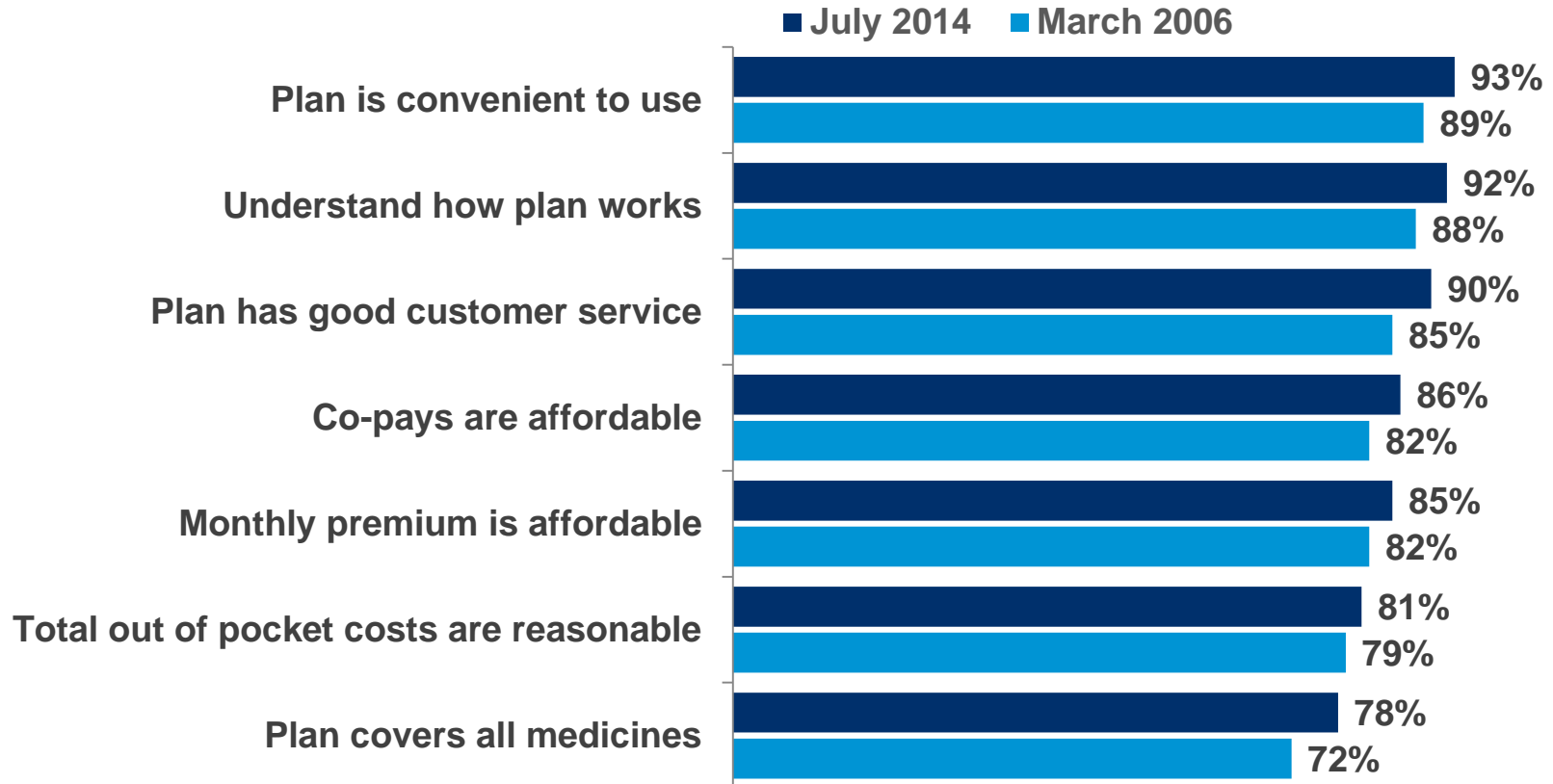


I'm going to read you some statements that may or may not describe your opinions about your prescription drug plan. For each one, tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

All dimensions of satisfaction have consistently received high ratings since the program started.

Dimensions of Plan Satisfaction: Percent Agree

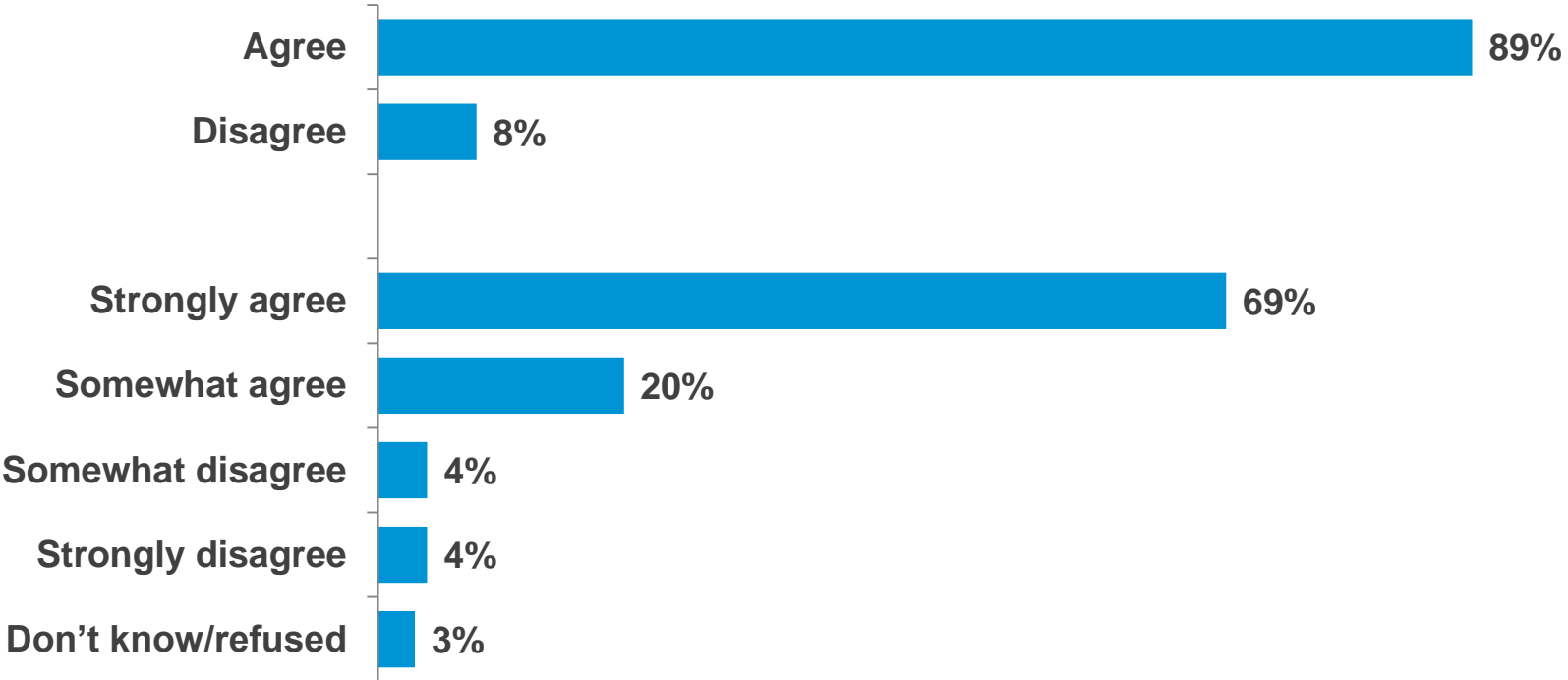


I'm going to read you some statements that may or may not describe your opinions about your prescription drug plan. For each one, tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. If any statement does not apply to your situation, just say so.

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

9 in 10 say Medicare drug plans are delivering on their promise.

