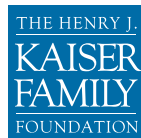


Kaiser Family Foundation/Association of Health Care Journalists

SURVEY OF AHCJ MEMBERS

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March 2009



**Association of Health Care Journalists**  
Center for Excellence in Health Care Journalism  
**Better coverage. Better health.**



## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

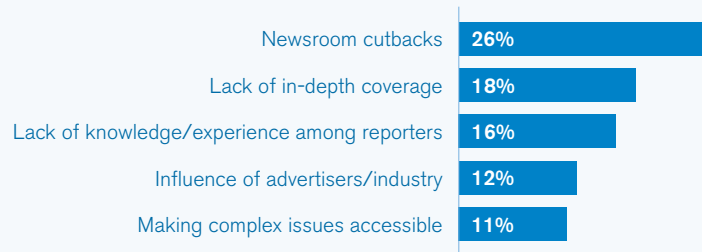
The tremendous turmoil and huge cutbacks that are roiling the news business have created increasingly challenging conditions for members of the Association of Health Care Journalists, with staff cutbacks, less time for reporting, fewer resources for training, and more pressure to produce short, quick hit stories. But even in the face of these difficult circumstances, AHCJ members have a cautiously optimistic view of the direction in which health journalism is headed.

### News industry cutbacks seriously hurting health journalism

Nearly all respondents (94%) say the bottom line pressure in news organizations is seriously hurting the quality of health news. Newsroom cutbacks are most commonly cited as the biggest challenge for the field of health journalism (26%), along with the related issues of not having enough time or space for in-depth coverage (18%) and the lack of experienced reporters on the health beat (16%).

CHART 1

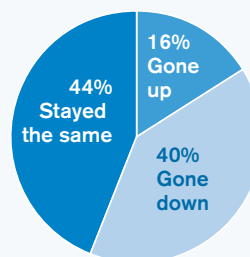
#### Top challenges facing health journalism today:



Forty percent of staff journalists say the number of health reporters at their organization has gone down since they've been there, compared to just 16% who say the number has gone up. Eleven percent of all respondents say they personally have been laid off from a health reporting job because of downsizing in the past few years, and 39% say it's either very (8%) or somewhat (31%) likely their positions will be eliminated in the next few years. Forty-three percent say training opportunities have gone down over the past several years at their organization (20% say they've increased).

CHART 2

#### Percent who say the number of health reporters at their organization has:



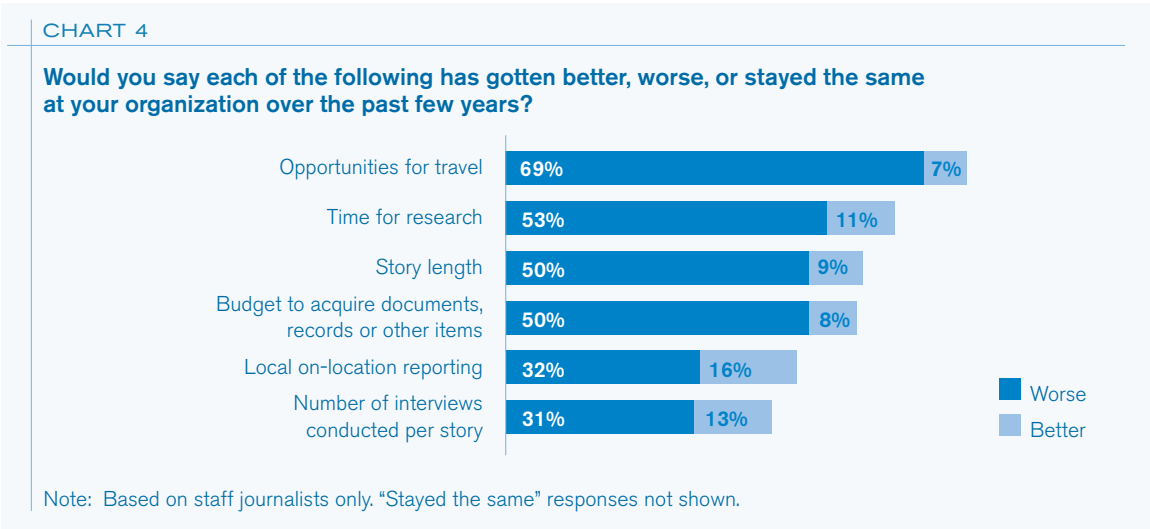
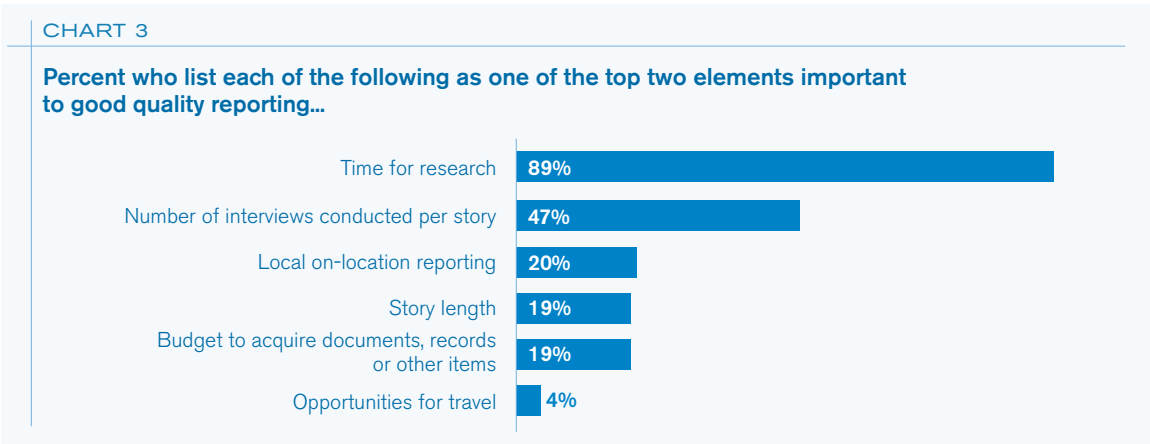
Note: Question asked of staff journalists only.

**Not enough time or space for in-depth reporting—and the situation is getting worse**

Eighty-nine percent of respondents say that having enough time to research and prepare a story is one of the top two ingredients in quality journalism, and a majority (53%) say the time allotted for research has gotten worse at their organization over the past several years.

