



# COVID-19 PATIENT PRIMARY CARE SURVEY

SERIES 3 FIELDLED JUNE 8, 2020



**Nearly 9 in 10 patients surveyed feel racism in the US has an impact on health, with 57% identifying racism as a public health concern.** 1 in 5 patients reported the killing of George Floyd, and related events, had an impact on their physical health and close to 75% were experiencing psychological or emotional distress. This has added additional health burden to a population still struggling with the mental strain related to the COVID-19 pandemic: 33% continue to struggle with feelings of isolation and loneliness, 13% with addiction, and more than 30% with anxiety and depression.

## **86% of patients say racism impacts health, with increased health-related harms since the death of George Floyd**

- Generalized impact of racism on health
  - Approximately 65% of patients felt racism effected emotional, psychological, and behavioral health
  - > 40% noted the effect of racism on physical and spiritual health
- Between 10% and 20% reported racism had affected their own physical health
  - 10% said racism has affected their physical health in general
  - 20% said George Floyd's death affected their physical health specifically
  - 70% of those who said racism has impacted their health have sought help from their primary care doctor
  - 40% also noted the death of George Floyd had a negative impact on the well-being of friends
- 1 in 5 felt the effects of racism were something for which they could receive help from primary care

## **While face-to-face visits are still low, use of primary care services continues to outpace pre-COVID-19 numbers**

- 47% of patients had contact with primary care in the last 8 weeks, an average of 1.4 times per patient
- Asked if they experienced comprehensive primary care during the pandemic, > 50% endorsed "Yes, without a doubt!"
  - When including those who said "sometimes, but the pandemic makes it hard", patients report care that is comprehensive (82%), continuous (80%), coordinated (80%), and integrated (78%)
- 78% said their experience included a sense of connection to a doctor with their best interest at heart
- Modes of care were evenly split among video-based, phone-based, and in-person visits
- Approximately 79% were comfortable with telehealth visits, and 61% hope this will continue post pandemic

## **Contact between patients and clinicians has increased and involves activities largely not reimbursed by insurance.**

- >50% of patient contacts with primary care in the past 8 weeks were reported to involve "visits"
- Among patients diagnosed with COVID-19, primary care conducted twice the number of follow ups by hospitals and three times the number of follow ups by public health
- 74% of patients either had contacts that were non-visit-based phone or electronic messages
- 17% report their primary care practice calling to check on them after a visit had taken place
- 11% report their doctor calling just to see how they're doing
- 39% of patient contacts with practices were initiated by the practice

**Methods** – Fielded June 8, 2020, by the Larry A. Green Center, in partnership with the Primary Care Collaborative and 3rd Conversation. The survey was offered through public posting, open to people 18 or older. The survey was voluntary and anonymous, with enrollment becoming limited as it filled to ensure diversity in respondent demographics.

**Sample** – 1111 respondents from a range of education levels (37% high school degree, 46% college degree, 14% graduate degree), income levels (43% less than \$50,000 household income, 7% greater than \$150,000 household income), and geographies (29% urban and 18% rural). 34% were 18-35 years old, 24% were over 55. Level of health varied with 53% rating their health as excellent or mostly good and 29% saying good. 47% were male, 51% female; 42% were full time employed and 14% were part time employed. 19% lost employment during the pandemic.

Larry Green Center: [www.green-center.org](http://www.green-center.org)

Primary Care Collaborative: [www.pcccc.org](http://www.pcccc.org)

*"I rely heavily on my primary care doctor, she is a comfort to me." Maryland*  
*"Telemedicine should still be a thing after the pandemic is over." Indiana*

### **Open text comments from patients regarding ...**

#### **... the exacerbated effect of the pandemic on the struggle of many people to get adequate access to health care**

- Now being laid off, I have to get on healthcare.gov to get medical insurance. All the plans I looked up that I can "afford" (said very loosely) none of the plans does my primary care doctor accept. :( Texas
- This epidemic helps highlight how the lower class have had to suffer without a primary care provider all of their lives. Maybe it's time to give everyone access to healthcare rather than gating it for those that have the resources to afford it. This can be done as evidenced in other countries. Illinois
- I make too much for Medicare, and not enough for ACA. I've been stuck in this nowhere place for years. I still go to clinics for flu shots, but I can't afford a real doctor if I got sick. I have asthma so I'm high risk and I'm scared. Missouri
- I have no money for food and I'm starving. Florida
- I have growths on my tonsils. I have been setting up my appointment with a throat specialist and had to cancel due to COVID-19 because the doctor can only see patients alone, without family. I have learning disabilities and sometimes have problem comprehending what doctors say. I need to have a family member with me and they can't allow it during COVID. So I am having to wait until they release the restrictions. South Carolina
- Healthcare has been a joke forever, but more recently it's so bad I can't even see a doctor for a long-standing health issue. I need to schedule elective surgery, but can't. New Mexico

#### **... the continued strain of the pandemic on psychological well-being and daily stress**

- I've been anxious lately. Illinois
- I just want this pandemic to end soon so we can all get on with our lives! Texas
- Due to many states' responses to the COVID pandemic I believe a lot of people who were sick of other conditions did not get the care they need and some died due to the fear ... Texas
- Don't think that we can ever get over this. Texas
- I had my mammogram canceled 3 times during to this mess. Wisconsin
- My health is deteriorating exponentially at the cost of myself and my people. Illinois
- I'm ready for it to be over. I want to see my family and friends without a mask. I want to go to my church. Indiana
- I am fearful of touching a door handle and getting sick. California

#### **... gratitude for the support patients have felt from their primary care doctors and practices**

- My primary care clinic has been great about sending out email updates, info and advice. New Mexico
- I believe my doctor and clinic are doing their best to keep appointment visits safe. Minnesota
- I contacted my PCP after testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 antibodies. She got back to me right away with more concern than I'd anticipated. New York
- I feel strongly that we do not acknowledge the value of the profession as much as we should. Virginia
- I had a wellness visit appointment for late March 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the visit was canceled and rescheduled for late April 2020. This visit was also canceled and another appointment made for mid - May 2020. Shortly before the May visit the doctor's nurse call and ask questions related to the virus. She also gave instructions for the upcoming visit. I was very impressed on the day of my visit with all the precautions that were in place. Illinois
- I had planned to postpone an annual wellness appointment with my primary care doctor, but when I called his office to reschedule, I was informed that the doctor was still doing routine appointments, so I went. I was totally comfortable because of the social distancing features of waiting room and precautions that were taken. Missouri
- My doctor is great and caring. North Carolina
- My Dr's office requires face masks and does temp checks prior to entering. I felt safe going there. Michigan