“My Medicare drug plan is delivering what it said it would when I enrolled”

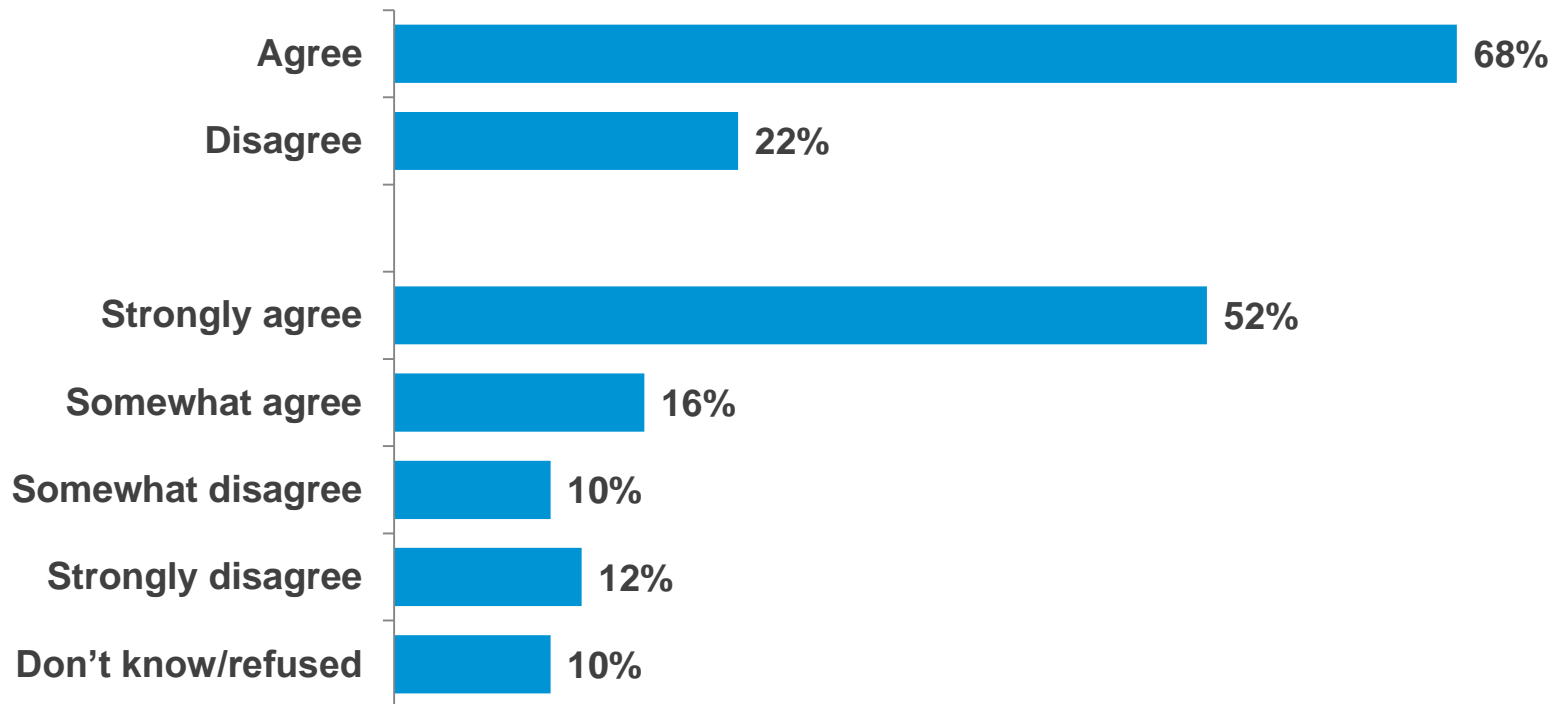


I'm going to read you some statements to hear how you feel about having Medicare prescription drug coverage. For each one, think about your situation before you had Medicare prescription drug coverage and tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Nearly 7 in 10 agree they are better off with a Medicare prescription drug plan than before they had one.

“Overall, I am better off now than before I had Medicare prescription drug coverage”

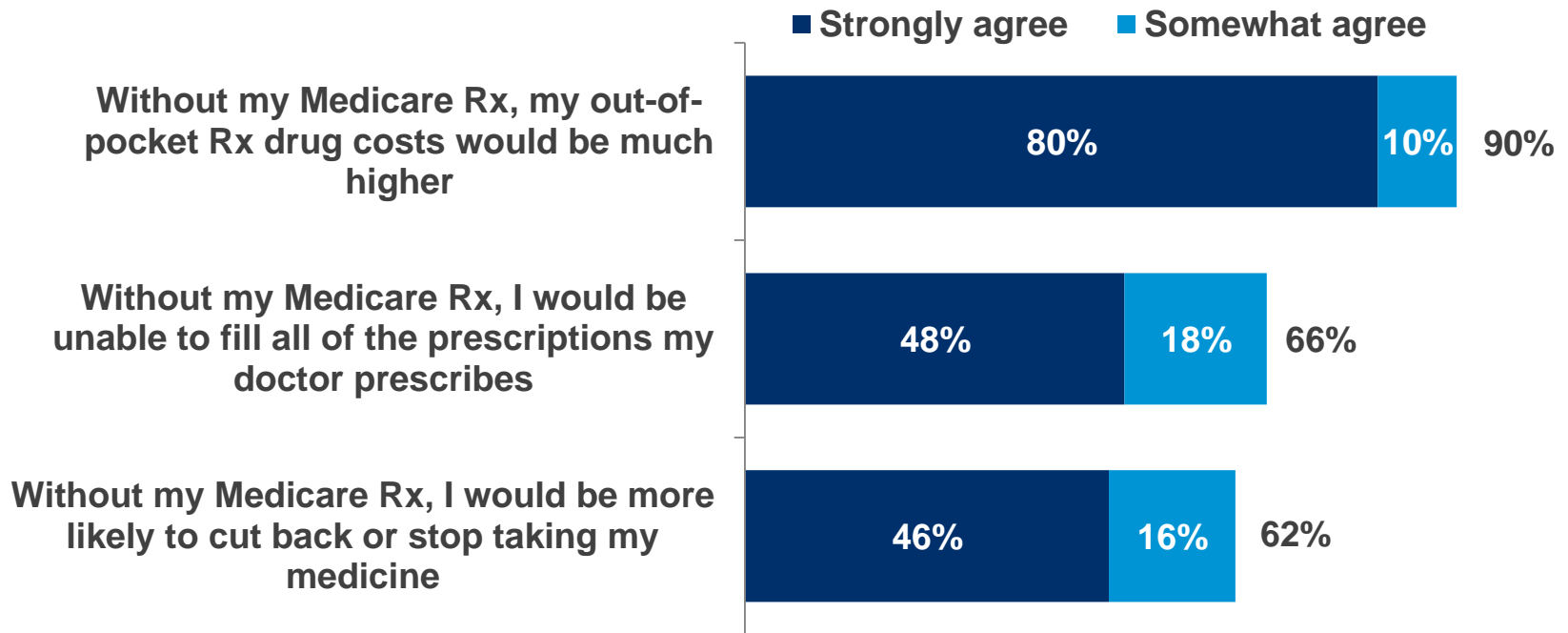


I'm going to read you some statements to hear how you feel about having Medicare prescription drug coverage. For each one, think about your situation before you had Medicare prescription drug coverage and tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Most seniors with prescription drug plans are enjoying health and financial benefits.

9 in 10 say without Medicare drug coverage their costs would be much higher. Without Medicare drug coverage, 6 in 10 say they would face difficulties getting prescriptions—and would be likely to cut back or stop taking their doctor-prescribed medicine.



I'm going to read you some statements to hear how you feel about having Medicare prescription drug coverage. For each one, think about your situation before you had Medicare prescription drug coverage and tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Most seniors with prescription drug plans are enjoying emotional benefits of having coverage that works for them.

Those Saying “A great deal” or “Some”

	Mar. 2006	Sept. 2006	Jan. 2007	Sept. 2007	Sept. 2008	Mar. 2009	Oct. 2009	Aug. 2010	Oct. 2011	Aug. 2012	Aug. 2013	July 2014
Feel fortunate that I'm covered	N/A	N/A	N/A	96	97	93	95	94	95	95	97	95
Feel peace of mind	78	82	83	94	97	91	93	94	95	94	96	95
Feel frustrated with my coverage	33	35	35	28	22	26	30	27	32	24	26	27
Feel nervous about my coverage	28	26	25	19	23	23	27	27	25	25	24	23

I'm going to read a list of words that may or may not describe how you're feeling about your prescription drug coverage these days. For each one, tell me if that describes how you're feeling a great deal, some, or not at all