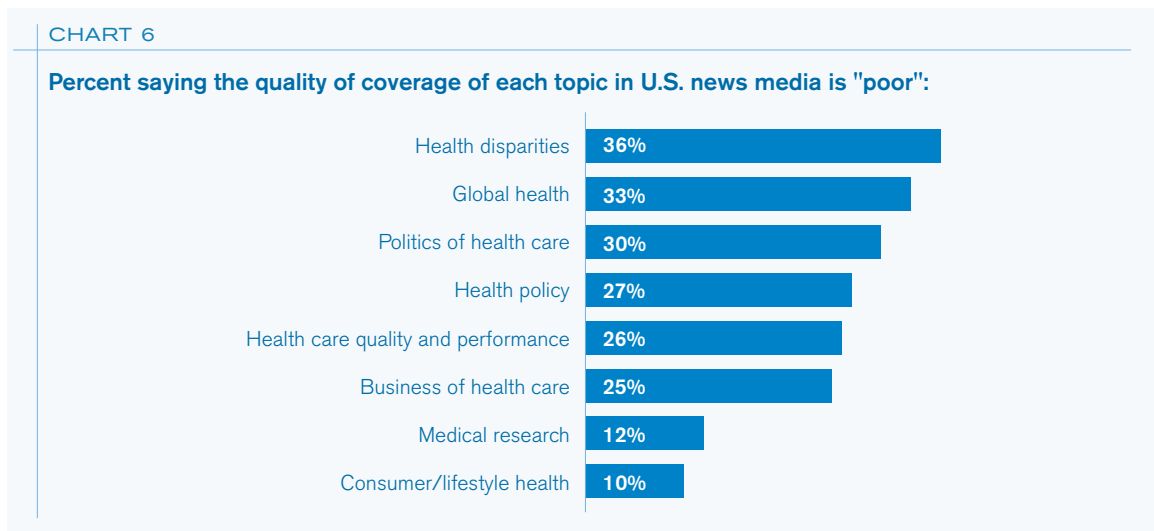
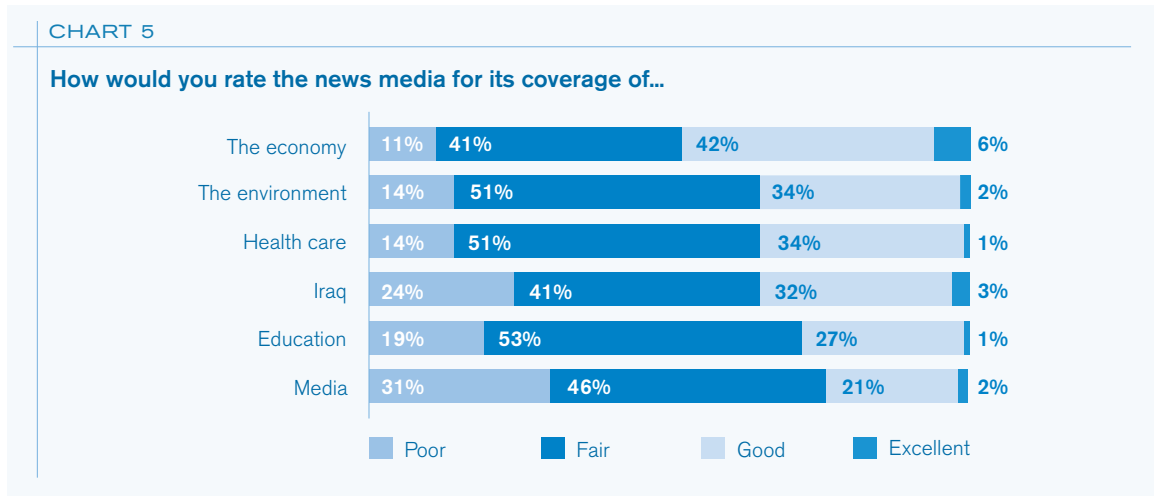
Nearly nine out of ten (88%) say the media's coverage of health care leans too much toward short stories and quick hits; and two-thirds (64%) say the situation in that regard has gotten worse in the past few years.

Perhaps as a consequence of the time crunch, just under half (44%) of respondents say their organization sometimes (34%) or frequently (10%) reports stories based on news releases without substantial additional reporting (56% say that rarely or never happens). But many reporters say they are still finding the time for enterprise stories: 39% say that most of their stories are enterprise or features, and a similar proportion (39%) say their work is about evenly split between event-driven and enterprise reporting. One in four respondents (23%) says his or her own stories are mostly event-driven (e.g., based on news reports, studies, or breaking news).



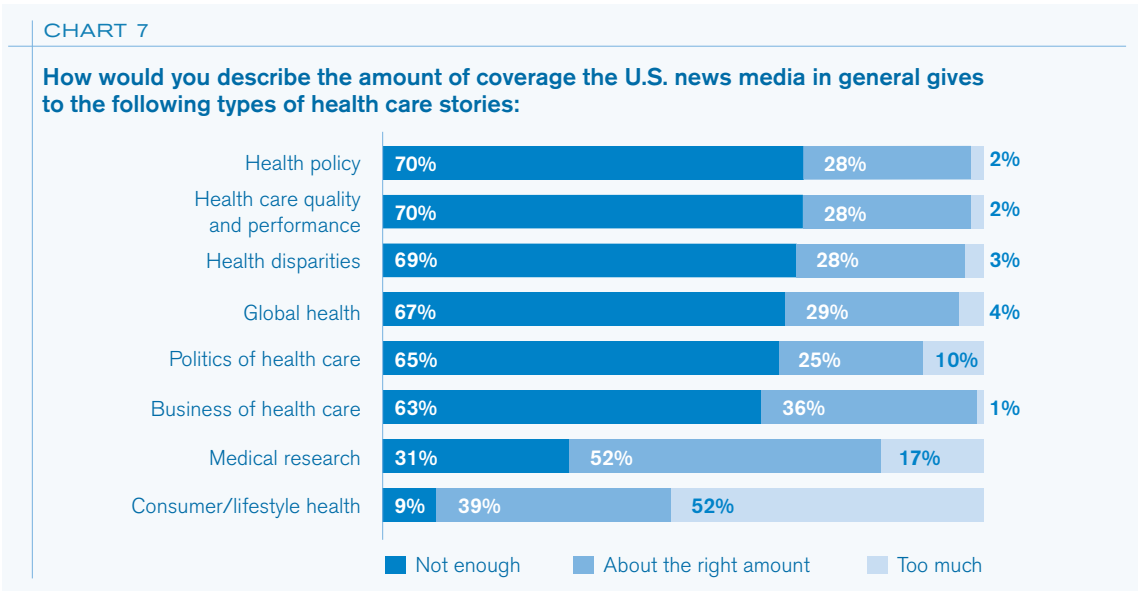
**Most judge the quality of health reporting today as “fair”**

Overall, respondents give a passing grade to the news media’s coverage of health—half (51%) rate coverage as “fair” on a four point scale including excellent (1%), good (34%), fair (51%), or poor (14%)—not much different from how they rate coverage of a host of other topics in the news. The health issues they think get the worst quality of coverage are health disparities (36% say the quality of coverage is poor), global health (33% say coverage is poor), the politics of health care (30%), and health policy (27%).



