



## New Survey Reveals Majority of Kentuckians Favor Universal Healthcare

### Executive Summary:

The Asclepius Initiative (AI) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the health and economic stability of Kentuckians, and ultimately everyone residing in the United States, by educating, inspiring, and mobilizing the public to advocate for a universally accessible, affordable, equitable and high-quality healthcare delivery system.

AI designed a survey of 1000 adult Kentuckians to assess their attitudes and beliefs about the US healthcare delivery system, and their willingness to entertain alternative financing models. The online survey was conducted by Qualtrics between April and May 2022.

Respondents were matched to Kentucky demographics with respect to gender, race/ethnicity, insurance status (uninsured vs insured through employer, Medicaid, Medicare, non-group), and urban vs rural.

Selected results include the following:

- 67% favor a national health plan that would provide health insurance for everyone, and only 23% opposed. 10% had no opinion. Overall, **two-thirds** of Kentuckians surveyed favor implementing a national health plan. This is nearly three times the number of those respondents who oppose such a plan.
- Of those who support a national government health plan, 51% think that it would be more efficient for patients and providers, 35% think that it would increase the quality of care provided, 61% think that it would make healthcare costs more affordable, 25% think that it would make receiving care less complicated.
- 75% think healthcare is a basic human right, while only 11% disagree and 14% are neutral.
- 40% of people would make life changes if they did not have to worry about health insurance coverage, including 15% who would go back to school, 20% would change jobs/start a new career, 7% would retire, and 6% would leave their current domestic situation.
- As a result of medical costs, overall, 59% of people avoided going to the doctor, 53% skipped or stopped care, 43% skipped or stopped medications, 31% were unable to purchase food, and 10% declared bankruptcy.
- 71% of those in rural areas and 61% of those in metropolitan areas avoided going to the doctor, skipped or stopped medical care, or skipped or stopped medications secondary to cost.
- With respect to insurance type, 62% of those with private commercial plans, 76% with Medicaid; and 61% with Medicare avoided, skipped, or stopped medical care or medications due to cost.
- While those without health insurance are more likely to avoid going to the doctor due to medical costs (86%), the same is true for nearly **6 in 10** insured Kentuckians (57%).
- 53% of people worried about healthcare expenses for themselves or their families at least one or more times a month, 31% at least one or more times per week, and 17% worried every day.
- Those most likely to never worry about healthcare expenses were those covered by more than one insurance type (40%). However, those with private insurance (16%) were less likely to report never worrying about healthcare expenses compared to those with Medicaid (19%), and Medicare (23%).

- The most common method of choosing an insurance plan was staying with the one that they had before (35%); 16% chose the only insurance plan offered. Only 5% picked the plan that offered out of network coverage/benefits, which means that up to 95% could have plans which restrict their choice of providers and facilities. 15% made sure that their current providers were in their plan.
- 25% spent more than \$1000 in out-of-pocket costs, and 42% spent over \$500 in 2021.
- While only 7.1% of whites are uninsured, this number rises to 12.6% of Blacks.
- Students have the highest frequency of being uninsured at 15%, followed by the unemployed at 14%, and the self-employed at 11%. However, 7.5% of those with full-time employment are uninsured, as are 8% of those who are employed part time. The lowest rate is in the retired population, where only 2% are uninsured.

**Next Steps:**

The results of this report reveal the need for health care delivery system reform. Too many Kentuckians are unable to obtain, or worry about receiving, the health care that they need. The Asclepius Initiative plans to engage allies, and to educate the public and decision makers on the real advantages – both economic and social, of a national health plan that would provide healthcare coverage for everyone.



# A Survey of Kentuckians' Attitudes and Beliefs about the US Healthcare Delivery System

## A Selection of Findings

Survey instrument developed by The Asclepius Initiative, with thanks to the Kaiser Family Foundation and IQS for their contributions, and to Liza Creel, PhD for data analysis.



# Survey Sample and Variables

- Survey administered via Qualtrics between April and May 2022 using existing respondent panels
- Sample constructed based on key demographic variables, used to meet recruitment quotas:
  - Race
  - Gender
  - Urban/rural residence
  - Insurance status (insured vs. uninsured) and type (employer based, Medicaid, Medicare, non-group)
  - Age  $\geq$  18 years
- 301 responses did not meet eligibility requirements, were incomplete, or had evidence of poor quality, resulting in a final study sample of 1000 responses.
- Collected additional sociodemographic data
- Collected data on attitudes, beliefs, and personal circumstances (e.g. premiums and out-of-pocket costs paid, use of insurance, etc)



# Key Variables

- ◆ Demographics
  - ◆ Age
  - ◆ Gender
  - ◆ Employment status
  - ◆ Education
  - ◆ Income
  - ◆ Sexual orientation
  - ◆ County of residence
  - ◆ Metro/non-metro (derived)



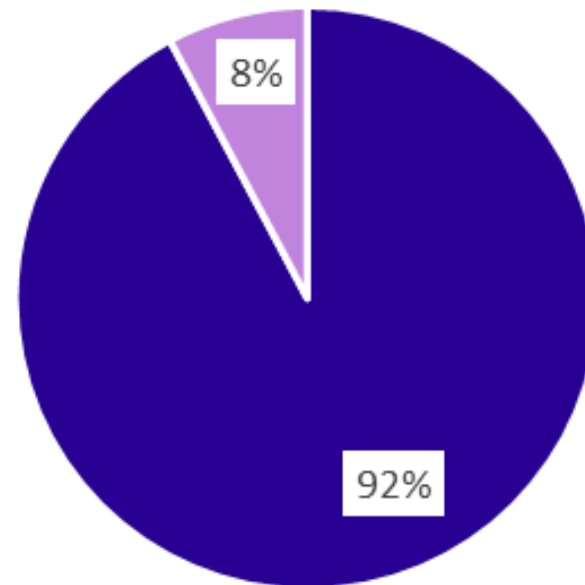
## Key Variables - Beliefs

- Support for paying higher taxes to replace current health insurance system
- Health insurance tied to employment
- Health care as basic human right
- Support for national government health plan for everyone
- Government coverage of health care costs for everyone
- Changing jobs and keeping health insurance
- Coverage options on health insurance (addition of dental, vision, hearing)
- Insurance structure and role of employers (fixed cost vs. percentage if insurance structure were simplified)