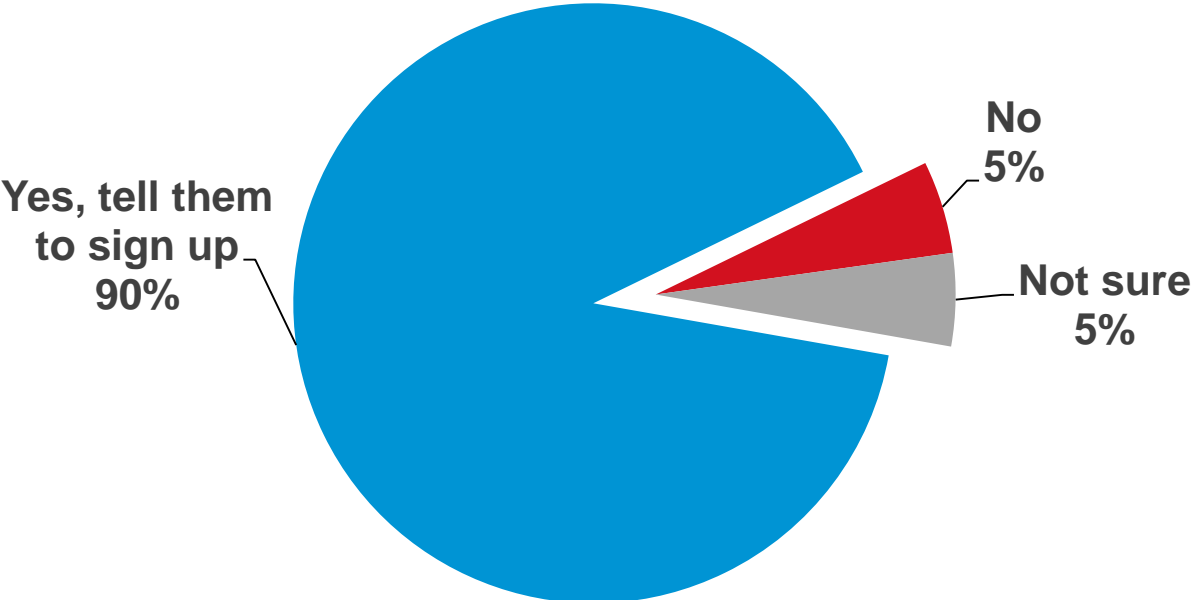
Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)



2015 Open Enrollment

9 in 10 enrollees would recommend Medicare drug coverage to their peers.

“Would you tell someone considering Medicare prescription drug coverage to sign up, or not?”

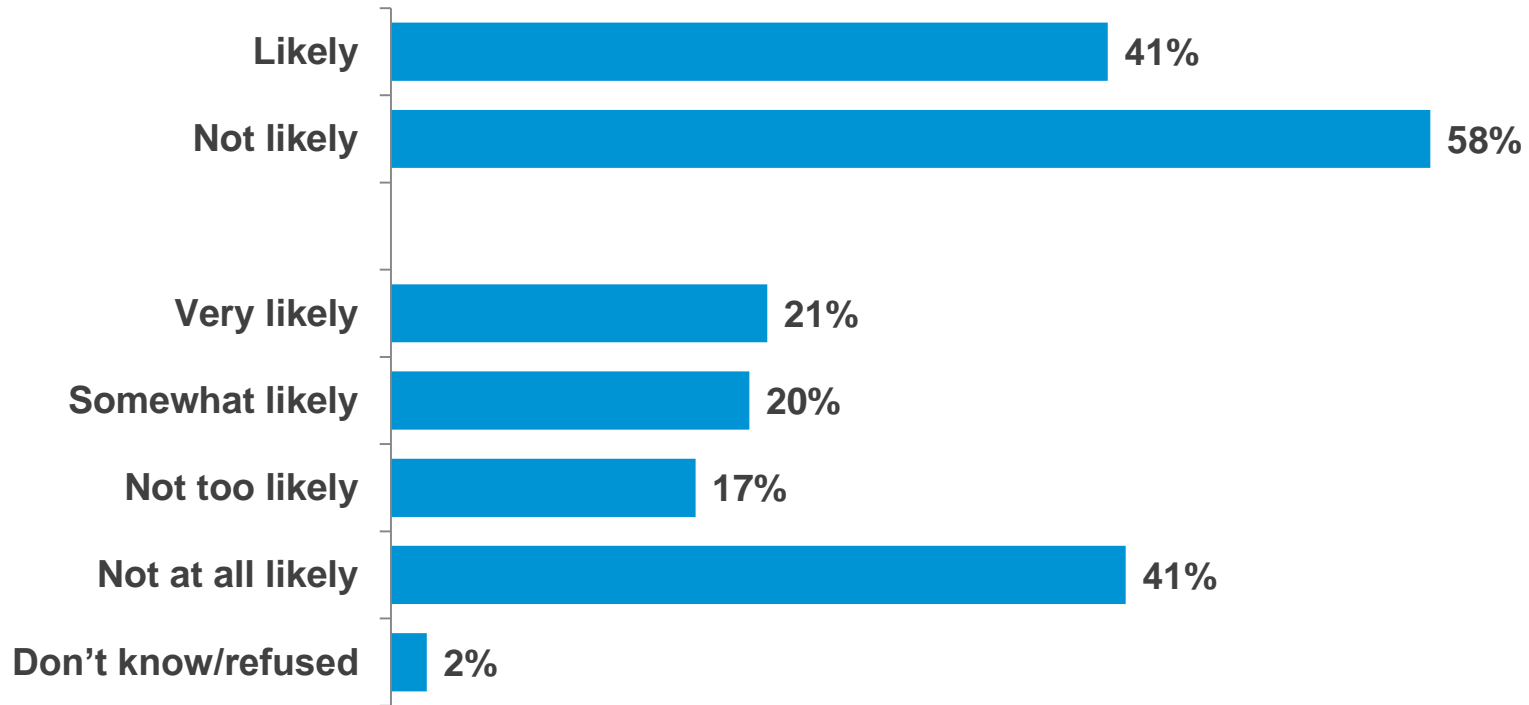


If you were giving advice to someone who is considering enrolling in Medicare for the first time, would you tell them to sign up for a Medicare prescription drug plan, or not?

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Overall, 41% are likely to shop around during this year's Open Enrollment—up 6 points from last year.

Likelihood to Shop & Compare Plans



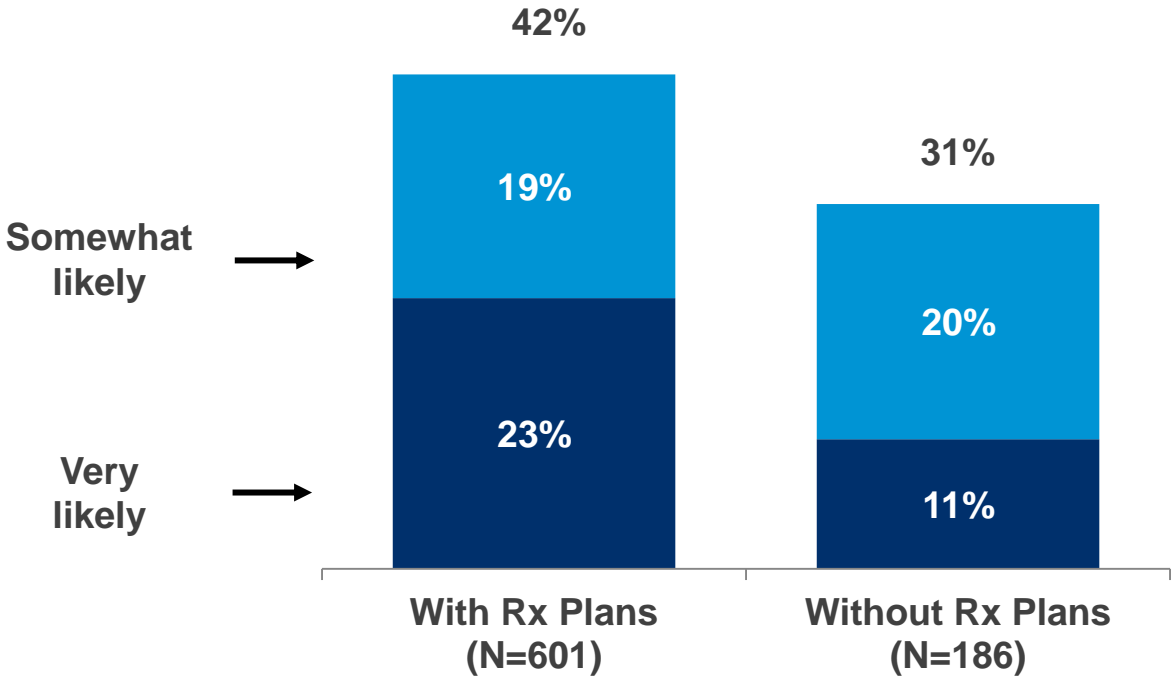
This year, open enrollment is from October 15th to December 7th. How likely are you to shop around and compare Medicare health or prescription drug plans this year—very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?

