



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Merritt
FROM: Whit Ayres and Jon McHenry
DATE: November 29, 2007
RE: Survey Results of Rural Seniors on E-Prescribing

Our firm conducted a national survey of 600 seniors in predominately rural counties throughout the country November 25-28, 2007, which finds that rural seniors believe electronic prescribing is a good idea, and they support requiring rural Medicare providers to use e-prescribing while allowing them additional assistance to adopt the system.

Key findings of the surveys are:

- 1. Rural seniors say electronic prescribing sounds like a good idea by a two-to-one margin.** When read the benefits of e-prescribing and told of the caveats that it would require time and money for doctors to install in their offices, seniors in these medically underserved areas say e-prescribing sounds like a good idea rather than a bad idea by a 48 to 25 percent margin.
- 2. By a similar margin, these seniors say rural doctors should be required to use e-prescribing, rather than exempted from the system.** Forty-eight percent say rural doctors should be required to use e-prescribing, but given additional financial assistance and time to adopt the system, and 24 percent say they should be exempted from having to use e-prescribing.
- 3. Half of these seniors take four or more prescriptions on a regular basis, with a similar percentage concerned about drug interactions.** Consistent with our survey of seniors conducted October 9-15, 21 percent of these rural seniors take four or five prescriptions each month to treat ongoing conditions and 28 percent take more than five prescriptions each month. Just 14 percent say they don't take any prescriptions. Not surprisingly, then, 50 percent of these seniors are very or somewhat concerned that a new drug they are prescribed could lead to a negative reaction with other drugs they take.

These results echo our earlier finding that seniors think e-prescribing is a good idea, and build upon that by showing rural seniors think rural doctors should not be exempted from a requirement to use this system.

Methodology

The sample for this survey consists of 600 seniors drawn randomly from a list of all full counties in the U.S. defined by the Health Resources and Services Administration as medically underserved areas. All respondents confirmed that they are 65 years old or older. The margin of error is ± 4.00 percent.