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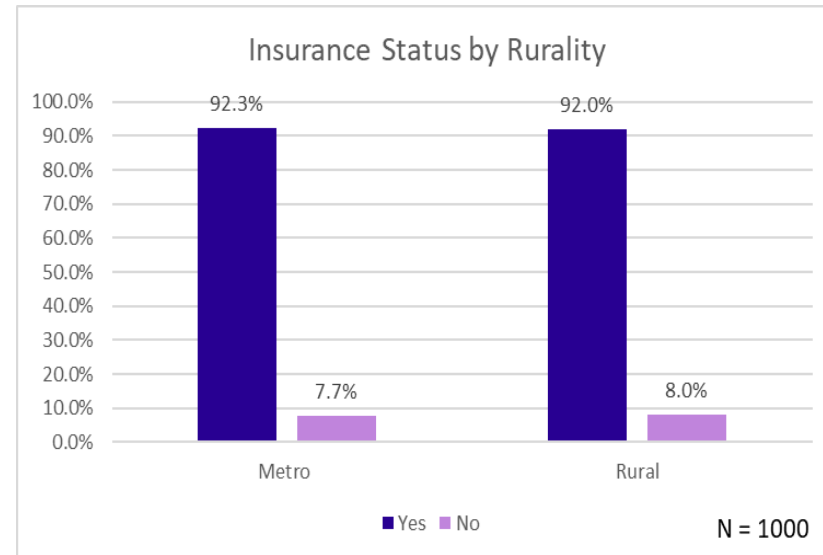
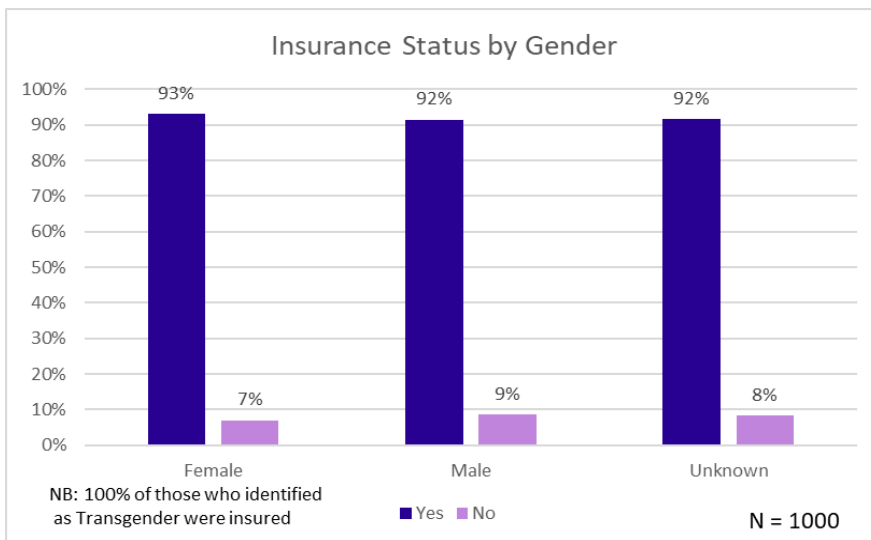
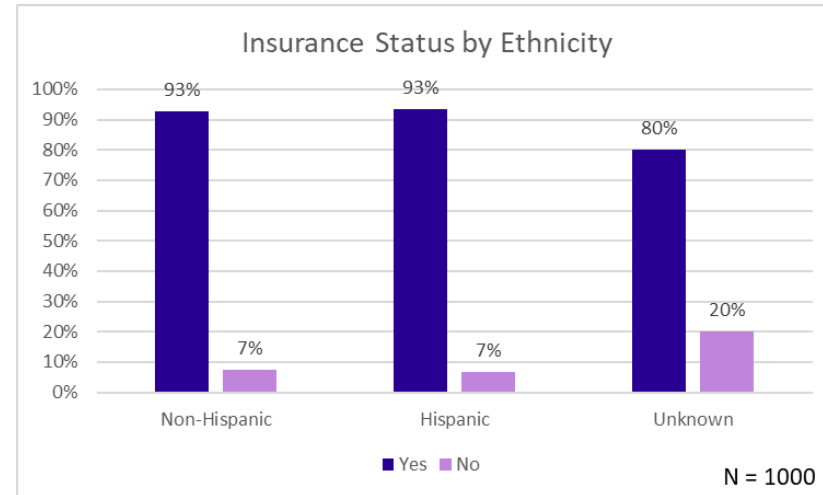
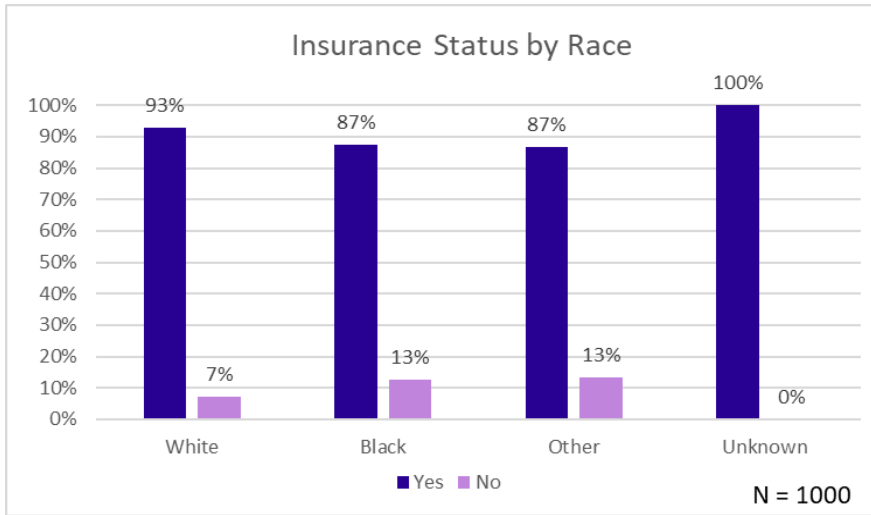
## Health Insurance Status of Surveyed Kentuckians