Base(N=787): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage) and those who have no drug coverage

Those already enrolled in a Medicare drug plan are more likely to shop around than those without drug coverage.

42% of people with plans are likely to shop this year—up 7 points from last year.

Likelihood to Shop & Compare Plans

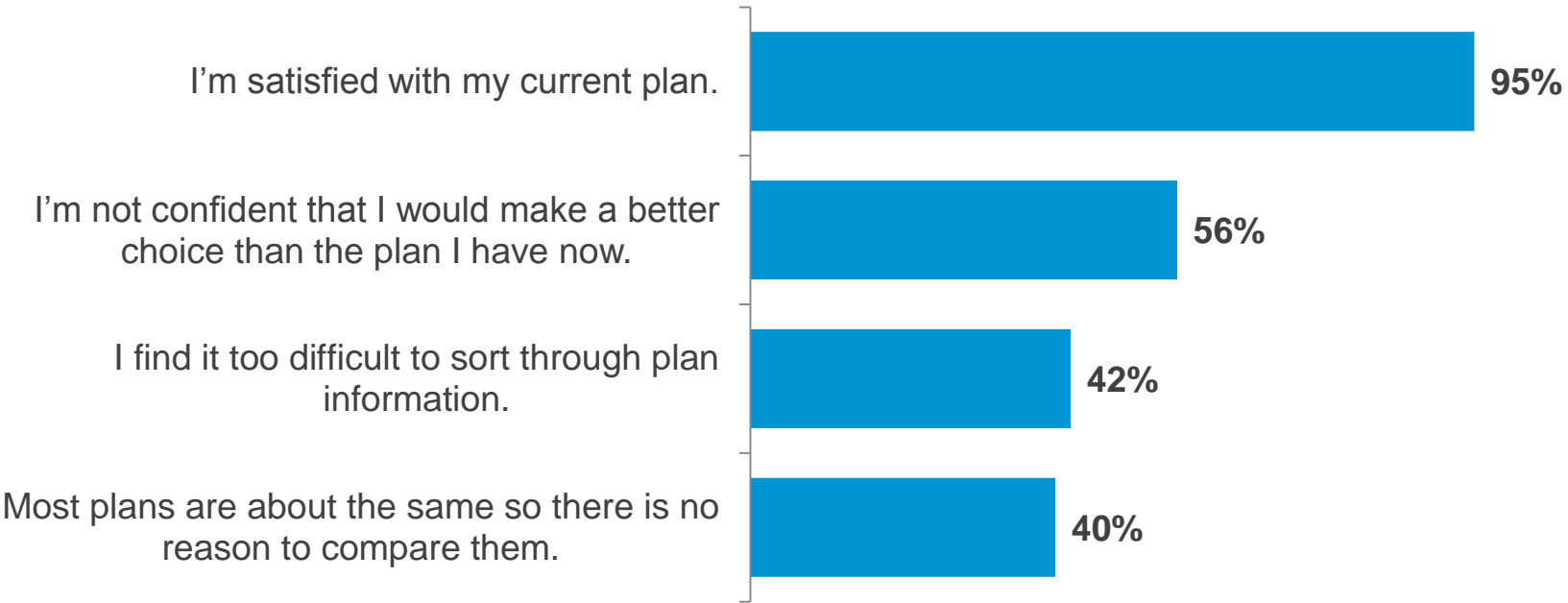


This year, open enrollment is from October 15th to December 7th. How likely are you to shop around and compare Medicare health or prescription drug plans this year—very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?

Base(N=787): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage) and those who have no drug coverage

The main reason seniors say they don't shop around is because they are satisfied with their current plan.

Reasons for Not Shopping Around This Year

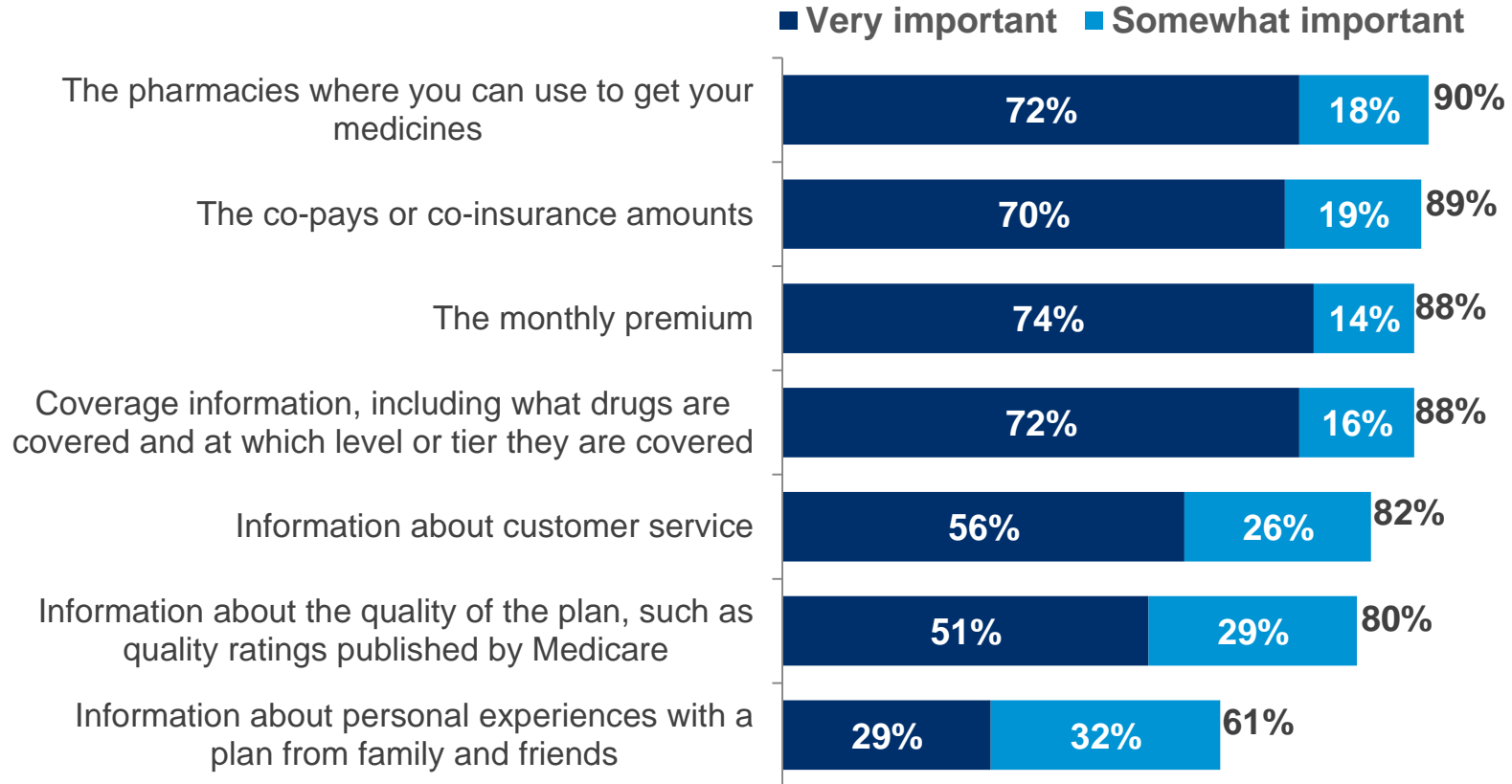


IF NOT TOO OR NOT AT ALL LIKELY TO SHOP AROUND AND COMPARE PLANS: I'm going to read you a list. For each one, tell me if that is a reason you are not likely to shop around and compare plans this year. You can choose more than one reason.

Base (N=339): Those not likely to shop around and compare Medicare health or drug plans during open enrollment

Cost, coverage, and pharmacies are most important to seniors when choosing the right plan for them.