**Many see an imbalance in the amount of coverage of lifestyle versus health policy**

A majority (52%) thinks there is too much coverage of consumer/lifestyle health, the right amount of coverage of medical research and science (52%), and too little coverage of all other health topics in the survey, especially health policy (70%), health care quality and performance (70%), health disparities (69%), and health disparities (69%).

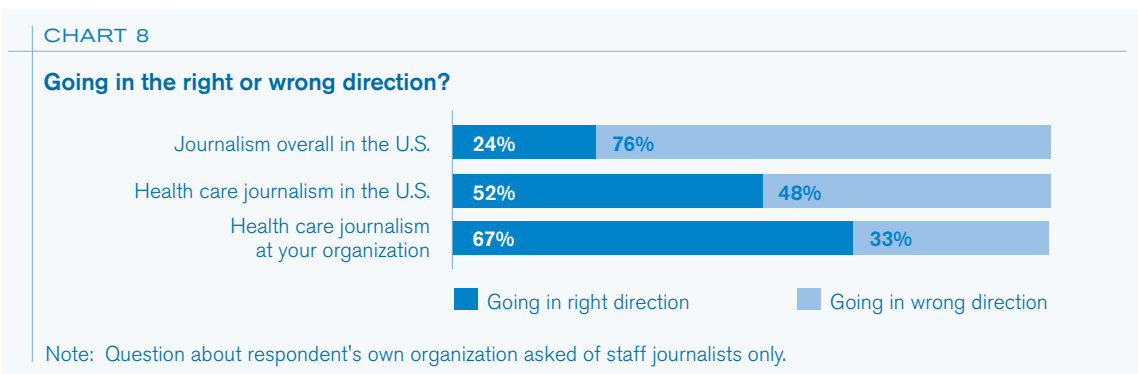


**Influence of advertisers and PR firms and the growth of sensational coverage**

While the AHCJ members surveyed are most likely to say the huge financial pressures that have hit the news business pose the greatest challenge to the future of health journalism, many others cite concerns about the *substance* of health coverage, including reporters getting caught up in sensational or gee-whiz medical stories, the influence of advertisers and industry on stories, and a lack of coverage of health policy. Twelve percent say the influence of advertisers and industry on stories and research is among the biggest challenges to the field; 7% cite the lack of balance and context in coverage of new medical research; 7% say the lack of coverage of health policy is a top concern; and 6% say the emphasis on sensational stories is one of the top challenges (see Chart 1). About one in ten staff journalists who responded to the survey (11%) says his or her *own* organization sometimes or frequently allows advertisers, sales staff or sponsors to influence story selection or content. And 28% say they personally get story ideas from public relations firms or marketing outreach somewhat or very often.

**Yet most believe health journalism is headed in the right direction**

While only 24% of AHCJ members say journalism in general in this country is going in the right direction, a narrow majority—52%—says *health* journalism in particular is going in the right direction. While this should not be taken as an overly “sunny” view of the state of health journalism—48% of respondents say it’s going in the wrong direction—it does indicate more hope for reporting on health than on other topics. And an even higher proportion of staff journalists—two-thirds (67%)—thinks health care journalism at their *own* institution is going in the right direction.

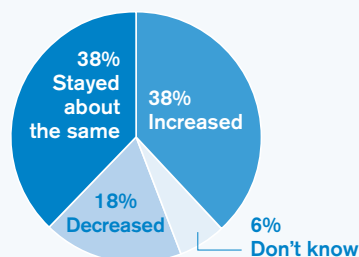


### More say the amount and quality of health news is going up than down

Twice as many respondents say the amount of news devoted to health at their organization has increased (38%) as say it has decreased (18%) in the past few years, and 42% say the *quality* of coverage at their organization has improved over the past few years as well (only 15% say it's declined). In both cases, the remaining respondents report things staying roughly the same.

CHART 9

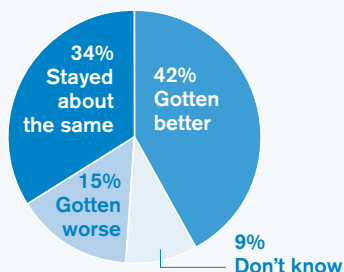
Would you say the *amount* of coverage given to health care topics at your own news organization has increased, decreased, or stayed the same over the past several years?



Note: Question asked of staff journalists only.

CHART 10

Would you say the *quality* of coverage given to health care topics at your own news organization has gotten better, gotten worse or stayed about the same over the past several years?



Note: Question asked of staff journalists only.

### The influence of online news

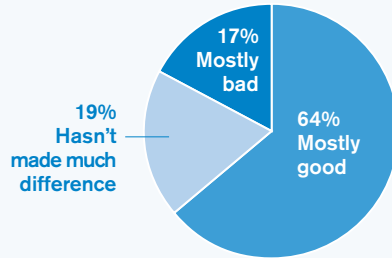
Respondents are by and large positive about the influence of online news on health reporting, with two-thirds (64%) saying the increasing platforms offered by the Internet have been mostly a positive influence on coverage of health care issues (17% said mostly negative).

The online features that are most highly rated as having a positive influence on health care journalism are blogs by professional journalists (66% say these are a positive influence), and news aggregating Web sites such as Google News or Yahoo News (58% say positive influence). The only online feature asked about in the survey that was rated more negatively than positively was health care blogs by non-journalists (36% say these have a negative effect on health care journalism, 21% say positive).

Among those who work on at least some Web content, half (50%) say that having to work across different media has resulted in less time and attention for each story and 59% say it means they work longer hours. Despite these longer hours and access to a Web platform, most (62%) say the Internet hasn't increased the space they have in which to tell a story. Sixty-six percent say it hasn't changed the kind of stories they pursue, but 69% say it *has* given them a chance to tell different aspects of a story.