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■ Yes ■ No

N = 1000

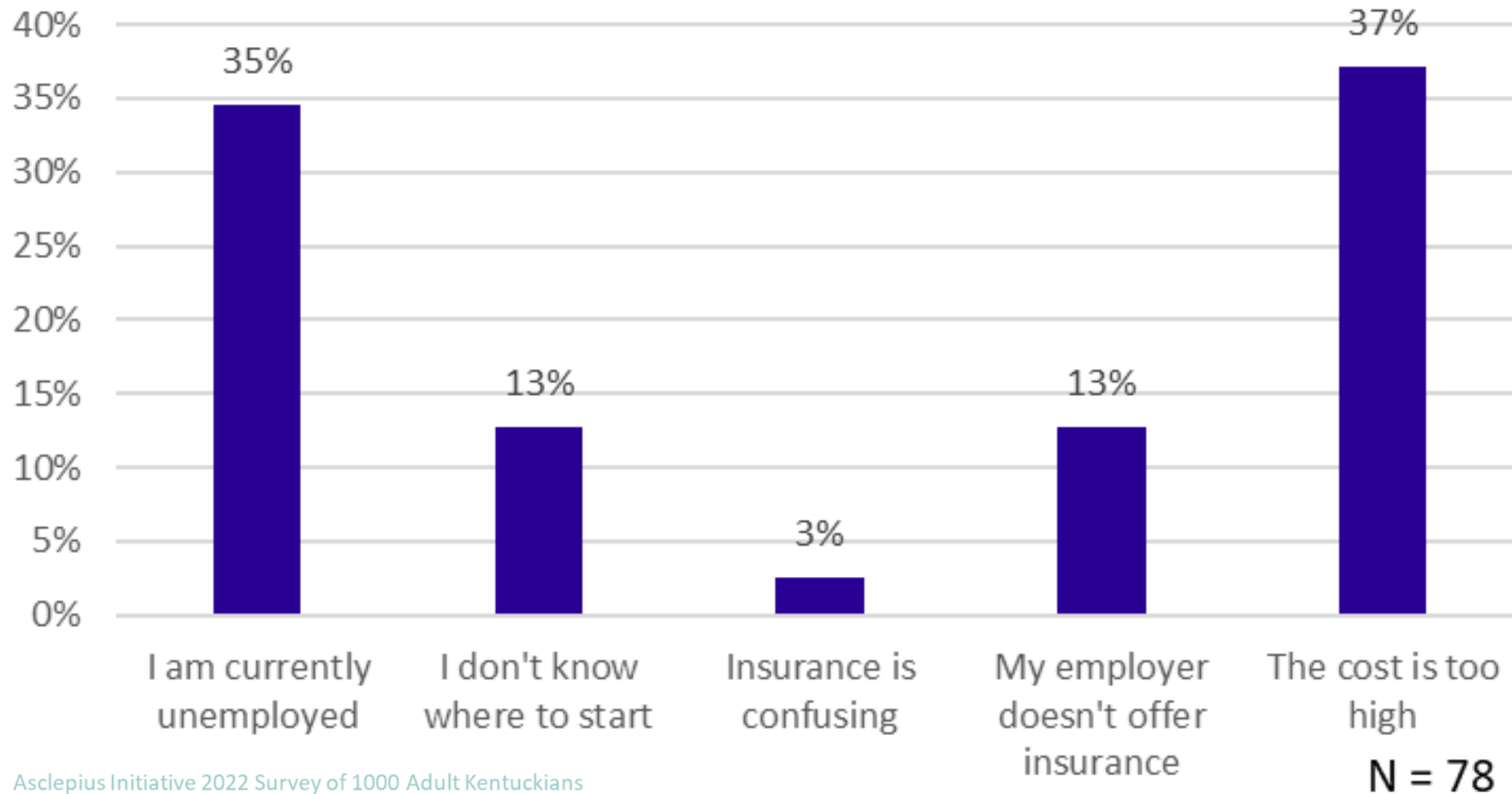






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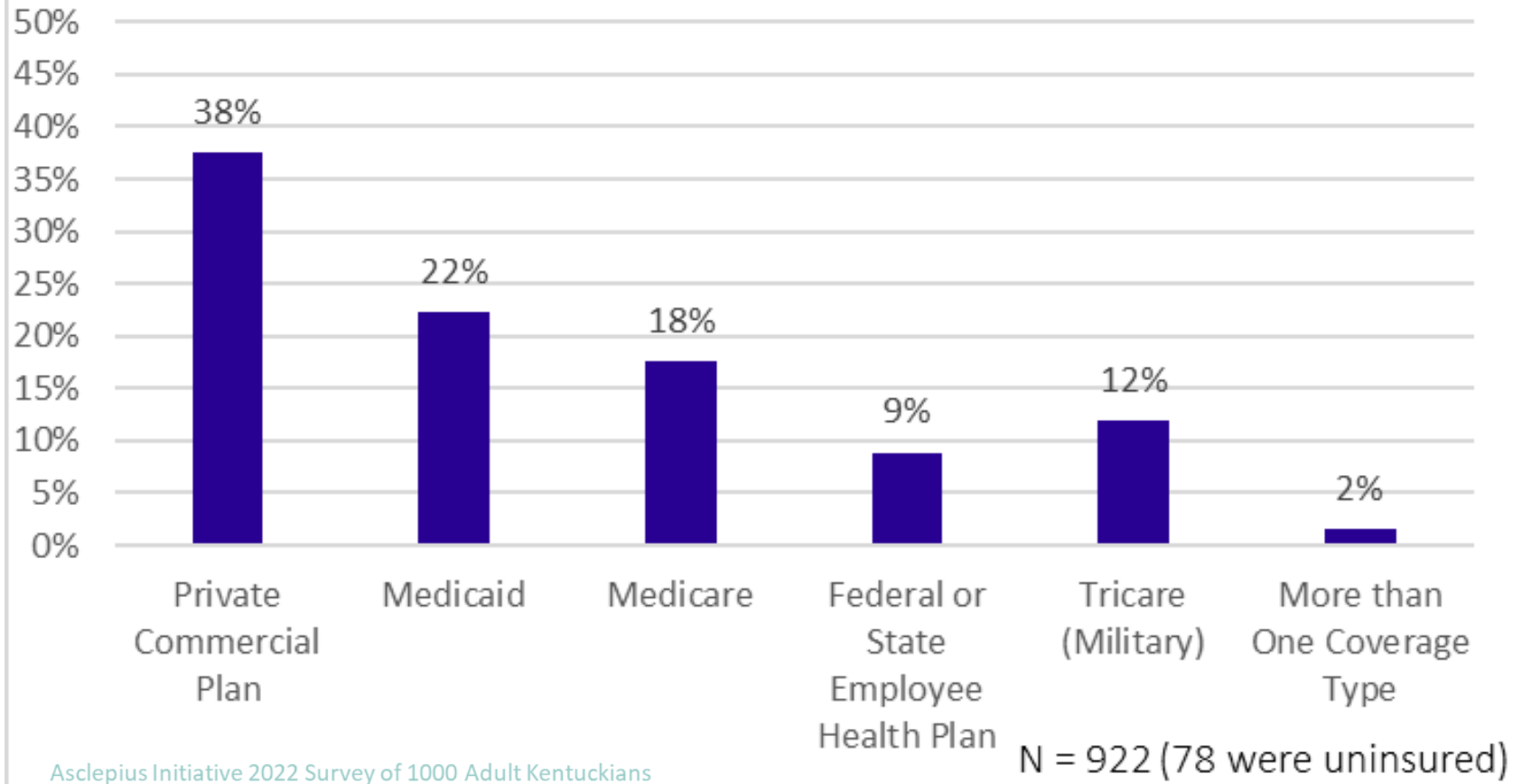
## Reasons for Being Uninsured





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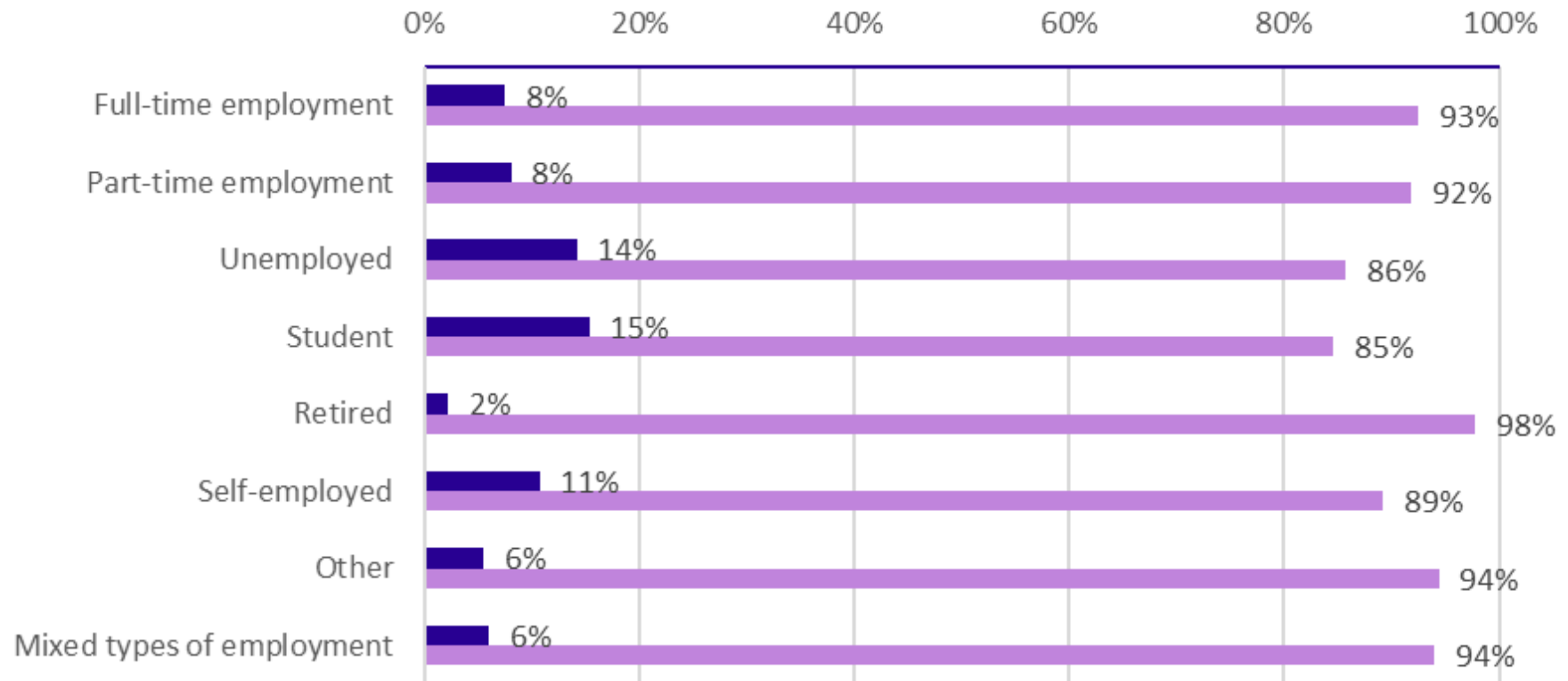
## Type of Health Insurance





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## Health Insurance Status by Status of Employment



