

by **Jerry Polilcoff**, [Research Committee Chair and original Board member of Healthcare4ALLPA](#)

Earlier today, Dr. Walter Trou referred to a survey of Massachusetts physicians where 34% supported moving to a single-payer system. Dr. Trou, a former Philadelphia Health Commissioner, also is a board member of Healthcare4AllPA and Physicians for a National Health Plan (PNHP).

I found the study that was conducted in 2010, as well as the 2011 study that is now out.

The survey is in a pdf format that does not permit copying (you can print it or download it though). I've summarized the findings that are of value to single-payer advocates, and they are attached. The url for both the 2010 and 2011 studies are at the end.

This study, like many others that have preceded it, does not bode well for the Massachusetts health law that passed in 2006, nor for the national Affordable Care Act, upon which it is based.

Here are some highlights:

- The sample of 1,071 Massachusetts physicians from all parts of the state and representing every specialty were asked which of four healthcare options they preferred as the U.S. health care system. 41% chose single-payer, up from 34% in 2010. A combination public/private plan came in a distant second at 23% (down from 32% in 2010); and far behind at 17% was the Affordable Care Act, "modeled after the Massachusetts health reform law of 2006." 15% preferred to keep the existing mix of private and public health care.

- Among younger physicians the support for single-payer was strongest. 45% of 30-39 year-old physicians opted for single-payer versus only 15% who want the Massachusetts cloned Affordable Care Act.

- 49% of Primary Care physicians and 47% of Pediatricians prefer single-payer. 34% of Specialists do.
  
- Support for single-payer ranges between a low of 16.7% (orthopedic surgeons) to 51.9% of Neurologists.
  
- Patient wait times are a big problem in Massachusetts with average wait time of 36 days for an appointment for new patients.
  
- 47% of family physicians are not accepting new patients resulting in growing access problems even for those who are newly insured.
  
- Depending upon specialty, between 24% and 65% of physicians do not accept Commonwealth Choice, the subsidized healthcare insurance.
  
- Between 22% and 57% of physicians do not accept Commonwealth Care, the Massachusetts equivalent of the Exchanges in the Affordable Care Act.

Consider these findings in the light of other studies that reveal that health insurance premiums in Massachusetts are the highest in the nation and are increasing faster than the national average.

You might well wonder whether modeling our national health care plan after the Massachusetts plan is really such a good idea.