

Survey Methodology

For a National Survey of Physicians on Unnecessary Tests and Procedures
In the Health Care System

May 1, 2014

Introduction

Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the ABIM Foundation commissioned PerryUndem Research/Communication to conduct a national survey of physicians. The purpose of the survey was to gauge physicians' attitudes toward the problem of unnecessary tests and procedures in the health care system, views on the causes of the problem, and their perspectives on various solutions.

Interview Dates and Sample Size

The survey was conducted by telephone February 12 through March 21, 2014 among a nationally representative sample of $n = 600$ practicing physicians¹ in the US.

¹ Respondents were screened for currently seeing patients.

Margin of Error

The margin of sampling error for the total results is ± 4.0 percentage points. The margin of error is larger for small subgroups within the total. Following is a table for cell sizes and corresponding margins of error.

	Cell size (unweighted)	Margin of sampling error
Total	N=600	± 4.0 points
Primary care physicians	N=360	± 5.2 points
Specialists	N=240	± 6.3 points
Sees <100 patients per week	N=383	± 5.0 points
Sees 100+ patients per week	N=206	± 6.8 points
Unaided recall of Choosing Wisely campaign	N=117	± 9.1 points
No unaided recall	N=483	± 4.5 points
Aided recall	N=232	± 6.4 points
No aided recall	N=367	± 5.1 points
Has seen CW materials	N=135	± 8.4 points
Has not seen materials	N=442	± 4.7 points

Sampling Methods

The sample was purchased from a company licensed to use the American Medical Association's (AMA) Physician Masterfile. To conduct this study, a representative sample of primary care physicians and specialists was randomly drawn from the AMA Physician Masterfile.

The Physician Masterfile includes current and historical data for more than 1.4 million physicians, residents, and medical students in the United States.

A record is established when individuals enter medical schools accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), or in the case of international medical graduates (IMGs), upon entry into a post-graduate residency training program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).

The AMA Masterfile assigns a Medical Education number (ME#) – a unique identifier that is given to each physician to track physicians throughout their careers.

Primary care physicians include family medicine/general practice physicians, internal medicine physicians, and pediatricians.

Data

The data were weighted slightly by region, gender, age and type of practice to reflect demographics based on the Association of American Medical Colleges' 2013 State Physician Workforce Data Book.