



AUSPOLL

Campaign. Intelligently

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Community attitudes to healthcare and the social wage

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ACTU Australian Council of Trade Unions
Representing 2 million Australian workers and their families

Methodology

- ▶ The data presented in this report are based on a survey of 1050 Australians to determine their attitudes towards:
 - ▶ Issues facing Australia
 - ▶ Healthcare
- ▶ The survey was undertaken online and conducted between the 12th and 14th of March, 2010.
- ▶ The overall sample size of 1050 was sampled and weighted to be nationally representative of Australia's population by gender, age and residential location.
- ▶ The accuracy of the results at an overall level is $\pm 3\%$ at the 95% confidence interval. This means, for example, that if the survey returns a result of 50%, there is 95% probability that the actual result will be between 47% and 53%.
- ▶ Results are presented at an overall level and are also segmented by soft voters (those who are “not very certain” or “not certain at all” who they will vote for at the next Federal election) and working families (respondents who are in a relationship or have children, and have at least one person working in their family).
- ▶ The accuracy of these segments is $\pm 4.2\%$ for working families (n = 536) and $\pm 5.8\%$ for soft voters (n = 285)
- ▶ Note: All percentage figures in this report are rounded. Accordingly, totals may not add up to 100%.

Importance of issues: Improving Australia's hospitals and healthcare system



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Extremely important	60	58	55
Very important	31	34	34
Moderately important	7	7	10
Slightly important	1	0	1
Not important at all	0	0	0
<i><u>Nett Important</u></i>	92	92	89
<i><u>Nett Unimportant</u></i>	1	1	1

Qu. 1: The following are a list of topical issues facing Australia. How important do you think these issues are?

Rating the quality of Australia's healthcare system



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Excellent	3	4	1
Good	30	31	26
Fair	42	41	45
Poor	17	17	21
Very poor	8	7	7
<i><u>Nett good</u></i>	34	35	27
<i><u>Nett poor</u></i>	25	24	28

Qu. 2: Overall how would you rate the quality of the healthcare system in Australia?

Perceived changes in the quality of the healthcare system



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Getting a lot better	1	1	1
Getting a little better	16	15	12
Staying the same	38	37	40
Getting a little worse	32	34	35
Getting a lot worse	13	13	12
<i><u>Nett getting better</u></i>	17	16	12
<i><u>Nett getting worse</u></i>	45	46	48

Qu. 3: And, would you say that, at an overall level, the quality of the healthcare system in Australia is.....?

Concern with aspects of healthcare in Australia: Most concerning healthcare issue



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Having enough doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals in our hospitals	18	19	20
Waiting times in hospital emergency departments	15	17	18
The overall efficiency of the healthcare system	12	10	11
The ability for all Australians to have access to quality healthcare	12	9	11
The length of waiting times for patients who need elective surgery	10	8	8
The affordability of healthcare for working families	9	13	10
Access to GPs (General doctors) when you need to see them	6	5	6
The cost of medicines to individuals	5	5	5
Making sure that people in the country get the same standard of care as people in the cities	5	5	5
The duplication of responsibilities between State and Federal governments	4	4	3
The rising cost of healthcare to the government	3	3	2
The lack of support for medical research in Australia	1	1	1

Qu. 5: And which of these same healthcare issues are you most concerned with?

Attitudes to healthcare reforms: Making the Federal Government more responsible for funding healthcare and the State Governments less responsible



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly support	30	29	22
Support	39	39	42
Neither support nor oppose	24	26	31
Oppose	4	3	3
Strongly oppose	2	3	3
<i><u>Nett support</u></i>	69	68	63
<i><u>Nett oppose</u></i>	6	6	6

Qu. 6: The Federal government has recently put forward a plan to reform Australia's hospitals and healthcare system. Do you support or oppose the following aspects of this plan?

Attitudes to healthcare reforms: Introducing regional health networks to oversee the day to day management of local hospitals



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly support	20	21	11
Support	44	44	48
Neither support nor oppose	28	28	34
Oppose	6	5	5
Strongly oppose	2	2	3
<i><u>Nett support</u></i>	64	65	59
<i><u>Nett oppose</u></i>	7	7	7

Qu. 6: The Federal government has recently put forward a plan to reform Australia's hospitals and healthcare system. Do you support or oppose the following aspects of this plan?