CHART 11

**Do you think the increasing number and variety of platforms for news and commentary provided by the Internet has been mostly good for the coverage of health care issues, mostly bad, or hasn't made much of a difference?**

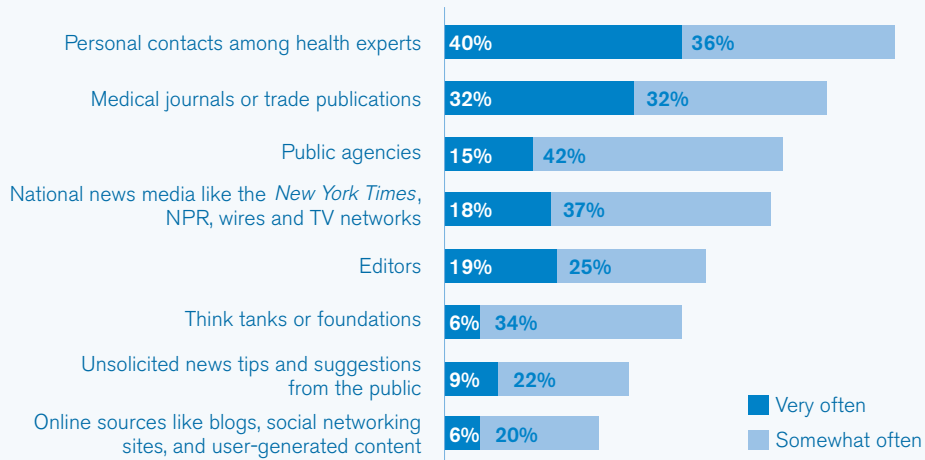


**Top sources for health news stories**

Among AHCJ members, the top sources for story ideas are personal contacts among health care experts (76% say they get story ideas from such sources somewhat or very often), medical or trade journals (64%), public agencies (57%), national news media such as the *New York Times*, NPR, or TV networks (55%), editors (44%), and think tanks or foundations (40%).

CHART 12

**How often do you get story ideas from the following sources:**





### Use of blogs

The approach respondents take toward blogs varies widely, with 38% saying they never or rarely read health blogs, 29% reading them weekly and 26% reading them daily. Twenty-three percent of respondents maintain their own blog related to their work. About one in four (26%) respondents says he or she gets story ideas somewhat or very often from online sources such as blogs, social networking sites, or user-generated content. One in three (37%) creates Web video or audio, 14% podcast for their work, and 9% create content for mobile platforms.

CHART 13

#### How often do you read blogs on health and health care topics?

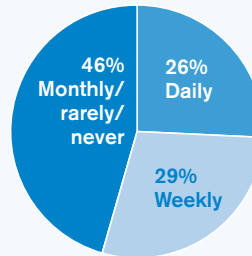
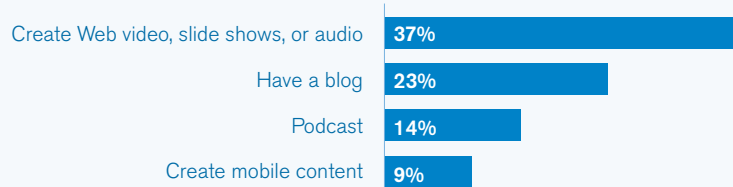


CHART 14

#### Percent of respondents who do each of the following as part of their job:



### Staying on the health beat

The factors respondents cite as most likely to help keep them in health journalism are more opportunities to do good stories (74% say this would make a major difference), better pay and benefits (65%), and more job stability (55%). The vast majority (78%) say their editor understands the health beat very or somewhat well, and nearly nine out of ten (88%) say that if they had it to do over, they'd go into health journalism again.

## METHODOLOGY

The Kaiser Family Foundation/Association of Health Care Journalists (AHCJ) *Survey of AHCJ Members* was designed and analyzed by researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation and AHCJ. The study was conducted via the Web from September 23 through October 21, 2008 among 256 professional members of AHCJ.

We began the project by identifying all 960 of AHCJ's professional members (including professional journalists, freelance journalists and college journalism instructors). Of these, 141 were not reachable at the email address provided, and an additional 6 had no email address in their files. The remaining members were all sent several email invitations on behalf of KFF and AHCJ. In the end, 256 members chose to complete the full questionnaire, representing roughly one in four members. The study was password protected so as to avoid tampering or multiple responses. Because this project was designed as a full census of AHCJ members, rather than a sample of their membership, there is no margin of error associated with the results. The respondents have only a slightly different demographic profile than the complete AHCJ membership (see below). However, the respondents cannot be said to be representative of health care journalists broadly. The survey was programmed, hosted and administered by Davis Research, an independent research company.

Values less than 0.5% are indicated by an asterisk (\*). "Vol." indicates that a response was volunteered by respondent, not an explicitly offered choice. Percentages may not always add up to 100% due to rounding.

### UNWEIGHTED BASES:\*

Unless otherwise noted, all responses are based on the full sample (n=256).

Based on all except college journalism professors (n=250)

Based on those who consider themselves primarily health care reporter/editor/producers (n=226)

Based on journalists who work on some Web content (n=182)

Based on staff journalists (n=150)

\* Note: Unweighted bases may differ slightly due to nonresponse on a given question.

### DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON

|   |  | AHCJ Full<br>Membership Data | KFF/AHCJ Survey<br>Respondents |
|---|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                             |  |                              |                                |
| Female                                    |  | 68%                          | 67%                            |
| Male                                      |  | 32                           | 33                             |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                          |  |                              |                                |
| White                                     |  | 81                           | 89                             |
| Asian                                     |  | 4                            | 4                              |
| Black                                     |  | 4                            | 2                              |
| Latino/Hispanic                           |  | 2                            | 2                              |
| Other race                                |  | 3                            | 2                              |
| Refused                                   |  | 6                            | 2                              |
| <b>Journalism Experience</b>              |  |                              |                                |
| 1 year or less                            | AHCJ data based only<br>on those who answered <sup>1</sup> | 8                            | *                              |
| 2-5 years                                 | 11%  | 11                           | 11                             |
| 6-10 years                                | 15   | 12                           | 14                             |
| 11-15 years                               | 17   | 9                            | 18                             |
| 16-20 years                               | 13   | 10                           | 16                             |
| 21 or more years                          | 14   | 21                           | 40                             |
| Prefer not to answer                      | 30   | 1                            |                                |
| <b>Media Outlet<sup>2</sup></b>           |  |                              |                                |
| Print                                     |  | 51                           | 39                             |
| Broadcast                                 |  | 11                           | 8                              |
| Web                                       |  | 9                            | 7                              |
| Mixed                                     |  | 17                           | 41                             |
| Other                                     |  | 12                           | 5                              |
| <b>Freelance/Professional<sup>3</sup></b> |  |                              |                                |
| Employed journalist                       |  | 79                           | 59                             |
| Freelance journalist                      |  | 21                           | 26                             |
| Other                                     |  | -                            | 15                             |

<sup>1</sup> These are the AHCJ Full Membership Data results repercentaged to be based only on the 71 percent of members who provided an answer to the experience question (excluding the 29 percent denoted as "prefer not to answer").