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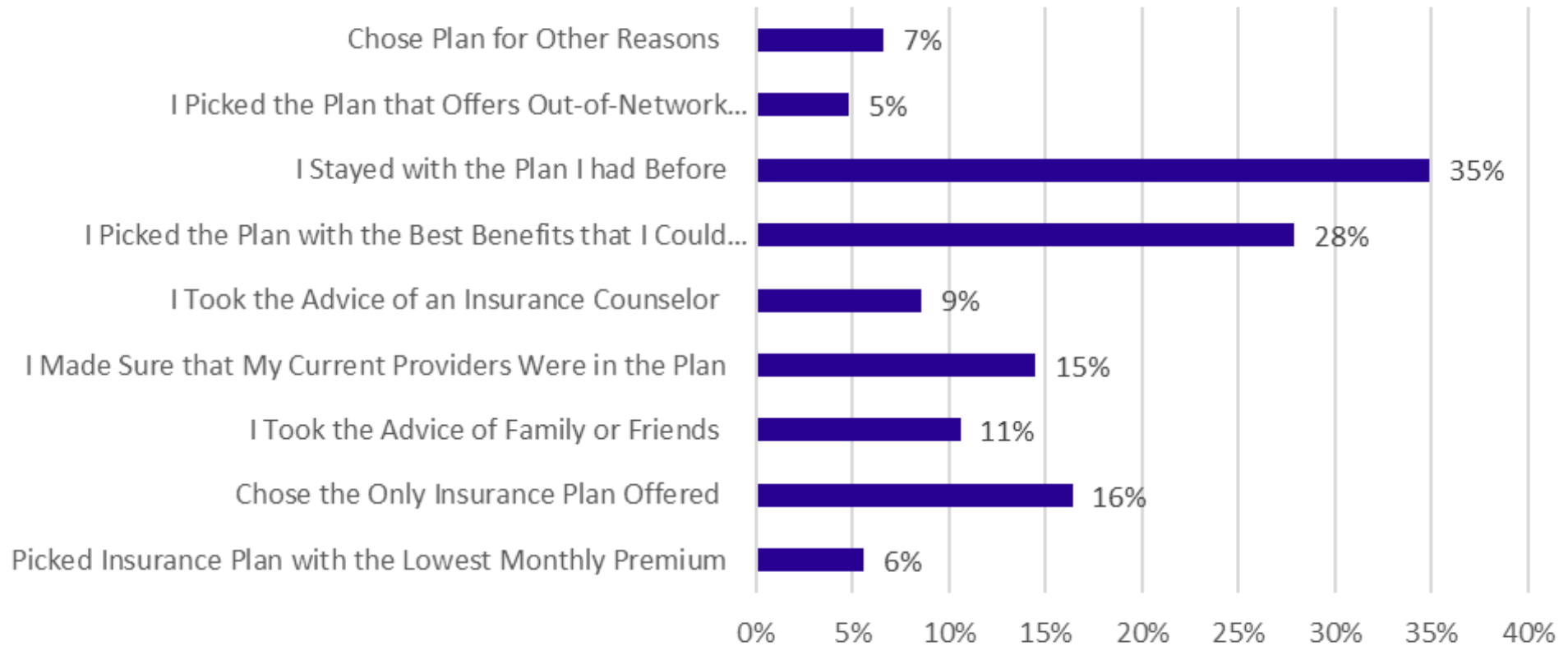
■ No ■ Yes

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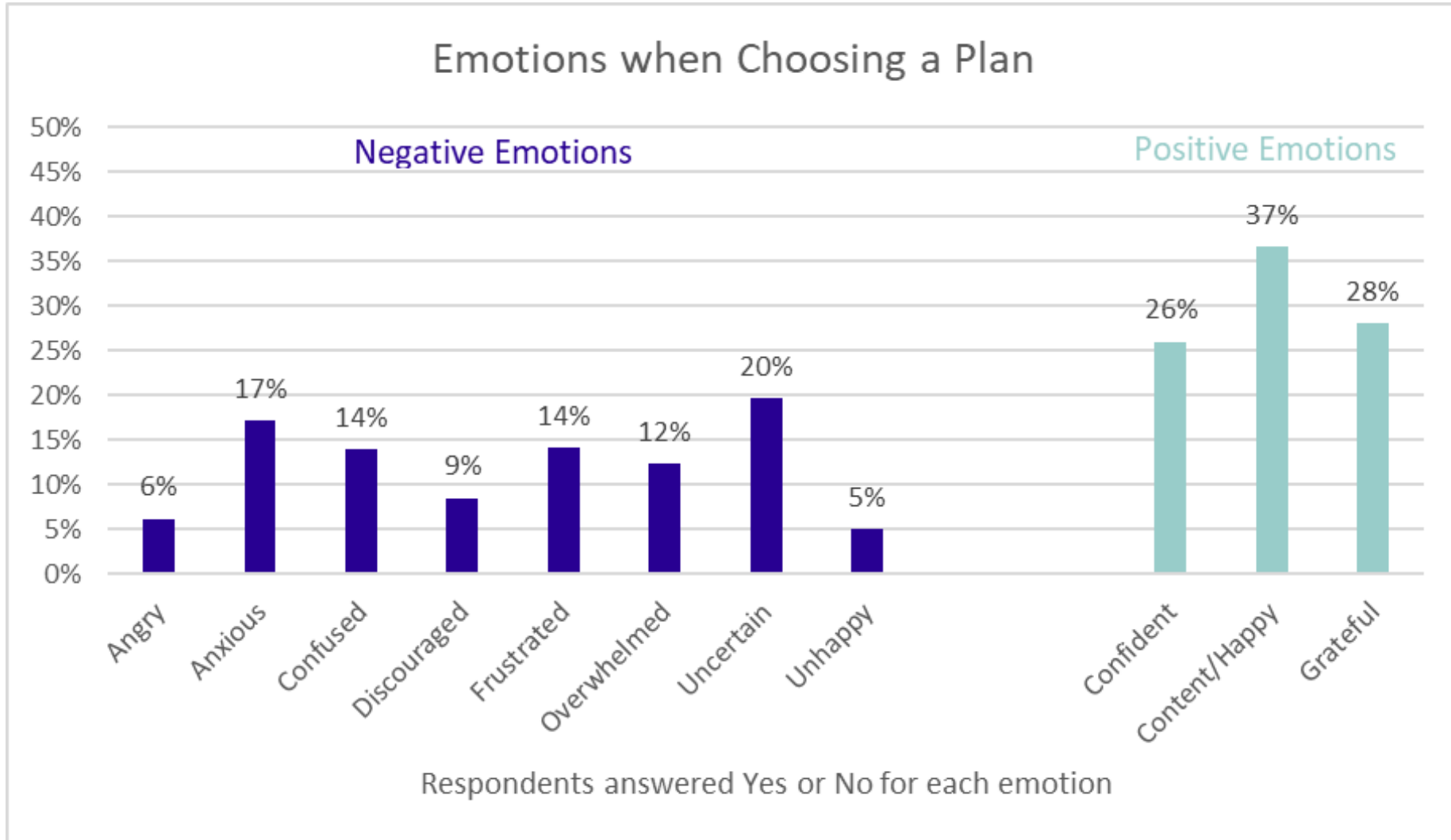
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## Reasons for Choosing Insurance Plan



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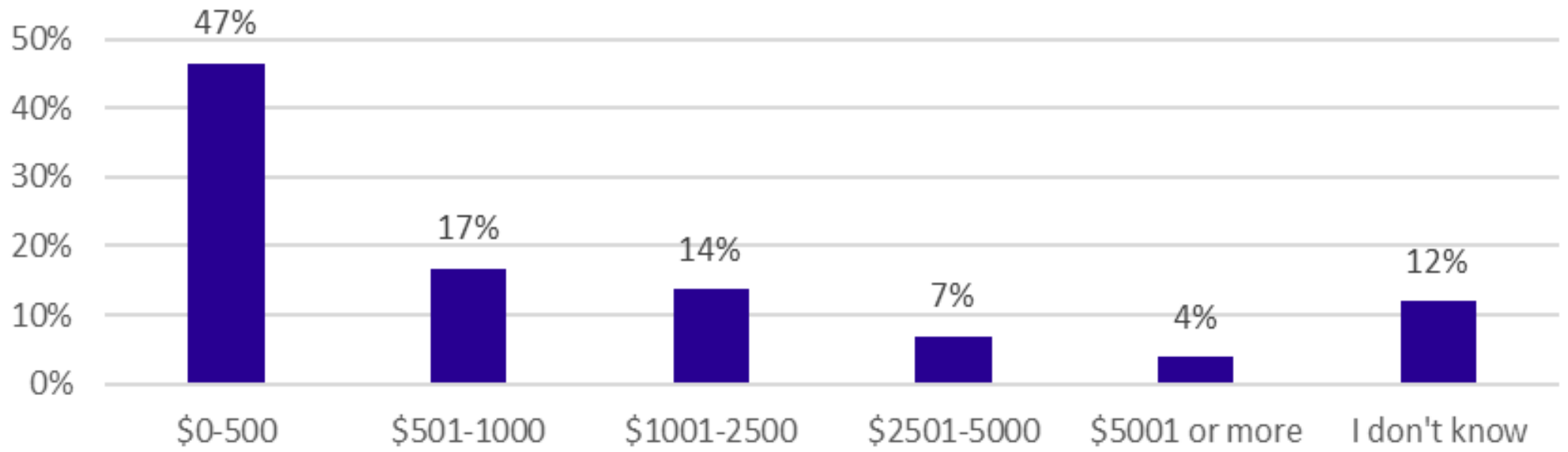
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## 2021 Annual Out-of-Pocket Costs Insured Respondents

