

### The Public's View of Health Care

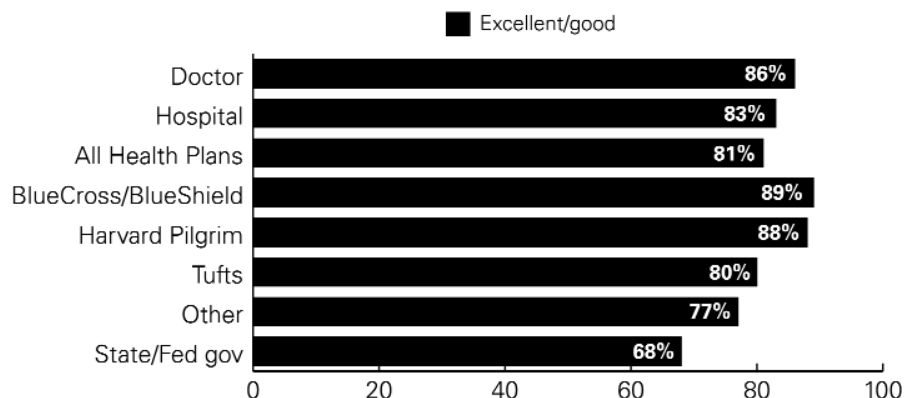
Since 1989 Mass Insight has provided its corporate and institutional clients with unique quarterly public opinion survey reports on issues including education, infrastructure, health care, jobs, water quality, and local, state and federal elections.

The following is a select set of health care data from the April 2003 and earlier public opinion surveys.

#### Doctors, hospitals, and plans get high ratings from Massachusetts health care consumers

- As in previous surveys dating back to 1990, the quality of health care services provided by doctors and hospitals and health care coverage provided by plans receive excellent/good ratings from the public.

How would you rate quality of care that you received from doctors and hospitals in a recent visit, and quality of coverage provided by your health plan?

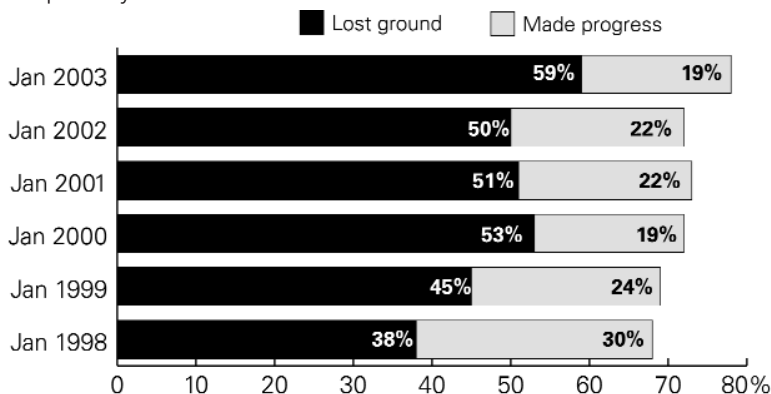


April 2003

#### ...but consumers increasingly feel that the state is losing ground on health care costs

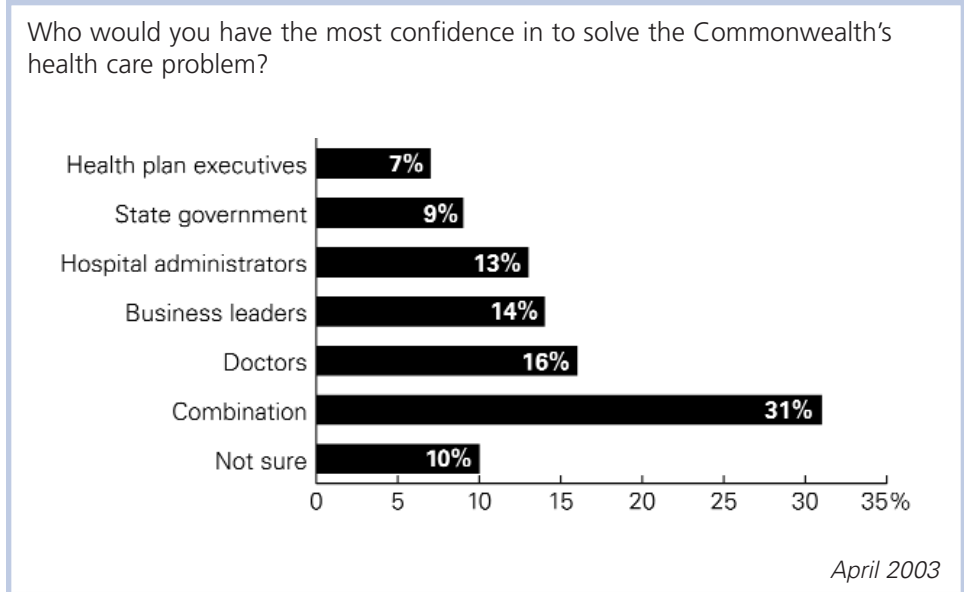
- People say the state is losing ground in containing health care costs, 59% today vs. 38% in 1998.