<sup>2</sup> Note that these data are presented for rough comparison only, as the items used to measure "media outlet" differed.

<sup>3</sup> The symbol ( - ) indicates category was not available.

TOPLINES

1. Which best describes you:

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 25% | Freelance reporter                              |
| 2   | Freelance editor                                |
| 42  | Reporter on staff of a news organization        |
| 16  | Editor/producer on staff of a news organization |
| 2   | College journalism instructor                   |
| 13  | Other   |

2. Thinking about journalism overall in the U.S. today, do you think it is generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

|     |                 |
|-----|-----------------|
| 24% | Right direction |
| 76  | Wrong direction |

3. All things considered, how would you rate the news media for its coverage of: [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|                     | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---------------------|-----------|------|------|------|
| a. Iraq             | 3%        | 32%  | 41%  | 24%  |
| b. The economy      | 6         | 42   | 41   | 11   |
| c. Health care      | 1         | 34   | 51   | 14   |
| d. Education        | 1         | 27   | 53   | 19   |
| e. The environment  | 2         | 34   | 51   | 14   |
| f. The media itself | 2         | 21   | 46   | 31   |

4. Thinking more specifically about **health care journalism** in the U.S. today, do you think health care journalism is generally going in the (right direction) or the (wrong direction)?

|     |                 |
|-----|-----------------|
| 52% | Right direction |
| 48  | Wrong direction |

5. Now thinking about **health care journalism at your own news organization**, do you think health care journalism at your own organization is generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

*Based on staff journalists*

|     |                 |
|-----|-----------------|
| 67% | Right direction |
| 33  | Wrong direction |

6. What do you think is the biggest challenge for the field of health care journalism today? (OPEN-END)

Note: Adds to more than 100% because multiple responses were accepted.

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 26% | Newsroom cutbacks   |
| 18  | Insufficient time and space for in-depth coverage         |
| 16  | Lack of experienced, trained and knowledgeable reporters  |
| 12  | Influence of advertisers/industry on stories and research |
| 11  | Making complex issues accessible                          |
| 7   | Providing balanced coverage of research                   |
| 7   | Not enough coverage or interest in health policy          |
| 6   | Emphasis on sensationalized/news-you-can-use stories      |
| 4   | Accuracy and objectivity                                  |
| 3   | Not enough focus on real people                           |
| 3   | Competing with blogs/transitioning online                 |
| 2   | Lack of public interest in big picture                    |
| 7   | Other   |
| *   | Don't know  |

7. What do you think is the biggest opportunity for the field of health care journalism today? (OPEN-END)

Note: Adds to more than 100% because multiple responses were accepted.

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 25% | Ability to educate and empower consumers                   |
| 20  | Internet expanding access to health information            |
| 17  | High consumer interest in good health reporting            |
| 13  | Opportunity to inform audience about health reform options |
| 9   | Platform to provide unbiased analysis to public            |
| 4   | Easier access to data and information                      |
| 3   | Investigative journalism                                   |
| 2   | Medical and technical advances                             |
| 2   | Many problems to report on                                 |
| 2   | Niche journalism and publications                          |
| 2   | No opportunities   |
| 10  | Other  |
| 2   | Don't know   |

8. In general, how would you describe the amount of coverage the U.S. news media in general gives to the following types of health care stories: [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|  | Too much | About the right amount | Not enough |
|--|----------|------------------------|------------|
| a. Medical research and science                          | 17%      | 52%                    | 31%        |
| b. Consumer/lifestyle health                             | 52       | 39                     | 9          |
| c. The business/economics of health care                 | 1        | 36                     | 63         |
| d. The politics of health care                           | 10       | 25                     | 65         |
| e. Health policy   | 2        | 28                     | 70         |
| f. Global health   | 4        | 29                     | 67         |
| g. Health care quality and performance                   | 2        | 28                     | 70         |
| h. Disparities (among economic, cultural, ethnic groups) | 3        | 28                     | 69         |

9. In general, how would you describe the **amount** of coverage **your own news organization** gives to the following types of health care stories: [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

*Based on staff journalists*

|  | Too much | About the right amount | Not enough |
|--|----------|------------------------|------------|
| a. Medical research and science                          | 9%       | 53%                    | 38%        |
| b. Consumer/lifestyle health                             | 20       | 64                     | 16         |
| c. The business/economics of health care                 | 1        | 49                     | 50         |
| d. The politics of health care                           | 7        | 43                     | 51         |
| e. Health policy   | 3        | 49                     | 48         |
| f. Global health   | 1        | 35                     | 64         |
| g. Health care quality and performance                   | 1        | 47                     | 52         |
| h. Disparities (among economic, cultural, ethnic groups) | 0        | 37                     | 63         |

10. Would you say the amount of coverage given to health care topics at **your own news organization** has (increased), (decreased) or stayed about the same over the past several years? (ROTATE ITEMS IN PARENS)

*Based on staff journalists*

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 38% | Increased   |
| 18  | Decreased   |
| 38  | Stayed about the same                                 |
| 6   | Don't know/haven't been at the organization that long |

11. In general, how would you rate the **quality** of the **U.S. news media's coverage** of the following types of health care stories: [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|  | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|
| a. Medical research and science                          | 3%        | 36%  | 49%  | 12%  |
| b. Consumer/lifestyle health                             | 7         | 49   | 34   | 10   |
| c. The business/economics of health care                 | 1         | 28   | 46   | 25   |
| d. The politics of health care                           | *         | 23   | 47   | 30   |
| e. Health policy   | 1         | 22   | 50   | 27   |
| f. Global health   | 1         | 20   | 46   | 33   |
| g. Health care quality and performance                   | 0         | 22   | 52   | 26   |
| h. Disparities (among economic, cultural, ethnic groups) | *         | 17   | 46   | 36   |

12. In general, how would you rate the **quality of your own news organization’s coverage** of the following types of health care stories: [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

*Based on staff journalists*

|  | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|
| a. Medical research and science                          | 17%       | 37%  | 31%  | 15%  |
| b. Consumer/lifestyle health                             | 13        | 49   | 32   | 7    |
| c. The business/economics of health care                 | 11        | 37   | 39   | 14   |
| d. The politics of health care                           | 5         | 40   | 39   | 17   |
| e. Health policy   | 7         | 43   | 37   | 14   |
| f. Global health   | 1         | 21   | 39   | 39   |
| g. Health care quality and performance                   | 6         | 40   | 39   | 15   |
| h. Disparities (among economic, cultural, ethnic groups) | 1         | 31   | 40   | 28   |

13. Would you say the quality of coverage given to health care topics at **your own news organization** has (gotten better), (gotten worse) or stayed about the same over the past several years?

