

SOURCE: JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S HEALTH, NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y.

THE MEDICINE CABINET

Share and Share Alike

Borrowing and sharing prescription medications is a serious medical and public health concern.

A survey of almost 7,500 women of reproductive age found that this is a common practice among more than one-third of this population, according to a recent report in the Journal of Women's Health.

Women of reproductive age (18-44 years) are more likely to report this practice (36.5%) than are other aged women (19.5%). In the survey of more than 25,000 women and men, 28.8% of women and 26.5% of men reported borrowing or sharing prescription medications.

Allergy medications (43.8%) and pain medications (42.6%) were the types of drugs most commonly borrowed or shared by reproductive-aged women.

MED ED UPDATE

All's Fair in CME, According to PPS

A clear majority of physicians responding to a Professional Postgraduate Services (PPS) survey find industry-funded continuing medical education (CME) to be fair-balanced and equally as rigorous, effective, and firmly rooted in evidence as nonindustry-funded CME.

A total of 1,527 physicians responded to the Web-based survey posted in advance of June's annual meeting of the American Medical Association House of Delegates, at which a proposal by the Council on Judicial and Ethical Affairs (CJEA) calling for elimination of industry funding to support medical education was referred back for further consideration.

- 82% of respondents said they disagreed with the proposed ban.
- When asked how this ban would affect their participation in CME activities, 56% said it would be more expensive and they would participate less.
- 71% of respondents found industry-funded CME to be fair-balanced (i.e., not favoring one product over another).
- More than two-thirds said industry-funded CME is just as rigorous, just as effective, and just as evidence-based as nonindustry-funded CME.

These findings further reinforce separate data where participants give PPS CME activities even higher approval ratings for fair balance, lack of commercial bias, and sound evidence bases.

For activities thus far in 2008, with greater than 7,500 clinicians answering each question:

- 98% of 7,561 respondents said activities present a balanced view of therapeutic options available for the applicable disease state(s).
- 95% of 7,925 said the activity presented content that fairly represented and was based on a reasonable and valid interpretation of available information.
- 95% of 14,046 said activities did not appear to place an unreasonable emphasis on one product or service.

SOURCE: PROFESSIONAL POSTGRADUATE SERVICES.

VOTE 2008

Healthcare Among Top Concerns

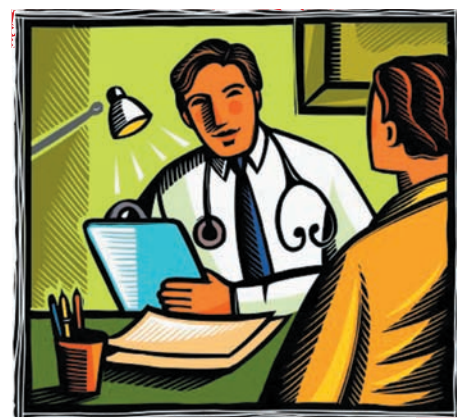
TNS Healthcare reveals that voters will pay very close attention to healthcare topics while determining which candidate to support this November.

Overall, Americans rank healthcare topics among the top issues to consider when choosing the next president, along with terrorism, the financial crisis, and the environment.

The study shows that voters' age and income are important factors in determining their views on healthcare and which candidate is the better overall choice. But many voters are not satisfied with either candidate on health issues and many cannot even recall seeing their health messages.

Key statistics include:

- 75% of voters age 65 or older indicated health issues will play a major role in their presidential choice.
- 59% of the youngest voters — age 18 to 29 — assign very high importance to health topics in this election.
- Almost 70% of women and 63% of men say they will give high importance to healthcare topics when deciding on a candidate.



Income also plays a part in whether voters believe Sen. John McCain or Sen. Barack Obama is the better candidate on healthcare issues. Voters with incomes of less than \$50,000 a year are more likely to believe that Sen. Obama best represents their healthcare and prescription drug interests, while those earning more than \$50,000 annually give higher marks to Sen. McCain.

Among voters that recall healthcare-focused ads, 91% remember them featuring Sen. Obama, the Democratic nominee. On the other hand, 66% recall healthcare ads featuring Sen. McCain, the Republican nominee.

TNS Healthcare's findings were based on an Internet survey with 300 Americans, 18 and older, conducted between July 24 and July 29, 2008. More than 90% of participants are planning to vote in the November presidential election.

SOURCE: TNS HEALTHCARE, NEW YORK.



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