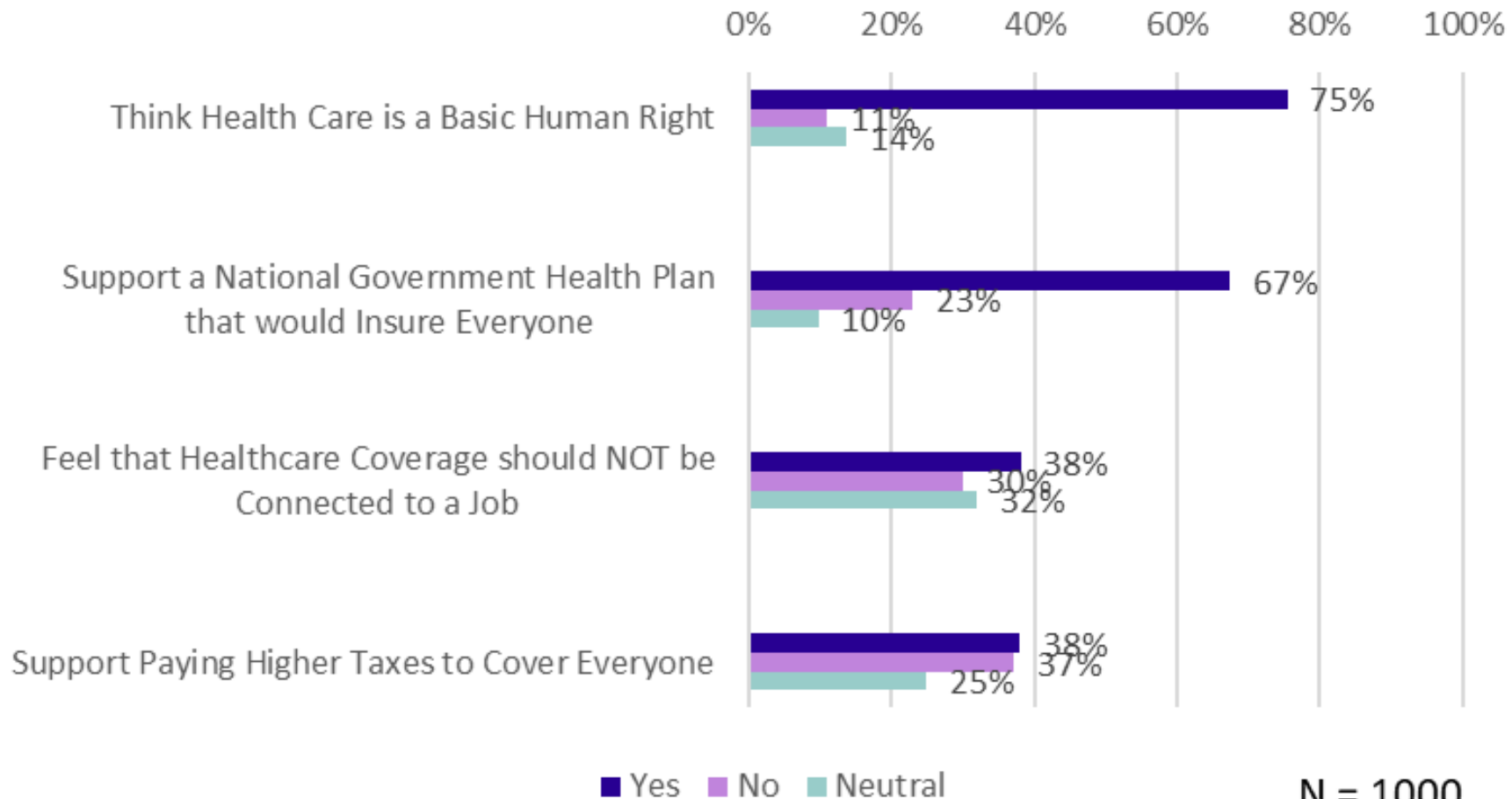


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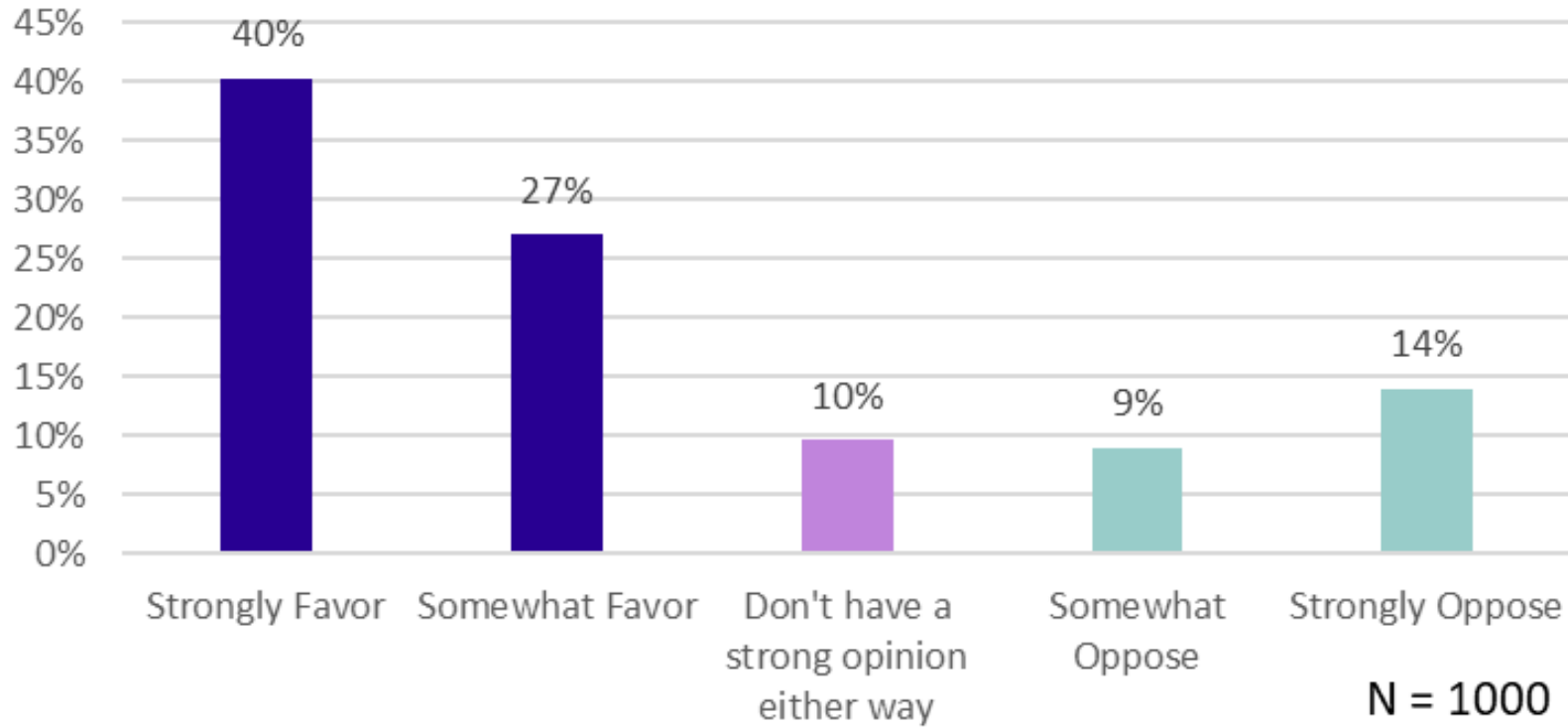
## Attitudes Related to Healthcare Coverage





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## Opinions on a National Health Plan that would provide Health Insurance for Everyone