*Based on staff journalists*

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 42% | Gotten better   |
| 15  | Gotten worse  |
| 34  | Stayed about the same                                 |
| 9   | Don't know/haven't been at the organization that long |

14. Thinking of the **U.S. news media’s** coverage of health care, would you say the mix of coverage leans too much toward (shorter stories and quick hits), too much toward (in-depth coverage), or is it about the right balance of the two? (ROTATE ITEMS IN PARENS)

|     |                                    |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| 88% | Shorter stories and quick hits     |
| 2   | In-depth coverage                  |
| 11  | About the right balance of the two |

14A: FOLLOW UP: Would you say this situation has (gotten better), (gotten worse), or stayed about the same over the past several years?

COMBINATION TABLE 14/14A (BASED ON TOTAL)

|     |                                    |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| 88% | Shorter stories/quick hits         |
| 4   | Gotten better                      |
| 64  | Gotten worse                       |
| 20  | Stayed same                        |
| 2%  | In-depth coverage                  |
| –   | Gotten better                      |
| 1   | Gotten worse                       |
| *   | Stayed same                        |
| 11% | About the right balance of the two |
| –   | Gotten better                      |
| 1   | Gotten worse                       |
| 9   | Stayed same                        |

15. In your opinion, is bottom line pressure in media organizations seriously hurting the quality of news coverage of health care issues these days, or not?

94% Yes  
6 No

15A: FOLLOW UP: Would you say this situation has (gotten better), (gotten worse), or stayed about the same over the past several years?

COMBINATION TABLE 15/15A (BASED ON TOTAL):

94% Yes, bottom line pressure hurting quality of coverage  
1 Gotten better  
85 Gotten worse  
7 Stayed about the same  
6% No, bottom line pressure not hurting quality of coverage  
– Gotten better  
1 Gotten worse  
5 Stayed about the same

16. On balance, do you think the increasing number and variety of platforms for news and commentary provided by the Internet has been mostly (good) for the coverage of health care issues, mostly (bad) for the coverage of health care issues, or hasn't it made much of a difference?

64% Mostly good  
19 Hasn't made much difference  
17 Mostly bad

17. Please tell me if you think each of the following is having a positive effect, negative effect, or no effect on health care journalism in general: [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|   | Positive | Negative | No effect | Not sure |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| a. Video-streaming Web sites like YouTube   | 15%      | 17%      | 31%       | 36%      |
| b. News aggregating Web sites such as Google News and Yahoo News                      | 58       | 9        | 11        | 21       |
| c. News ranking Web sites such as reddit.com and digg.com                             | 9        | 9        | 21        | 61       |
| d. Users posting comments on news organizations' Web sites                            | 32       | 27       | 23        | 18       |
| e. Health care blogs by professional journalists                                      | 66       | 4        | 15        | 15       |
| f. Health care blogs by non-journalists   | 21       | 36       | 15        | 28       |
| g. Rankings of the most-read or most emailed stories on news organizations' Web sites | 26       | 21       | 28        | 25       |
| h. The news review Web site HealthNewsReview.org                                      | 33       | 1        | 16        | 50       |

18. How often do you read blogs on health and health care topics?

26% Daily  
29 Weekly  
8 Monthly  
27 Rarely  
11 Never

19. If you do read blogs on health and health care topics, please list up to three that you find the most valuable (name, author, and/or URL) (OPEN-END, UP TO 3 RESPONSES)

Based on those who answered anything but 'never' in Q18 (n=140); adds to more than 100% because of multiple mentions.

Only blogs/Web sites that received two or more mentions shown:

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 30% | <i>New York Times</i>                     |
| 19  | Tara Parker-Pope                          |
| 11  | Others                                    |
| 24  | <i>Wall Street Journal</i>                |
| 11  | The Health Care Blog                      |
| 6   | Pharmalot                                 |
| 6   | Health Affairs Blog                       |
| 4   | <i>Los Angeles Times</i>                  |
| 4   | Health Beat Blog, Maggie Mahar            |
| 3   | Association of Health Care Journalists    |
| 3   | Health Care Policy and Marketplace Review |
| 3   | Gooz News                                 |
| 8   | Can't name                                |

20. Which TWO of the following elements of journalism would you say are most important to good quality reporting? [PICK UP TO TWO, SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 89% | Time for research                                   |
| 47  | Number of interviews conducted per story            |
| 20  | Local on-location reporting                         |
| 19  | Story length  |
| 19  | Budget to acquire documents, records or other items |
| 4   | Opportunities for travel                            |

21. Thinking about **your own news organization**, would you say each of the following elements of newsgathering has (gotten better), (gotten worse), or stayed about the same over the past several years? [SCRAMBLE ITEMS IN SAME ORDER AS ABOVE]

Based on staff journalists

|  | Gotten better | Gotten worse | Stayed about the same |
|--|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| a. Time for research                                   | 11%           | 53%          | 35%                   |
| b. Number of interviews conducted per story            | 13            | 31           | 56                    |
| c. Local on-location reporting                         | 16            | 32           | 52                    |
| d. Opportunities for travel                            | 7             | 69           | 23                    |
| e. Story length  | 9             | 50           | 41                    |
| f. Budget to acquire documents, records or other items | 8             | 50           | 41                    |



22. How often would you say you get story ideas from the following sources: [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

*Based on all except college journalism professors*

|  | Very often | Somewhat often | Once in a while | Never |
|--|------------|----------------|-----------------|-------|
| a. National news media like the <i>New York Times</i> , NPR, wires and TV networks | 18%        | 37%            | 39%             | 7%    |
| b. Radio and TV talk shows   | 3          | 5              | 43              | 49    |
| c. Personal contacts among health and health care experts                          | 40         | 36             | 22              | 2     |
| d. Friends/acquaintances outside journalism  | 7          | 23             | 59              | 12    |
| e. Medical journals or trade press publications                                    | 32         | 32             | 31              | 5     |
| f. Think tanks or foundations  | 6          | 34             | 49              | 11    |
| g. Public agencies   | 15         | 42             | 39              | 4     |
| h. Public relations or marketing outreach  | 5          | 23             | 57              | 16    |
| i. Online sources like blogs, social networking sites, and user-generated content  | 6          | 20             | 40              | 34    |
| j. Editors   | 19         | 25             | 44              | 12    |
| k. Colleagues at other news organizations  | 2          | 15             | 59              | 24    |
| l. Unsolicited news tips and suggestions from the public                           | 9          | 22             | 48              | 22    |
| m. Databases   | 7          | 17             | 45              | 32    |
| n. AHCJ Web sites, e-mails or listserv   | 5          | 23             | 56              | 16    |

23. What proportion of your stories are event-driven (i.e., news reports, studies, breaking news announcements) as compared to enterprise or feature reporting?

