

Resilience in the Face of Challenges: America's Healthcare System

As part of a series to understand the effects of COVID-19 on people, businesses and institutions, APCO Worldwide conducted a poll of Americans from March 26–27, 2020. In the latest polling, APCO, a global advisory and advocacy communications firm, explored how COVID-19 is impacting Americans' attitudes and behaviors related to healthcare.

This report focuses on perceptions of the healthcare sector preparedness and resilience.

Americans have improved sentiment towards healthcare providers and institutions that are directly responsible for responding to this crisis, and Americans feel those providers and institutions will be made stronger because of it.

- **Two-thirds of adults have a more positive image of providers** (68%) and hospitals and health systems (65%) because of how they've reacted to the pandemic. Similarly, more than half have a more positive view of public health departments (56%) and their state government (55%).
- But, most have not changed their image of companies that manage electronic health records (58%), insurance companies (55%) or pharmaceutical companies (48%) as a result of how they reacted to the pandemic. **Yet, those who did change their image are two-times more likely to feel more positive toward each.**
- Nearly half of Americans say hospitals and health systems (48%), healthcare providers (45%) and medical testing companies (42%) **will be made stronger because of their actions related to the pandemic.**
- Notable is that **the majority of Americans chose at least one group that would come out of this pandemic stronger.** Less than a quarter (23%) said no one will come out stronger.

Americans overwhelmingly expect there will be shortages of medical resources needed to respond to the crisis. To meet the shortfall, Americans want the federal government to step up and force private companies into action.

- **Three-quarters of Americans think it is likely that in their area there will be shortages** of personal protective gear (79% very/somewhat likely), diagnostic tests for COVID-19 (75%) and essential medical equipment, such as respirators (74%). Two-thirds (67%) think it is also likely **there will be a shortage of healthcare providers.**
- **Americans are split on whether private companies will meet the demands** for essential medical equipment on their own (53%) or if the federal government will need to force them to produce via the **Defense Production Act** (47%).
- Still, nearly nine-in-ten (89%) **want the federal government to be involved** (either very or somewhat) in making sure private companies are meeting the demand for medical equipment needed to manage the pandemic.