Has state government made progress in controlling health care costs over the last couple of years?



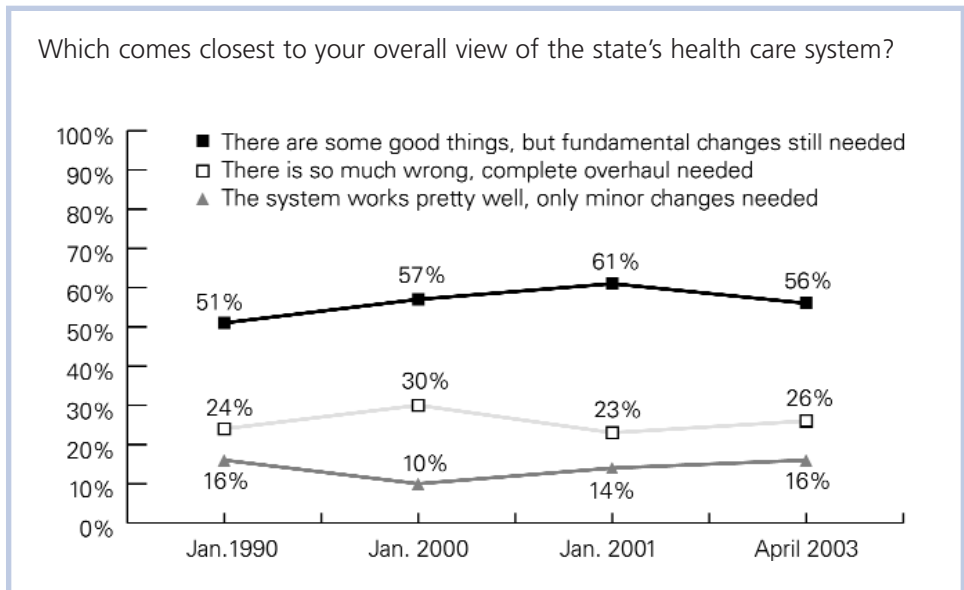
## People feel that it will require a team effort to solve the health care crisis

- The public doesn't believe it can count on one single group to solve the health care crisis.
- The largest group of respondents favor a coordinated approach to developing a solution.



## Over the last decade, the public has consistently supported the need for major changes

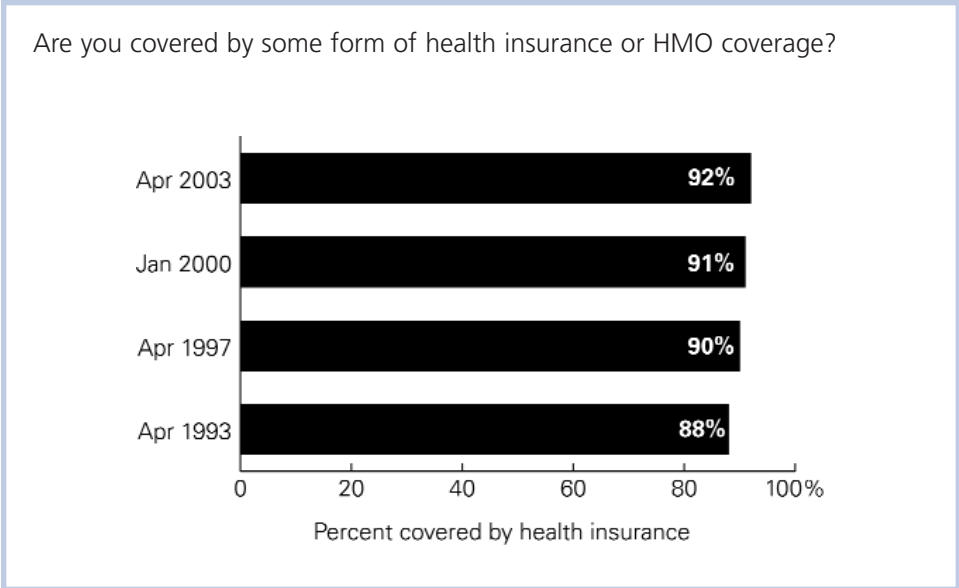
- While very satisfied with the quality of their own health care, many Massachusetts residents have consistently said that the system needs change.
- 56% of the public agree that there are some good things in our health care system, but fundamental changes are needed to make it work better.



Source of data: Mass Insight Corporation quarterly public opinion surveys, January 1990 to April 2003. The quarterly surveys are conducted by Opinion Dynamics Corporation, a national leader in market research and consulting. The surveys consist of interviews with 500 randomly selected adult residents of Massachusetts.