*Based on all except college journalism professors*

|     |                               |
|-----|-------------------------------|
| 23% | Mostly event-driven           |
| 39  | About equal                   |
| 39  | Mostly enterprise or features |

24. How often does your news organization report stories based on news releases or news conferences without substantial additional reporting, including contacting independent sources?

*Based on staff journalists*

|     |            |
|-----|------------|
| 10% | Frequently |
| 34  | Sometimes  |
| 35  | Rarely     |
| 21  | Never      |

25. How often, if at all, does your news organization allow sponsors, other outsiders or advertising/business staff to influence story selection or content?

*Based on staff journalists*

|    |            |
|----|------------|
| 2% | Frequently |
| 9  | Sometimes  |
| 21 | Rarely     |
| 69 | Never      |

26. Which comes closest to describing your news organization:

*Based on staff journalists*

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 52% | Newspaper (or newspaper Web site)                    |
| 14  | Large newspaper (over 250,000 circulation)           |
| 16  | Medium newspaper (90,000 to 250,000 circulation)     |
| 21  | Smaller newspaper (under 90,000 circulation)         |
| 4   | General interest magazine (or its Web site)          |
| 2   | Medical journal (or its Web site)                    |
| 5   | Wire service (or its Web site)                       |
| 11  | Trade publication or newsletter (or its Web site)    |
| 5   | Online-only journal or other online-only news outlet |
| 7   | TV (or TV Web site)                                  |
| 4   | Top 20 market, network, or syndicated                |
| 3   | Other TV   |
| 10  | Radio (or radio Web site)                            |
| 7   | Top 20 market, network, or syndicated                |
| 4   | Other radio  |
| 4   | Other  |

27. And would you describe yourself mainly as a:

*Based on all except college journalism professors*

|     |                      |
|-----|----------------------|
| 40% | Print journalist     |
| 8   | Broadcast journalist |
| 7   | Web journalist       |
| 3   | Print and broadcast  |
| 31  | Print and Web        |
| 4   | Broadcast and Web    |
| 4   | All three            |
| 3   | Other                |

28. Are you also called on to produce content unique to your news organization's Web site, or not?

*Based on staff journalist, not working at online/Web publication.*

Too few respondents to report results.

29. Do you do any of the following:

- a. Maintain and distribute a blog related to your work?
 

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 23% | Yes |
| 77  | No  |
- b. Podcast for your work?
 

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 14% | Yes |
| 86  | No  |
- c. Create content for mobile platforms, such as cell phones?
 

|    |     |
|----|-----|
| 9% | Yes |
| 91 | No  |
- d. Create Web video, audio or slideshows?
 

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 37% | Yes |
| 63  | No  |

30. Would you say dividing your time across different media has or has not (\*)? [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

*Based on journalists who work on some Web content*

- |   |     |         |
|---|-----|---------|
| a. Resulted in having less time and attention for each story                      | 50% | Has     |
|   | 50  | Has not |
| b. Changed the kinds of stories you pursue  | 34% | Has     |
|   | 66  | Has not |
| c. Given you a chance to tell different aspects of a story on different platforms | 69% | Has     |
|   | 31  | Has not |
| d. Increased the space you have in which to tell a story                          | 38% | Has     |
|   | 62  | Has not |
| e. Resulted in your filing more often   | 56% | Has     |
|   | 44  | Has not |
| f. Resulted in longer work hours  | 59% | Has     |
|   | 41  | Has not |
| g. Other  | 4%  | Has     |

31. How long have you been a journalist?

*Based on all except college journalism professors*

- |     |                  |
|-----|------------------|
| *   | Less than 1 year |
| 11% | 1-5 years        |
| 14  | 6-10 years       |
| 74  | 11+ years        |

32. Do you currently consider yourself primarily a health care reporter/editor/producer, or not?

*Based on all except college journalism professors*

- |     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 78% | Yes |
| 22  | No  |

32a. How long have you been a health care reporter/editor/producer? (OPEN-END)

*Based on those who consider themselves primarily health care reporter/editor/producers*

- |    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 3% | Less than 1 year |
| 26 | 1-5 years        |
| 24 | 6-10 years       |
| 47 | 11+ years        |

**32b. Has the percentage of your time devoted to health care stories gone up or down in the past several years, or hasn't it changed much?**

*Based on those who consider themselves primarily health care reporter/editor/producers*

|     |                     |
|-----|---------------------|
| 35% | Gone up             |
| 7   | Gone down           |
| 58  | Hasn't changed much |

**33. What is your primary focus: [check all that apply]**

*Based on those who consider themselves primarily health care reporter/editor/producers*

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 68% | Medical research and science                          |
| 53  | Health care quality and performance                   |
| 52  | Health policy   |
| 49  | Consumer/lifestyle health                             |
| 48  | The business/economics of health care                 |
| 37  | The politics of health care                           |
| 31  | Disparities (among economic, cultural, ethnic groups) |
| 14  | Global health issues                                  |
| 3   | Local health issues (vol.)                            |
| 9   | Other   |

**34a. How often do you currently work on health care stories: very often, somewhat often, once in a while, never?**

*Based on those who don't consider themselves health care reporters.*

Too few respondents to report results.

**34b. Were you primarily a health journalist at some point in the past, or not?**

*Based on those who don't consider themselves health care reporters or are college journalism professors.*

Too few respondents to report results.

**35. If you had to do it again, would you go into health journalism as a career, or not?**

*Based on those who consider themselves primarily health care reporter/editor/producers*

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 88% | Yes |
| 12  | No  |

**36. Have any of the following happened to you in the past several years:**

|  | Yes | No  |
|--|-----|-----|
| a. You have been taken off a health care beat and moved to another beat specifically because of downsizing or cutbacks         | 5%  | 95% |
| b. You have been laid off from a health reporting/editing/producing job specifically because of downsizing or cutbacks         | 11  | 89  |
| c. You have chosen to leave a health reporting/editing/producing job because it was no longer satisfying to you professionally | 11  | 89  |

37. Thinking about your own job, how likely do you think it is that your position will be eliminated in the next three years?

