



NEWS RELEASE

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**SURVEY FINDS MORE IN U.S. WORRIED ABOUT  
HEALTH CARE COSTS THAN LOSING THEIR JOBS**

*CHW Health Security Index Shows Even Affluent are Increasingly Concerned about Affordability*

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** – April 5, 2009 – Despite the surging unemployment rate and continuing corporate layoffs, nearly twice as many U.S. adults are concerned about the rising cost of health care as are concerned about losing their jobs.

A nationally representative survey found that 69 percent of adults in the U.S. said they were worried about the cost of health care, while just 37 percent expressed similar concern about staying employed. The affordability anxiety is even affecting higher income families, where households earning more than \$75,000 saw health care cost concerns jump from 39 percent last year to 50 percent.

The annual Health Security Index™ survey, commissioned by Catholic Healthcare West, was conducted by Yankelovich (part of The Futures Company) to measure perceptions of individuals' confidence about their health and health care.

“Today’s headlines are justifiably focused on the overall economic crisis, but our Health Security Index findings show that health care affordability is a significant and enduring concern,” said Lloyd Dean, president/chief executive officer of Catholic Healthcare West. “Simply put, health care costs too much. Change is clearly overdue and the need for improvement is undeniable.”

On April 6, 2009 Lloyd Dean, a recognized national leader and advocate for health reform, will join California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Washington Governor Christine Gregoire, and White House Domestic Policy Council Director Melody Barnes at the Western Regional White House Forum on Health Reform in Los Angeles.

The overall CHW Health Security Index, which measures a wide range of perceptions about health and health care, held relatively steady compared to a year ago, and the survey contained some troubling findings:

- For the first time more than half (51%) believe the health care system in the U.S. is getting worse;
- One in five U.S. adults (20%) have had to choose between buying medicine and paying for other necessities, like groceries or heat for their homes;
- Those who work at small businesses are less secure (HSI of 63) than at larger businesses (HSI of 70);
- Three out of four of those closest to retirement age (50-64) are worried about the availability of Medicare;
- A majority of adults in the U.S. (83%) believe making health care affordable for every member of society should be one of Congress' most important issues in the coming year.

The CHW Health Security Index is a composite score of public perceptions about individuals' ability to access the services they need to maintain their personal sense of health. In general, the nation's overall sense about health care security has remained consistently low over the past three years, with a score of 65 out of 100 in 2009, down from 66 in 2008 and 2007. This stability is due primarily to adults' overall confidence in the quality of care available to them, their ability to access that care, and their generally positive sense of personal health. Concerns about affordability are responsible for keeping the Index low.

“Although the overall Health Security Index ranking for the nation remains consistent, there is a widening security gap between the more affluent and the more vulnerable members of society,” said Steve Bodhaine, President of the

Custom Research Group at The Futures Company. “That gap is cause for greater concern and it represents a great potential for tension in the marketplace. It’s certainly something policymakers need to be mindful of when they seek to address the health care needs of the nation.”

National health care reform legislation will be controversial, and the Health Security Index showed strong differences based on party affiliation on issues such as higher taxes or more government involvement. However, based on self described political affiliation, there is general agreement among Republicans, Democrats and independents on three policy initiatives: health care tax credits for low income families, employer-sponsored health plans, and a consumer-driven model for health insurance.

“We are encouraged by the Obama Administration’s continued focus on the important issue of health care reform,” Dean continued. “It will take the best minds from many fields to make meaningful reform a reality, but it is imperative that we do so.” Dean called upon health care leaders to commit to support comprehensive reform even if it runs counter to their business models. “We need to recognize that business as usual is not sustainable and we must all be willing to take risks to achieve universal coverage with lower long-term costs.”

In addition to the national survey, supporting qualitative research was conducted to better illuminate the findings that have emerged from the national survey. In November 2008, nine interviews were conducted in Los Angeles spanning the three days following the presidential election on November 4th. These interviews, conducted among men and women who represent various points on the Health Security Index, revealed strong sentiments that the current health care system is unfair to the middle class and that health care reform is both widely expected and hoped for. Excerpts can be viewed at: [www.healthsecurityindex.org](http://www.healthsecurityindex.org).

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### **About the Health Security Index**

The 2009 Health Security Index, conducted by Yankelovich, a part of The Futures Company, consisted of telephone interviews with 1250 adults in the U.S. 18 years of age or older. This year’s interviews took place Jan. 29 – Feb. 16, 2009. Data are weighted by age, gender, geographic region and race to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the population. The sampling error for this study is less than +/- 3 percent.

### **About Catholic Healthcare West**

Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), headquartered in San Francisco, CA, is a system of 41 hospitals and medical centers in California, Arizona and Nevada. Founded in 1986, it is one of the nation’s largest not-for-profit hospital systems and the largest private health care system in California. CHW is committed to delivering compassionate, high-quality, affordable health care services with special attention to the poor and underserved. The CHW network of nearly 10,000 physicians and approximately 53,000 employees provides health care services to more than five million people annually. In 2008, CHW provided \$967 million in charity care and unsponsored community benefit. For more information, please visit our website at [www.chwHEALTH.org](http://www.chwHEALTH.org).

### **About The Futures Company**

The Futures Company delivers measurable breakthroughs in marketing productivity for Fortune 500 clients. We identify for our clients specific, tangible opportunities for competitive advantage by moving them from simplistic targeting to advanced productivity solutions. The Futures Company was established in 2008 with the merger Yankelovich, Inc., and Henley Centre HeadlightVision, creating an unparalleled global consultancy powered by unique database and segmentation solutions and unparalleled information-based insights into consumer motivations and lifestyles. More information available at [www.thefuturescompany.com](http://www.thefuturescompany.com).