Attitudes to healthcare reforms: Creating national standards for the delivery of care to hospital patients



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly support	39	39	31
Support	48	48	54
Neither support nor oppose	12	12	14
Oppose	1	0	1
Strongly oppose	1	1	1
<i><u>Nett support</u></i>	86	87	84
<i><u>Nett oppose</u></i>	1	1	1

Qu. 6: The Federal government has recently put forward a plan to reform Australia's hospitals and healthcare system. Do you support or oppose the following aspects of this plan?

Attitudes to healthcare reforms: Funding hospitals nationally, but having local boards of doctors, nurses and other health professionals who manage the day to day running of hospitals



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly support	28	27	19
Support	48	49	53
Neither support nor oppose	20	20	23
Oppose	3	2	2
Strongly oppose	2	2	2
<i><u>Nett support</u></i>	76	76	73
<i><u>Nett oppose</u></i>	5	4	4

Qu. 6: The Federal government has recently put forward a plan to reform Australia's hospitals and healthcare system. Do you support or oppose the following aspects of this plan?

Attitudes to healthcare reforms: Providing direct funding of our hospitals from the Federal Government, instead of relying on the eight State Governments



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly support	35	33	25
Support	41	43	46
Neither support nor oppose	19	20	23
Oppose	3	2	3
Strongly oppose	2	2	2
<i><u>Nett support</u></i>	76	76	72
<i><u>Nett oppose</u></i>	4	4	5

Qu. 6: The Federal government has recently put forward a plan to reform Australia's hospitals and healthcare system. Do you support or oppose the following aspects of this plan?

Attitudes to healthcare reforms: Introducing national standards for hospitals to make sure people in the country get the same standard of care as people in the cities



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly support	41	40	30
Support	47	47	54
Neither support nor oppose	12	12	14
Oppose	0	1	1
Strongly oppose	1	1	1
<i><u>Nett support</u></i>	87	86	84
<i><u>Nett oppose</u></i>	1	1	1

Qu. 6: The Federal government has recently put forward a plan to reform Australia's hospitals and healthcare system. Do you support or oppose the following aspects of this plan?

Policy proposal: The government should try to attract more qualified nurses and other healthcare professionals by improving pay and conditions in the sector

	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly agree	37	33	30
Agree	46	49	50
Neither agree nor disagree	15	16	20
Disagree	2	3	0
Strongly Disagree	1	1	1
<u>Nett agree</u>	82	81	79
<u>Nett disagree</u>	3	3	1

Qu. 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about healthcare in Australia?

Policy proposal: Nurses in Australia are overworked, and need more support in order to improve the quality of care in Australia



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly agree	38	36	31
Agree	43	45	44
Neither agree nor disagree	15	15	21
Disagree	3	3	2
Strongly Disagree	1	1	1
<u>Nett agree</u>	81	81	75
<u>Nett disagree</u>	4	4	3

Qu. 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about healthcare in Australia?

Policy proposal: There is a lot of waste and inefficiency in Australia's current health system

	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Strongly agree	39	39	38
Agree	37	37	39
Neither agree nor disagree	22	22	21
Disagree	2	1	2
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0
<u>Nett agree</u>	76	76	78
<u>Nett disagree</u>	2	2	2

Qu. 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about healthcare in Australia?

Personal view on changes in healthcare funding (balance between government funding and user pays)



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
There has been an increase in the proportion of government funding for healthcare	10	11	9
There has been no real change in the balance between government funding and user pays	38	35	37
There has been an increase in the proportion of user pays for healthcare	52	55	54

Qu. 8 The healthcare system in Australia is funded from a combination of government funding and user pays (in the form of private insurance and personal payments for services). How do you think funding of healthcare in Australia has changed in recent years?

Preferred model of healthcare funding (balance between government funding and user pays)



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
I would like to see an increase in the proportion of government funding for healthcare	72	73	73
I think the current balance between user pays and government funding is about right	21	21	22
I would like to see an increase in the proportion of user pays for healthcare	7	6	5

Qu. 9 How would you like funding for the healthcare system to change?

Best party for providing better healthcare for working families



	Total	Working families	Soft voters
Labor by a lot	17	16	5
Labor by a little	45	46	55
Liberal by a little	29	29	38
Liberal by a lot	10	9	2
<u>Nett Labor</u>	61	62	59
<u>Nett Liberal</u>	39	38	41

Qu. 10 Which Federal political party is best at delivering the following outcomes for working families?

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