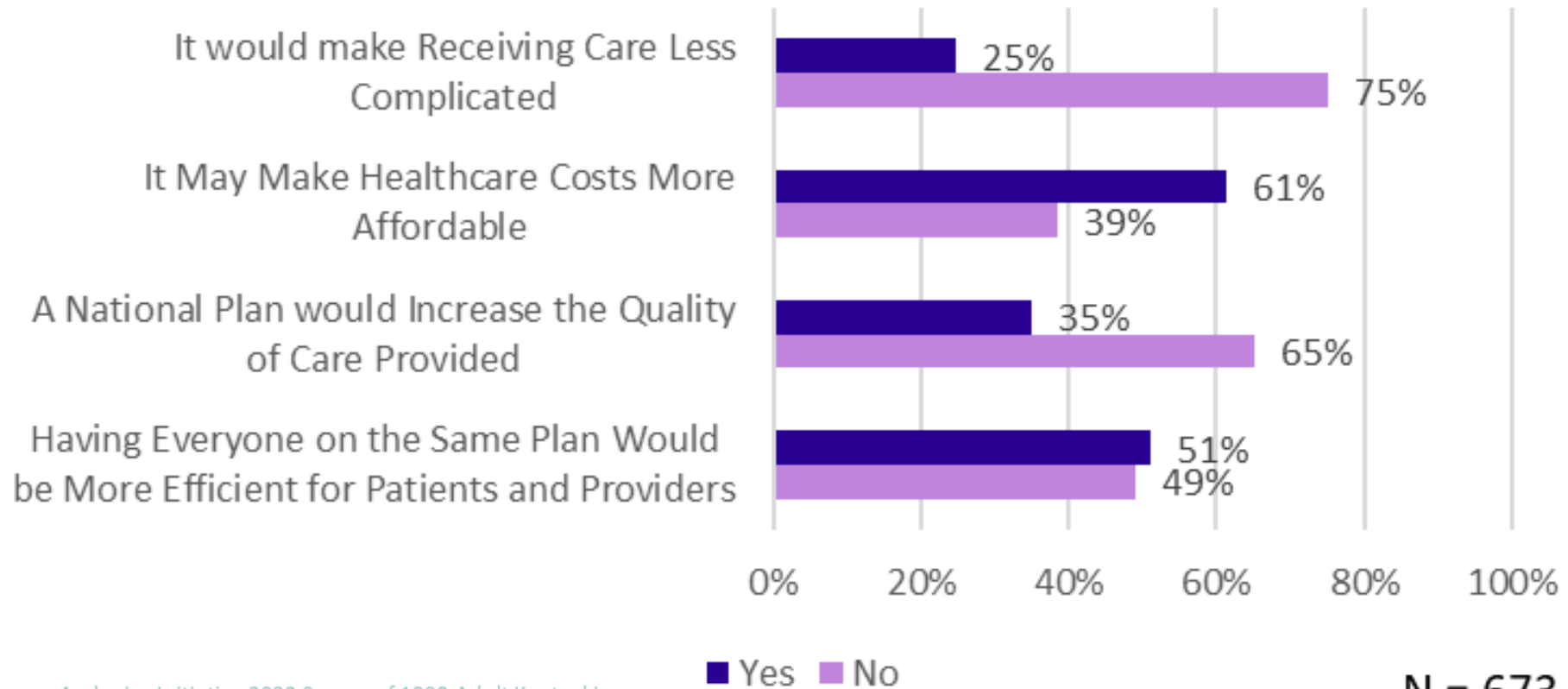


Asclepius Initiative 2022 Survey of 1000 Adult Kentuckians



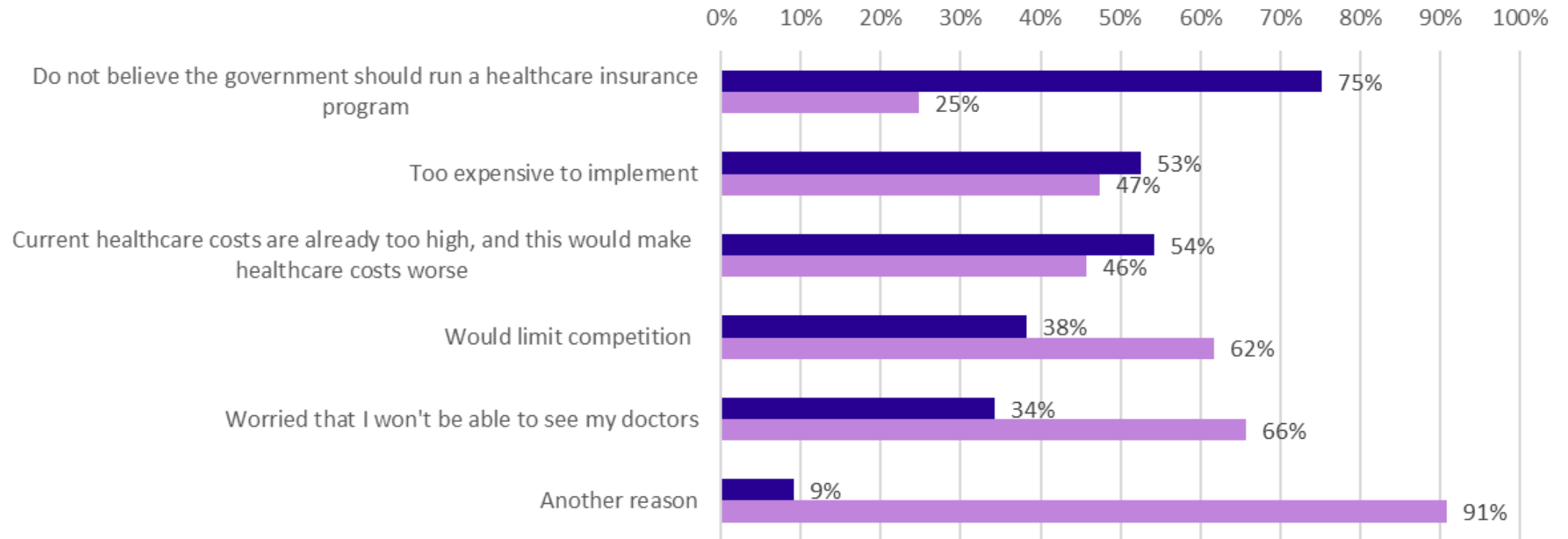


## Reasons Given by Those Who Support a National Government Health Plan





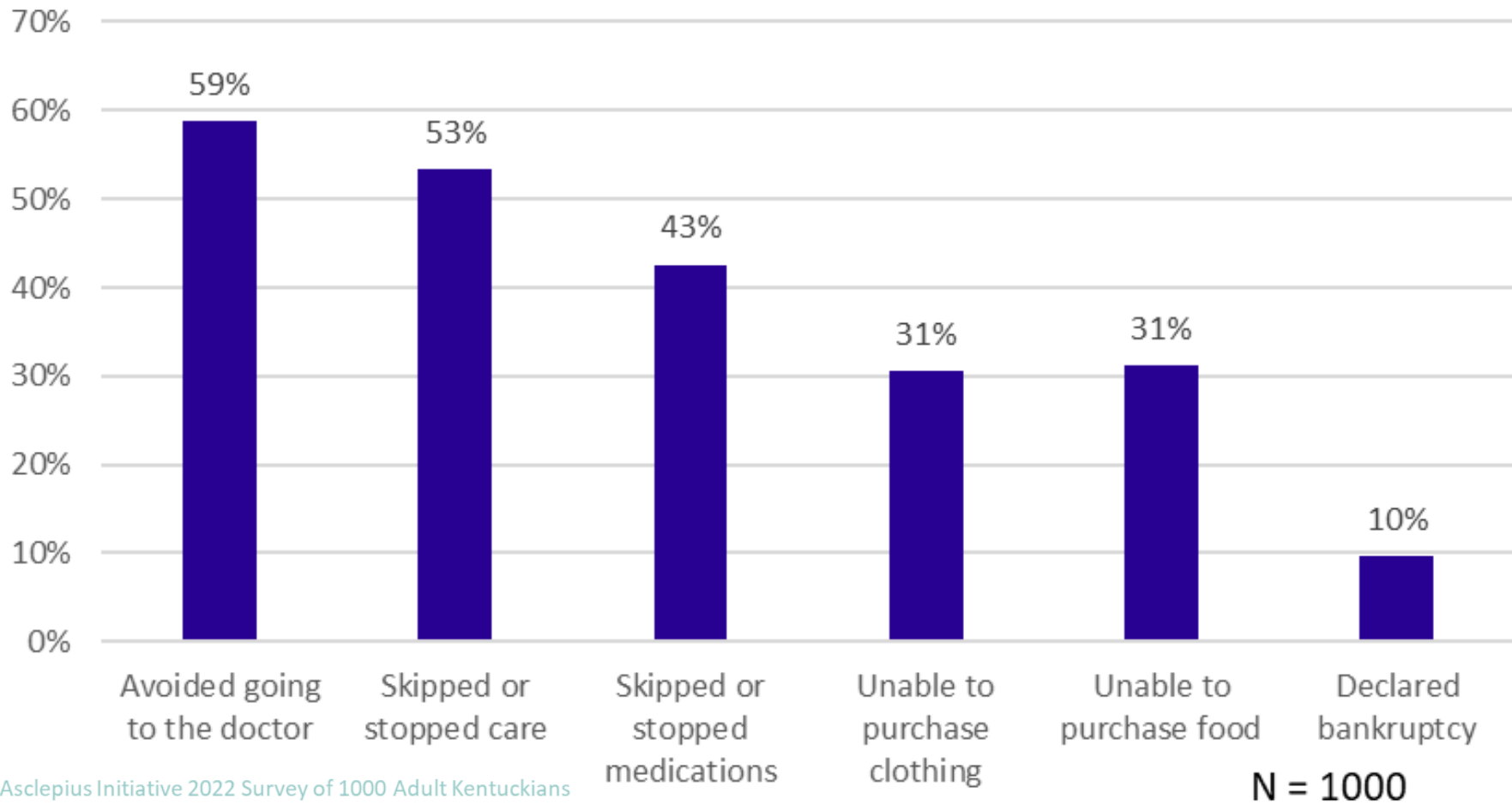
## Reasons Given by Those Who Oppose a National Government Health Plan