Importance of Information When Comparing Plans



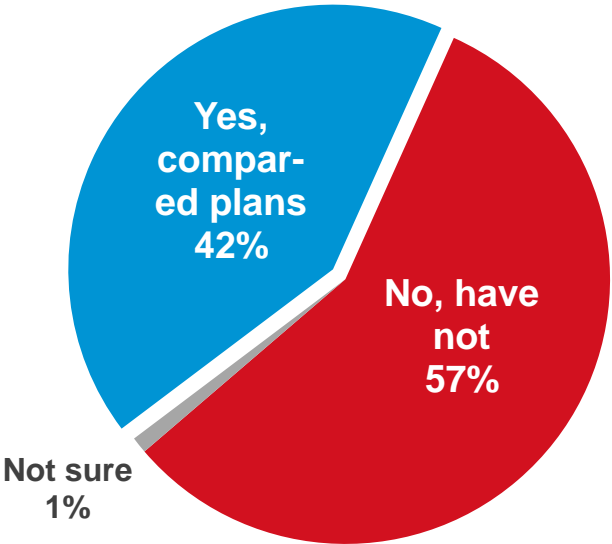
I'm going to read you some information that you may like to look at when you are comparing prescription drug plans to determine which one is right for you. For each one, tell me how important that is to you personally—very important, somewhat important, not too important, not at all important.

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Since first enrolling in a plan, just over 4 in 10 have shopped around and compared plans. Most have not.

Those not satisfied with their prescription coverage and those who have difficulty paying for their prescriptions are the most likely to have shopped around and compared plans.

Compared Plans Since Enrolling



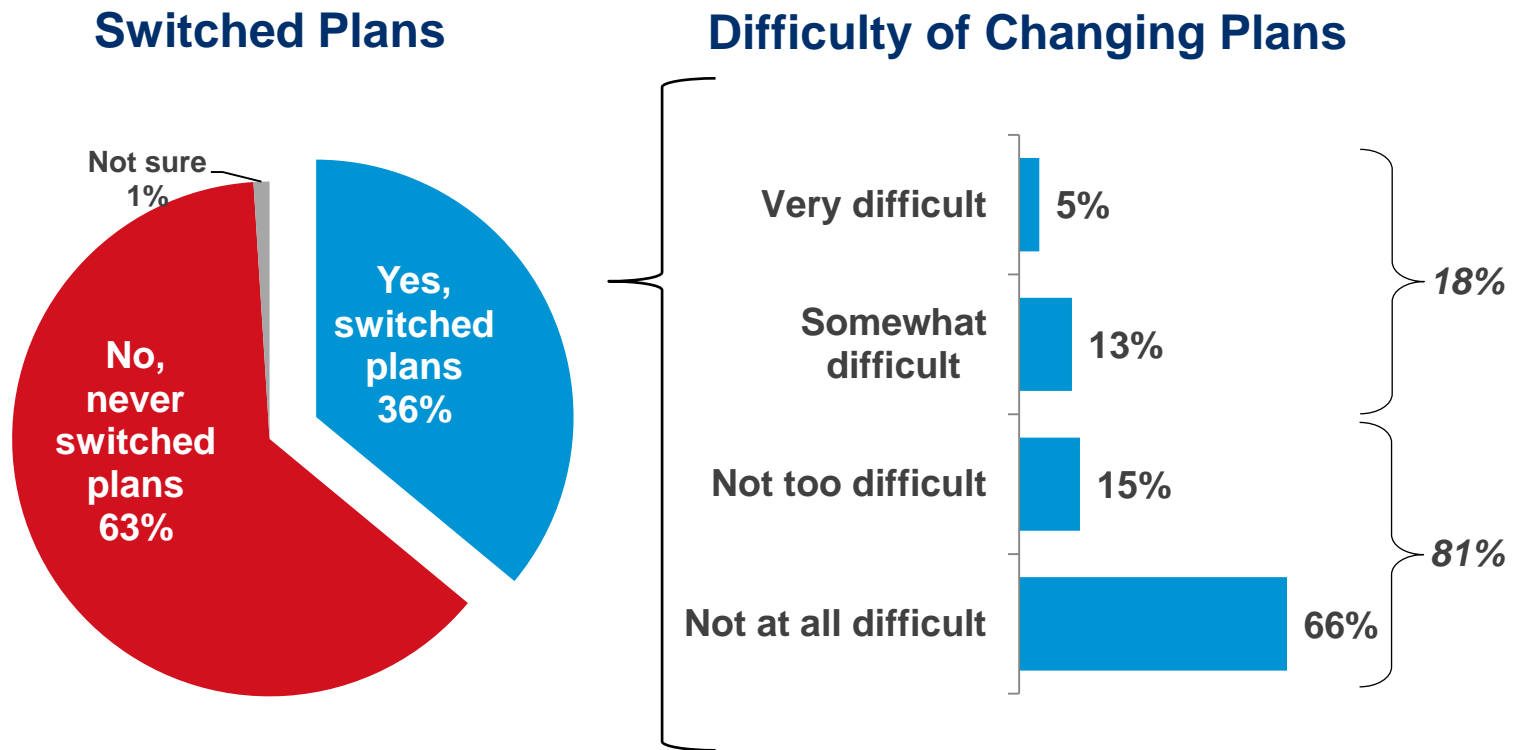
Those Most Likely to Have Shopped Around	
Not satisfied with drug coverage	61%
Having difficulty paying for Rx	56%
Age 65-74	49%
Received Annual Notice of Change	49%

Since you first enrolled in your Medicare prescription drug plan, have you ever shopped around and compared plans?

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Almost 4 in 10 have switched plans since first enrolling. Of those, 8 in 10 said it was not difficult to switch.

13% said it was somewhat difficult and 5% said it was very difficult to change their plan—the same as last year.



Since you first enrolled in a Medicare health or prescription drug plan, have you ever switched from one plan to another?

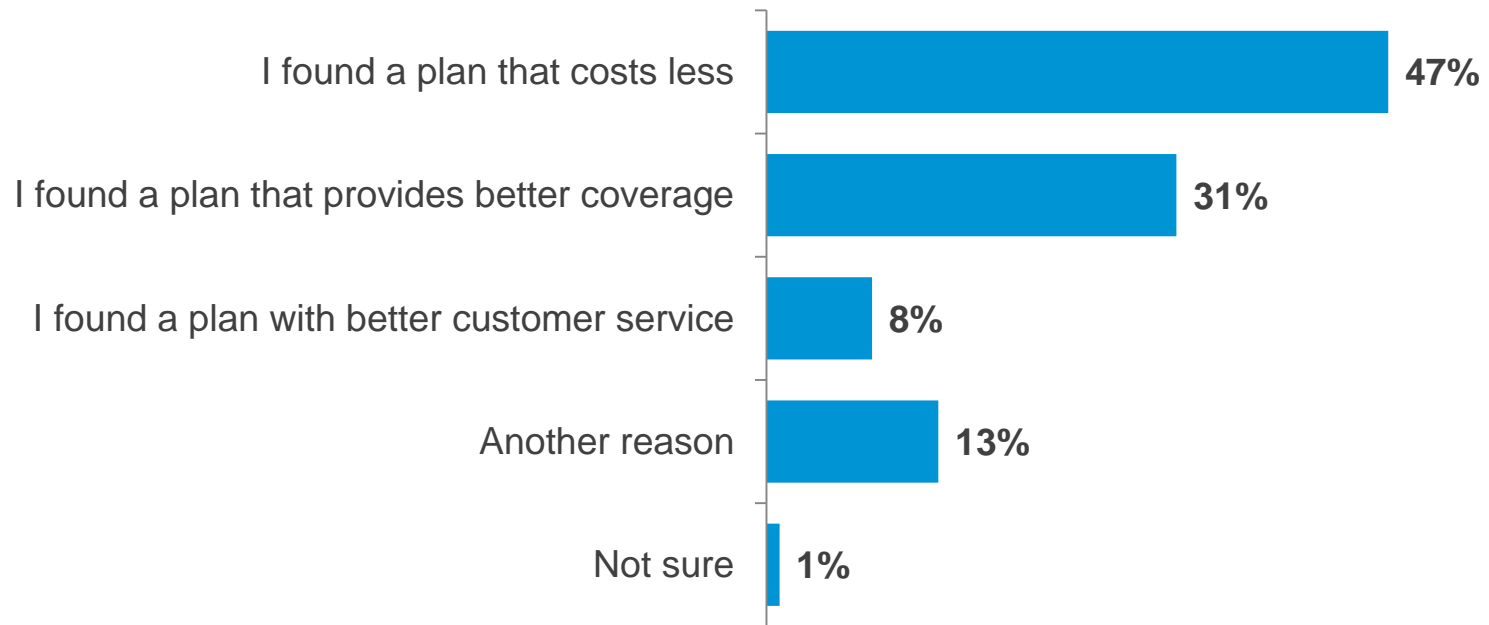
IF SWITCHED PLAN (N=222): How difficult was it for you to switch to a different Medicare prescription drug plan—very difficult, somewhat difficult, not too difficult, or not at all difficult?