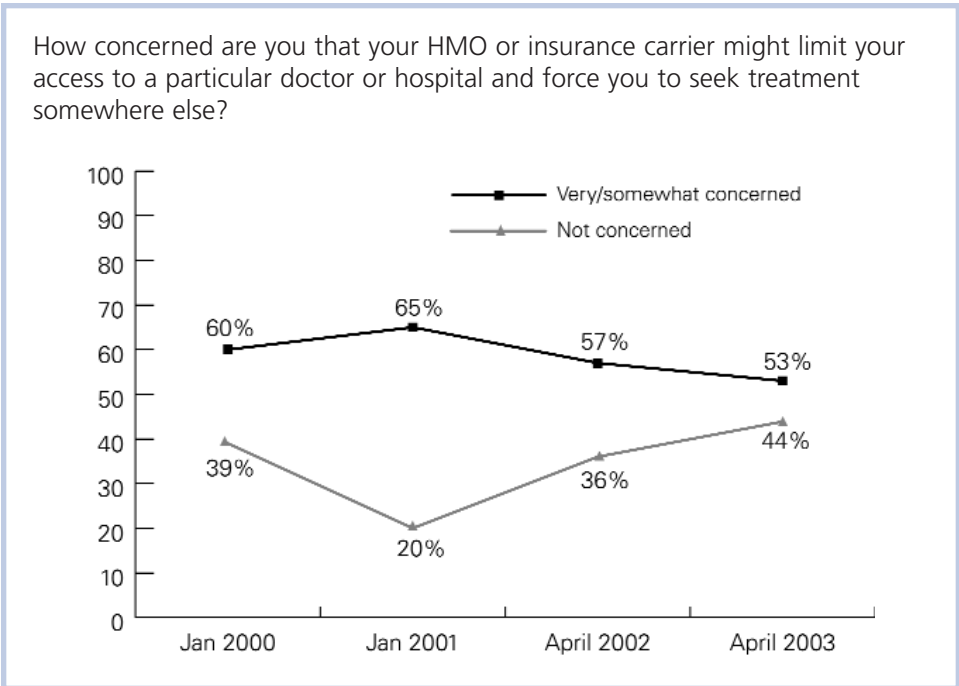
## The good news in Massachusetts: With MassHealth and extra efforts by employers, expanded health care coverage in the 1990s

- 92% of Massachusetts residents polled are covered by some form of health insurance, up from 88% in 1993.
- The state has maintained high levels of coverage during the current recession.



## And after the health care crisis in 2000 subsided and the Patients' Bill of Rights passed, fewer concerns about limits on doctor, hospital choices

- While people rate the quality of their health care as excellent or good, most are still concerned about preserving their choices.
- Concern increased following the crisis in 2000, but has dropped substantially in the last two years.
- The Managed Care Bill/Patients' Bill of Rights allows for greater continuity in doctor-patient relationships — a major priority for consumers



## Health care: Where do we go from here?

*Focus on the facts, focus where the state can make a difference, leadership in Washington*

Special thanks to the Massachusetts Medical Society for their valuable assistance in preparing this report.



Massachusetts Medical Society

**Despite countless commissions, panels and studies, Massachusetts still lacks a road map and a long term health care strategy.**

“Health care affects everyone, so everyone has opinions about what to do,” Thomas P. Glynn, chief operating officer of Partners HealthCare told Mass Insight. “But we have to understand that a lot of these issues are not fixable at the state level. We need to focus on those issues about which the state can do something.”

**Escalating malpractice insurance costs** is one of those areas. The crisis is deepening and must be addressed, and efforts in the state legislature are a good start. However, a solution is not easy to come by. “What’s different now from the professional liability crisis of the mid-1980s is that the system now has so little slack,” said Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) executive vice president Corinne Broderick.

Mass Insight has called for the state to take a stronger lead as **a neutral arbiter in collecting and analyzing health care facts from all parties involved, focusing leadership on the right issues.**

But to be effective—and to help create the political will necessary to make tough follow-up decisions—such an effort requires the active and visible participation of high-level leaders from both executive and legislative branches, business and health care.

The fact finding role was among the recommendations to come from Mass Insight’s Transition Briefing Series last fall and from an earlier Mass Insight report, *Beyond Harvard Pilgrim*.

### **Other recommendations from Mass Insight’s 2002 Transition Briefing Series:**

- Governor should take a leadership role in Washington on health care costs and funding
- Simplify administrative systems / funding
- Reform MassHealth Long Term Care and pursue additional funding sources
- Reform the Uncompensated Care Pool
- Reform malpractice insurance
- Encourage greater utilization of lower cost services
- Consolidate HHS agencies

### **About Mass Insight Corporation**

Mass Insight Corporation is a public policy, research and consulting firm that seeks to keep Massachusetts globally competitive. Through clients and leadership networks, the firm shapes public-private dialogues and delivers policy results on issues where state actions and investments affect profitability, growth and new jobs.

Our corporate clients and sponsors represent a range of sectors, including universities, financial institutions, telecommunications, health care, utilities, trade organizations, and state agencies.

Since 1989, we have provided our clients and partners with field research reports and public opinion polling, and organized and facilitated leadership groups on key public policy initiatives.



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