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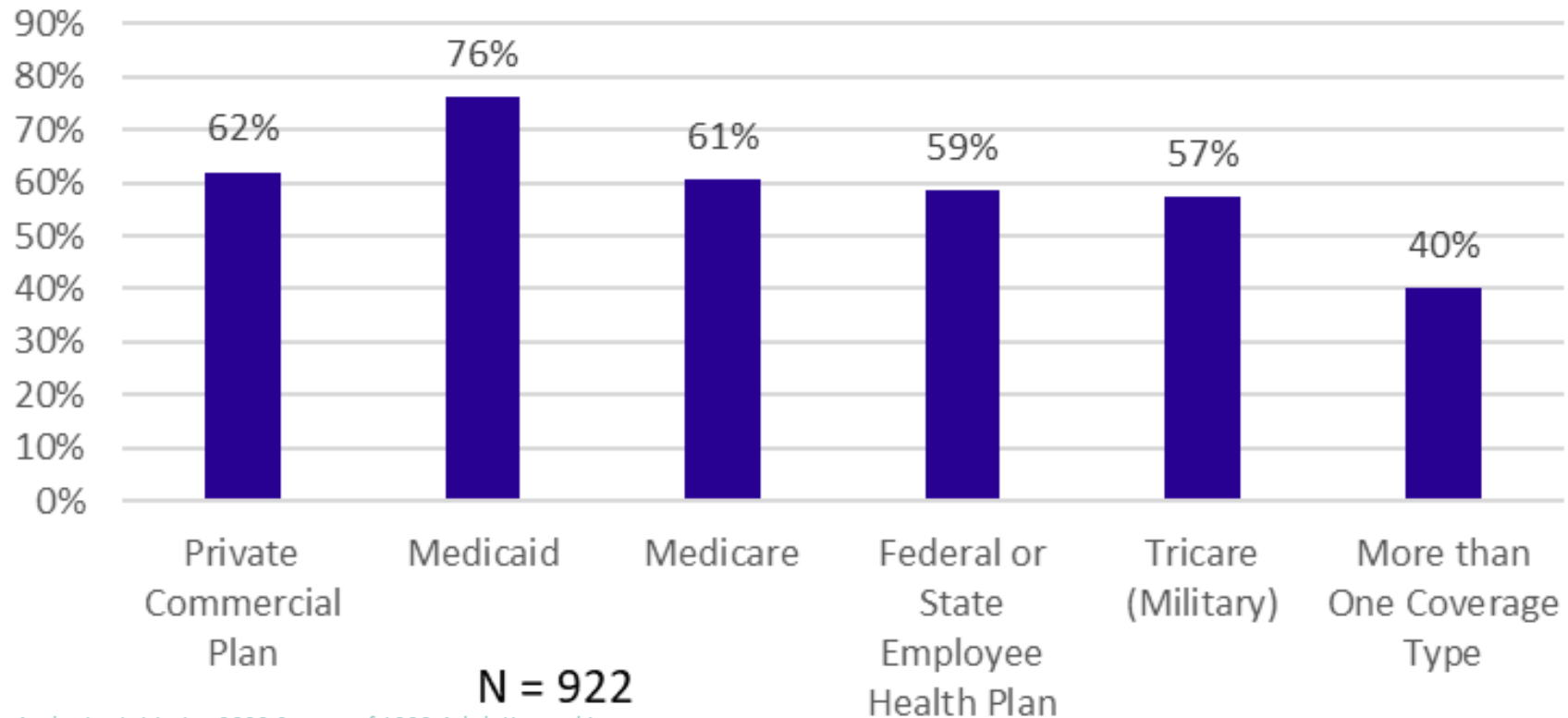
### As a result of Medical Costs:





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## Avoided, Skipped, or Stopped Medical Care or Medications Due to Cost, by Type of Insurance

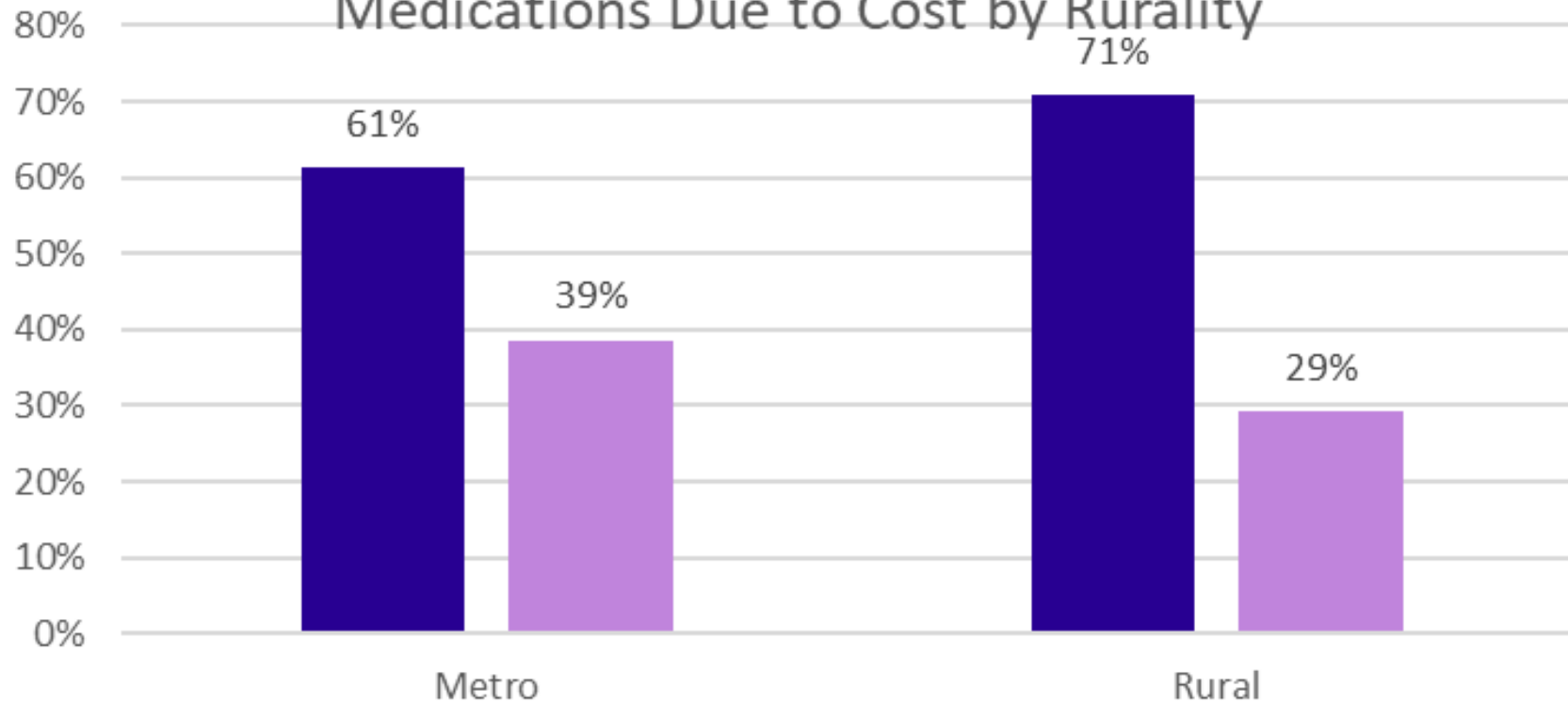


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## Avoided, Skipped, or Stopped Medical Care or Medications Due to Cost by Rurality