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Base (N=222): Those who have switched plans

Most seniors who switched plans did so because they found a plan with lower costs and better coverage

Reasons for Switching Plans

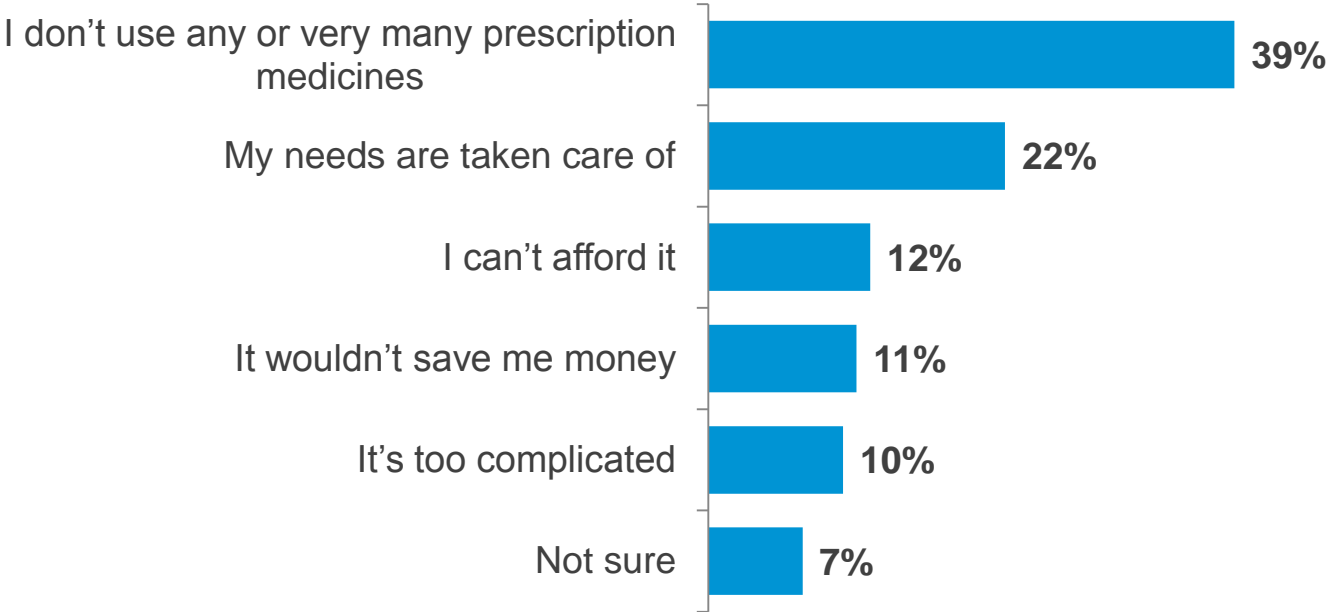


IF SWITCHED PLAN : I'm going to read you a few reasons people switch plans—which one is the primary reason you switched plans?

Base (N=222): Those who have switched from one plan to another

Among the 12% without drug coverage, the main reason for not enrolling in a plan is absence of perceived need.

Reason for Not Enrolling in a Drug Plan



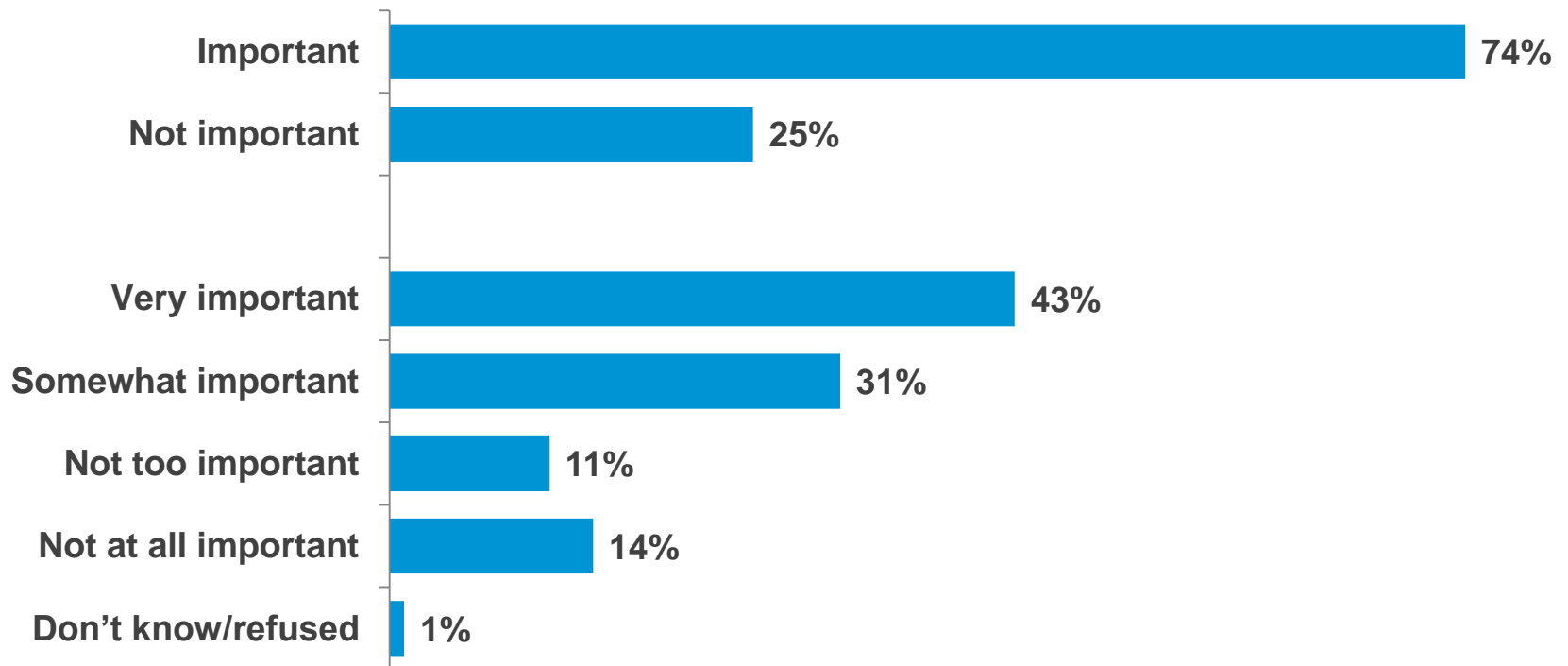
THOSE WITHOUT DRUG COVERAGE : You said you are not enrolled in a Medicare prescription drug plan. I'm going to read a list of reasons some seniors give for why they have not enrolled in a Medicare prescription drug plan. When I finish reading the list, I'd like you to tell me which one is the main reason you have not enrolled.

Base (N=186) : Those without a prescription coverage plan

Three-fourths of beneficiaries say a variety of plan options is important to them.

74% say a variety of plan options is important to them—up 8 percentage points from 2013. 43% say it is very important—up 4 points.