*Based on staff journalists*

|    |                   |
|----|-------------------|
| 8% | Very likely       |
| 31 | Somewhat likely   |
| 50 | Not too likely    |
| 11 | Not at all likely |

38. During the time you've been at your news organization has the number of health reporters (gone up), (gone down), or stayed the same? (ROTATE ITEMS IN PARENS)

*Based on staff journalists*

|     |                 |
|-----|-----------------|
| 16% | Gone up         |
| 40  | Gone down       |
| 44  | Stayed the same |

39. How well do you feel [your editor/the editor you do the most work for] understands the health beat? Very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not well at all? [IF STAFF JOURNALIST, USE 'YOUR EDITOR'; IF FREELANCER, USE 'THE EDITOR YOU DO THE MOST WORK FOR']

*Based on all except college journalism professors*

|     |                 |
|-----|-----------------|
| 38% | Very well       |
| 40  | Somewhat well   |
| 16  | Not too well    |
| 5   | Not well at all |

40. How big a difference would each make in keeping you in journalism: a major difference, a minor difference, or no difference? [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

*Based on all except college journalism professors*

|  | Major | Minor | No difference |
|--|-------|-------|---------------|
| a. Better pay and benefits               | 65%   | 26%   | 9%            |
| b. Fewer hours                           | 24    | 38    | 38            |
| c. More job stability                    | 55    | 30    | 15            |
| d. More possibility of advancement       | 36    | 36    | 28            |
| e. More control over your assignments    | 47    | 32    | 22            |
| f. More opportunities to do good stories | 74    | 15    | 11            |
| g. Other                                 | 8     | 1     | -             |

41. Do you currently have health care benefits, or not?  
[IF YES:] Through what type of source do you get those benefits?

|     |                           |
|-----|---------------------------|
| 88% | Yes                       |
|     | 60 Your employer          |
|     | 17 Your spouse's employer |
|     | 6 Purchase on your own    |
|     | 1 Medicare (vol.)         |
|     | 4 Other                   |
| 12  | No                        |

42. Have training opportunities available through your news organization (increased), (decreased), or stayed the same over the past several years? (ROTATE ITEMS IN PARENS)

*Based on staff journalists*

|     |                 |
|-----|-----------------|
| 20% | Increased       |
| 43  | Decreased       |
| 37  | Stayed the same |

43. Did you spend more than \$100 of your own money on training and development last year, or not?

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 52% | Yes |
| 48  | No  |

44. What, if any, health or health care topics do you want more training in? Please check up to four areas that are most important to you. [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 45% | The business/economics of health care                  |
| 41  | Health care quality and performance                    |
| 37  | Health policy  |
| 35  | Medical research and science                           |
| 33  | The politics of health care                            |
| 29  | The workings of publicly financed health care programs |
| 27  | Disparities (among economic, cultural, ethnic groups)  |
| 20  | Global health  |
| 13  | Consumer/lifestyle health                              |
| 3   | Online/Internet (vol.)                                 |
| 4   | Other  |

45. What, if any, skills training do you want more of? Please check up to four areas that are most important to you. [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 51% | How to do multimedia reporting (Web sites, video, podcasts)         |
| 40  | How to understand statistics  |
| 33  | How to interpret medical research reports                           |
| 33  | How to understand hospital and other financial reports              |
| 30  | How to evaluate conflicts of interest                               |
| 30  | How to map health conditions, services and the like in my community |
| 30  | How to work with Excel or other analytical software                 |
| 30  | How to search for medical information online                        |
| 11  | How to understand public opinion polls and surveys                  |
| 5   | Other   |

46. When you are looking at training opportunities, how interested are you in each of the following formats? [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|  | Very interested | Somewhat interested | Not too interested | Not at all interested |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| a. National conferences                                  | 39%             | 41%                 | 17%                | 3%                    |
| b. Regional workshops                                    | 42              | 41                  | 13                 | 4                     |
| c. Web courses   | 29              | 41                  | 23                 | 8                     |
| d. Video Webcasts  | 22              | 42                  | 27                 | 9                     |
| e. Audio podcasts  | 15              | 37                  | 32                 | 17                    |
| f. Printed books and resource guides                     | 25              | 52                  | 20                 | 3                     |
| g. Online reports, factsheets, tipsheets and transcripts | 51              | 38                  | 8                  | 2                     |

47. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most value and 1 being the least, how much value do you put on the following AHCJ services or products? [SCRAMBLE ITEMS]

|  | 1  | 2  | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|--|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| a. Web site                                    | 3% | 8% | 27% | 34% | 28% |
| b. Conferences and workshops                   | 2  | 9  | 20  | 30  | 39  |
| c. Guidebooks and slim guides                  | 6  | 15 | 27  | 32  | 20  |
| d. Listserv                                    | 6  | 9  | 18  | 31  | 36  |
| e. Access to medical and health journals       | 4  | 4  | 19  | 29  | 43  |
| f. Advocacy                                    | 3  | 10 | 22  | 32  | 33  |
| g. E-newsletter                                | 3  | 9  | 29  | 38  | 21  |
| h. Healthbeat print newsletter                 | 7  | 21 | 32  | 28  | 13  |
| i. Annual journalism awards                    | 19 | 22 | 29  | 16  | 13  |
| j. Various fellowship programs                 | 11 | 18 | 27  | 21  | 22  |
| k. Chapters and other networking opportunities | 12 | 18 | 27  | 27  | 16  |

Finally, we'd like to ask you a few demographic questions.

D1. Are you:

|     |        |
|-----|--------|
| 33% | Male   |
| 67  | Female |

D2. What is your age?

|    |              |
|----|--------------|
| 7% | 18-29        |
| 41 | 30-49        |
| 46 | 50-64        |
| 2  | 65 and older |
| 4  | Undesignated |

D3. Are you of Hispanic origin or background?

D4. IF NO/REF, ASK: Are you:

COMBINATION TABLE D3/D4 (based on total):

|                 |     |     |
|-----------------|-----|-----|
| White           | 81% | 89% |
| Asian           | 4   | 4   |
| Black           | 4   | 2   |
| Latino/Hispanic | 2   | 2   |
| Other race      | 3   | 2   |
| Refused         | 6   | 2   |



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