Importance of Plan Variety to Compare & Choose From



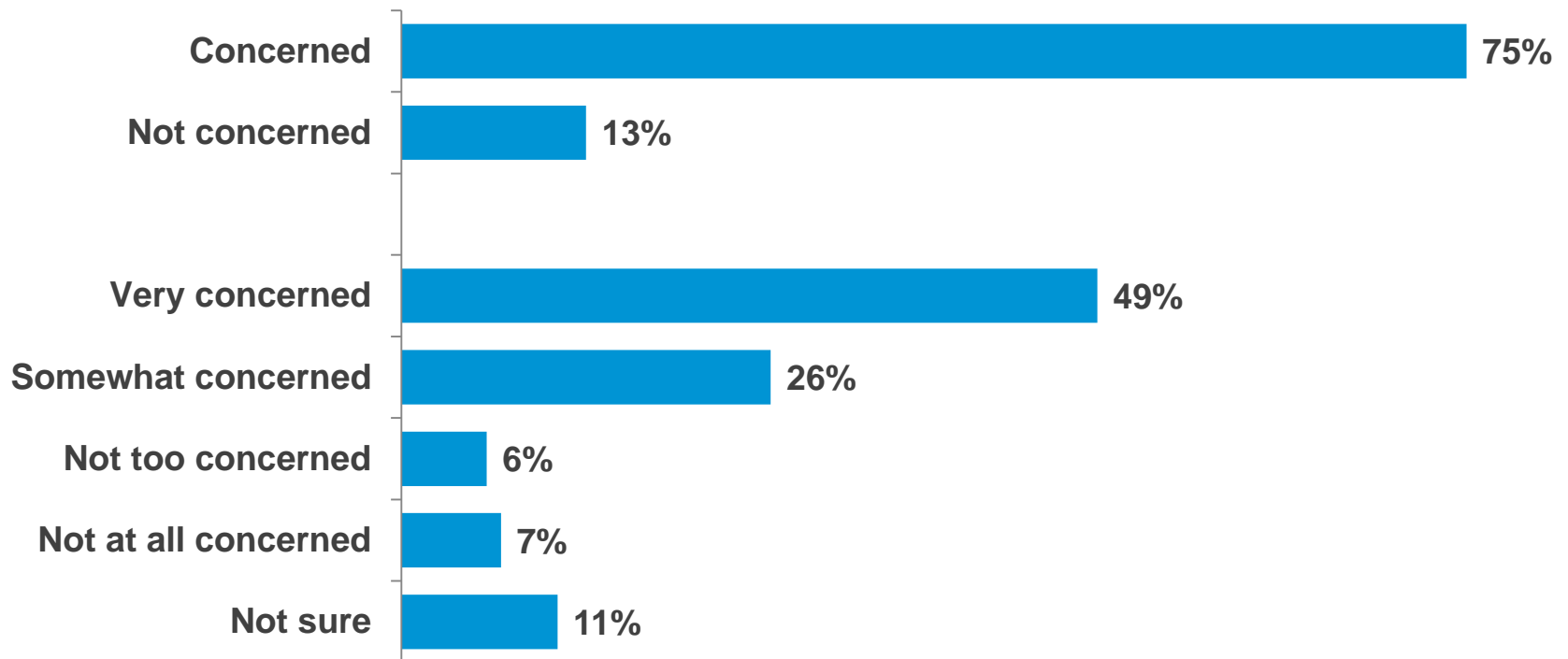
How important is it to you personally to have a variety of plans to compare and choose from — is it very important, somewhat important, not too important or not at all important?

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Three-fourths of enrollees find the idea of reducing Medicare plan choices concerning.

Only 7% of enrollees are not at all concerned with the idea of fewer drug plan choices.

Level of Concern with Fewer Plan Choices



One of the key features of Medicare Part D is giving beneficiaries options so they can pick a plan that meets their health care needs. How concerned would you be if changes were made to reduce the number of choices available to you in Part D? Would you be very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, not at all concerned— or are you not sure?

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

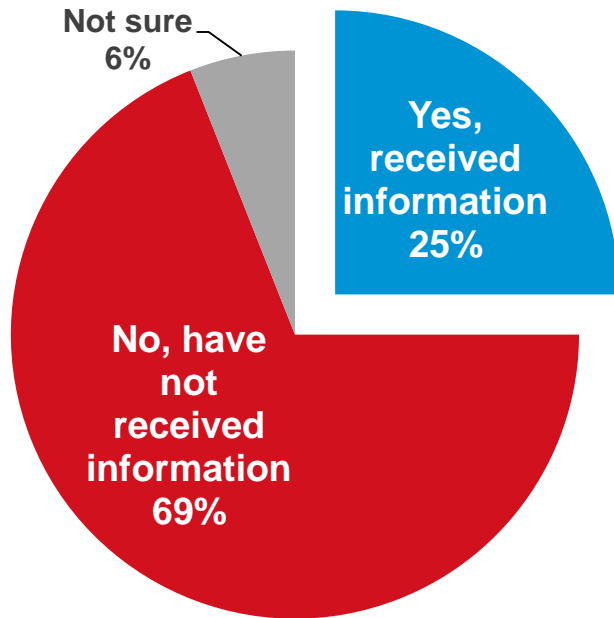


**Information
and
Knowledge**

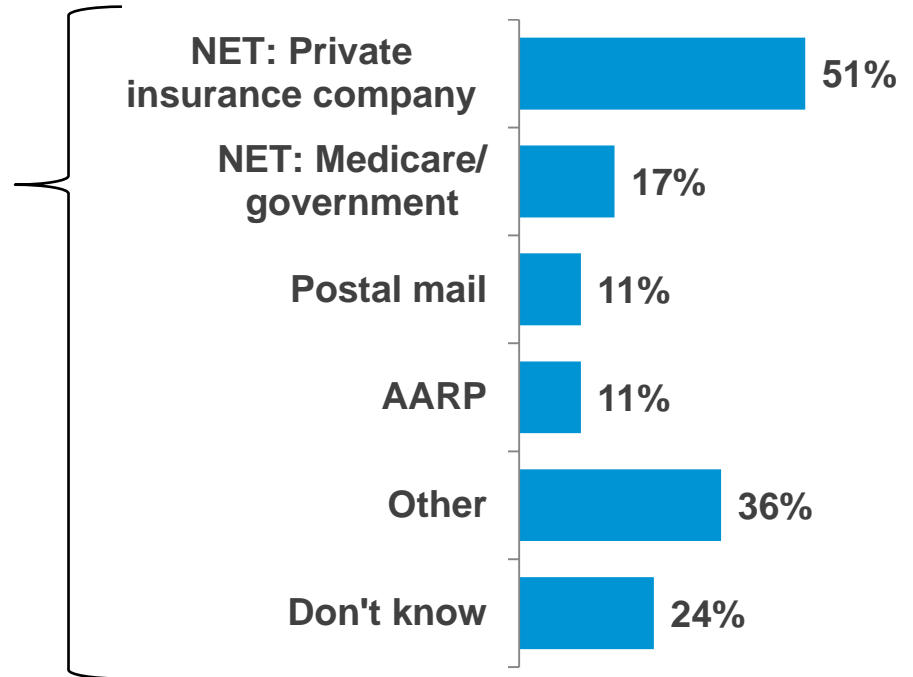
As of early July, only 1 in 4 had received Medicare drug plan information this year.

Half of all information about Medicare prescription drug plans comes from private insurance companies.

Received Information



Source of Information



And have you received any information recently about Medicare prescription drug plans?

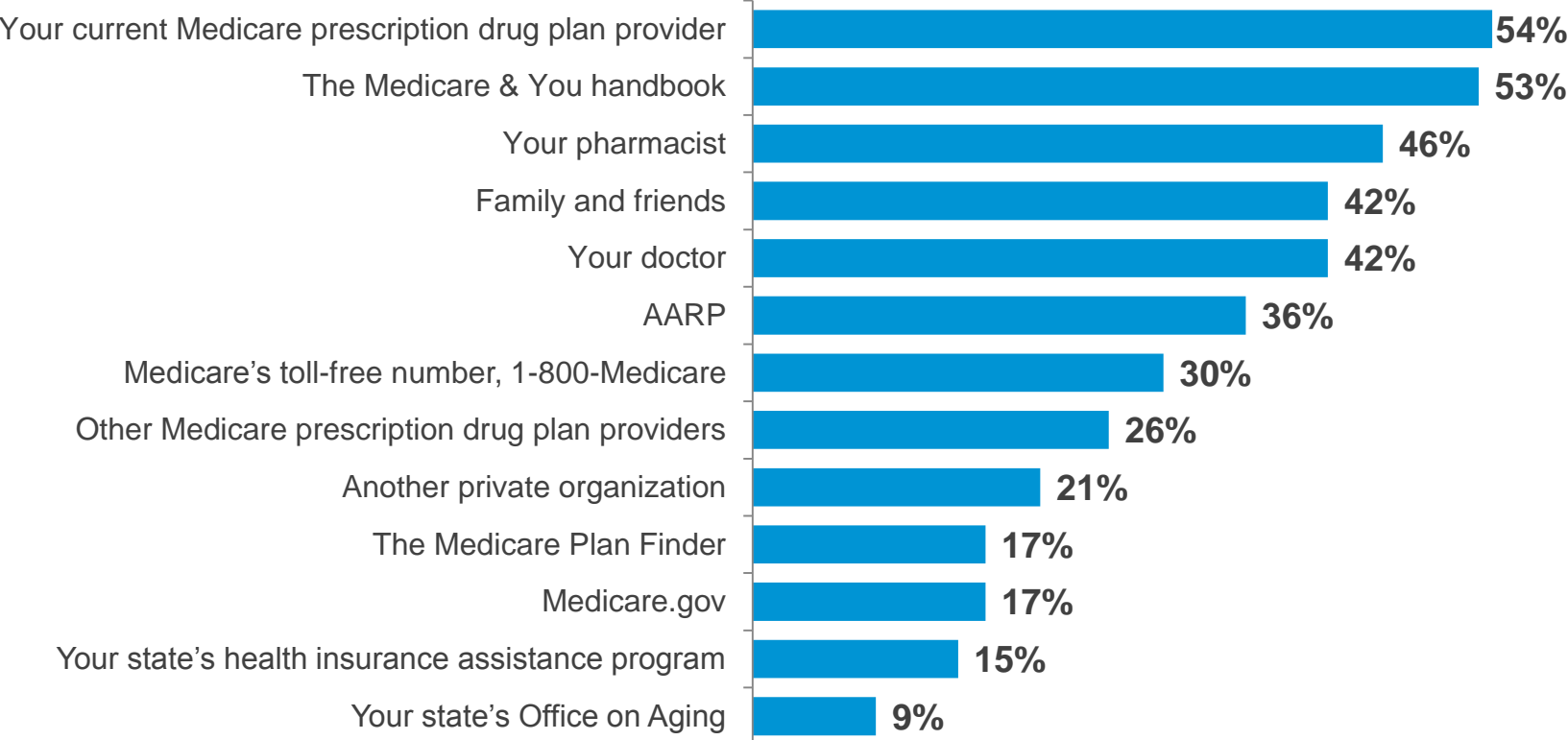
IF HEARD OR READ SOMETHING: From whom did you receive information about Medicare prescription drug plans?

Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Base: (N=155): Those who receive information about Medicare prescription drug plans

When making a plan choice, over half get information from their current drug plan provider and the *Medicare & You* handbook.

Used Source of Information for Plan Comparison



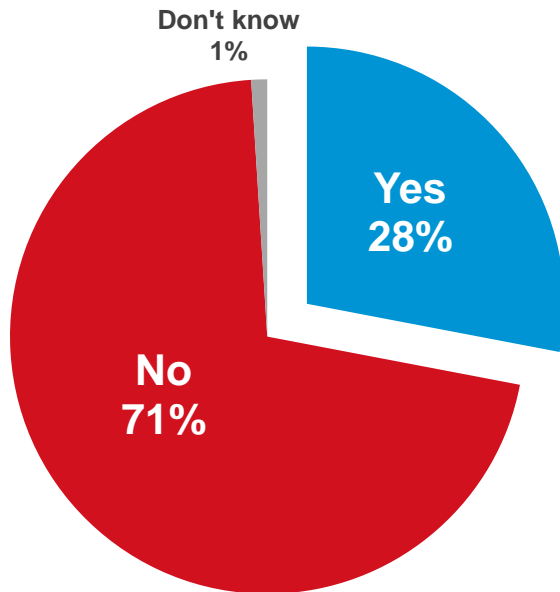
I'm going to read you a list of places where you could get information or help in comparing and choosing various Medicare health and prescription drug plans. For each one, tell me if you have ever gone to that source for information to help in comparing Medicare health or prescription drug plans.

Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Fewer than 1 in 3 know that Medicare offers a Plan Finder and quality ratings for each drug plan.

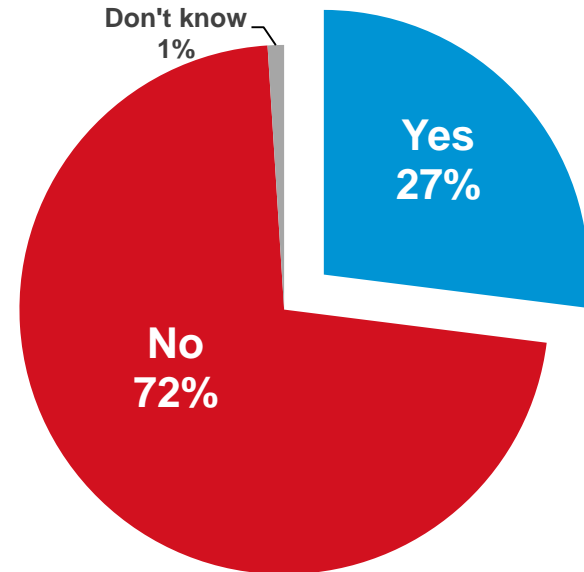
Aware of Plan Finder

Did you know Medicare has a Plan Finder on the Internet that allows you to compare all Medicare health and prescription drug plans that are available in your area?



Aware of Quality Ratings

Did you know that Medicare gives each health and prescription drug plan a quality rating, ranging from one to five stars?

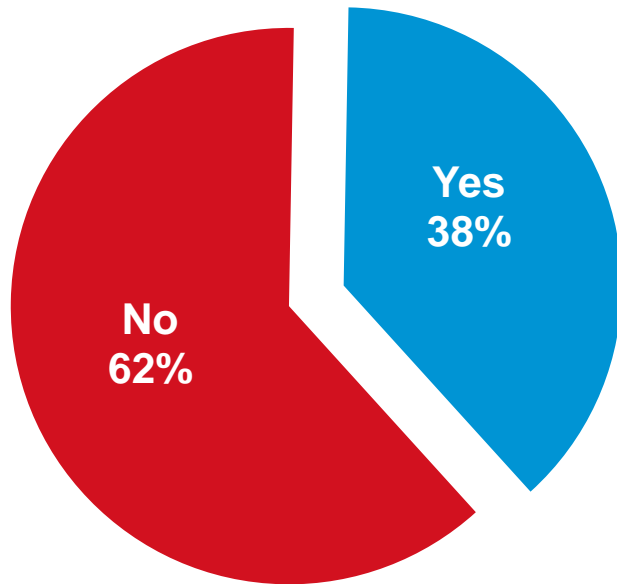


Base: (N=601) Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)

Almost 1 in 4 are aware of Medicare SHIP counselors; 6 in 10 are aware that some seniors can get additional financial help.

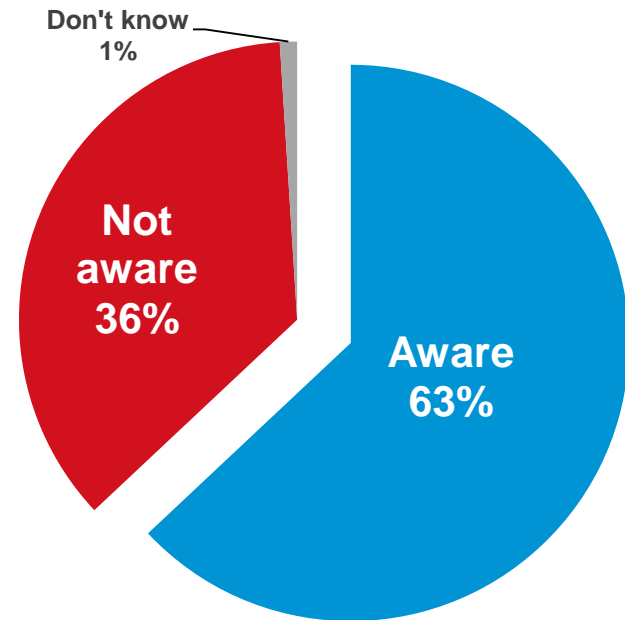
Aware of SHIP Counselors

Did you know that there are Medicare counselors in your state who you can call or visit to get help in comparing Medicare plans?



Aware of Extra Help

Some seniors need extra help paying for their Medicare prescription drug coverage. Did you know that seniors with limited resources can get help paying for part of their monthly premiums, annual deductibles, and co-payments?



Base (N=601): Those enrolled in a Medicare drug plan (stand-alone or Medicare Advantage)



Conclusions

Conclusions

1. Medicare Part D continues to prove itself a high-successful program—across groups, beneficiaries are largely happy with their coverage. Most report that their plan is—
 - Meeting their expectations;
 - Affordable with reasonable co-pays and covering the medicines they need;
 - Saving money and giving them access to prescription medicines they might otherwise have difficulty getting.
2. For these reasons, most beneficiaries with Part D plans recommend that others enroll.
3. A larger number than last year say they will shop around for a new plan during open enrollment this year. Among those who don't plan to shop around, an overwhelming majority say it is because they are satisfied with their current plan.
4. Beneficiaries value having a variety of plans to compare and choose from—in fact, importance has increased 8 points over the year. Most find the idea of fewer plan choices concerning.
5. Information about plan costs, coverage, pharmacies, and quality are important to seniors when shopping for and comparing plans.
6. Seniors who are considering shopping around this year can take courage—most seniors who switched plans in the past say they found plans with lower costs and better coverage and it wasn't especially difficult to switch.
7. There is an opportunity to inform beneficiaries that they can get personalized help from State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) counselors and they can use Medicare's online Plan Finder with 5-star plan quality ratings to shop and compare plans.



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