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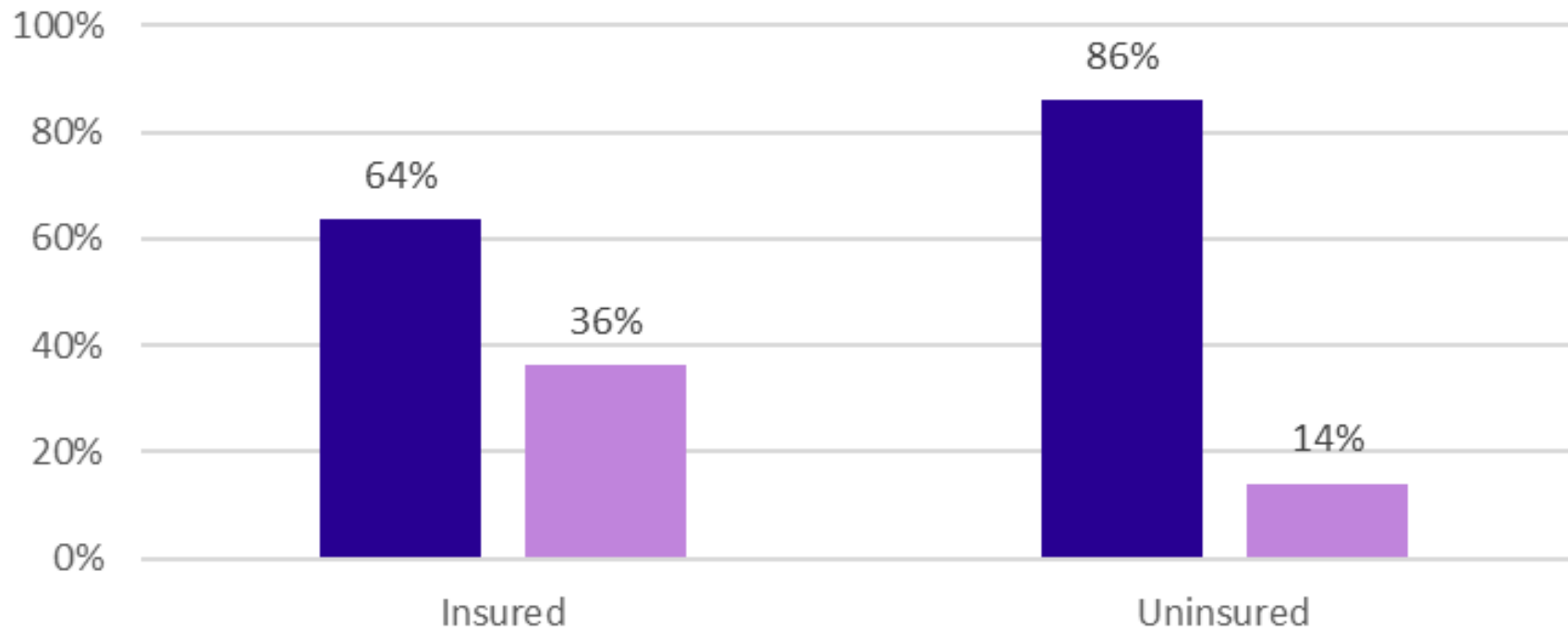
■ Yes ■ No

N = 1000



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## Avoided, Skipped, or Stopped Medical Care or Medications Due to Cost, by Insurance Status



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■ Yes ■ No

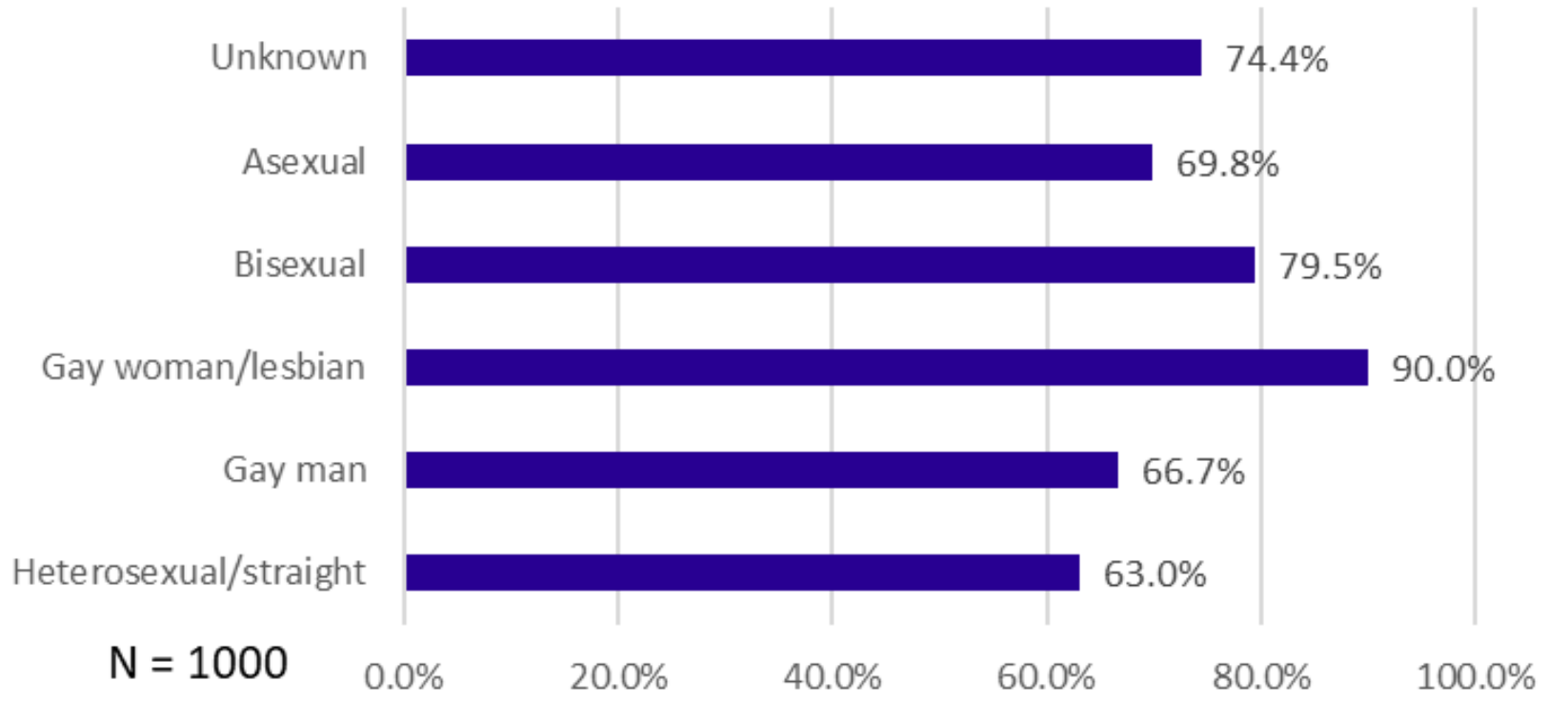
Corrected 1-15-23

N = 1000



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## Avoided, Skipped, or Stopped Medical Care or Medications Due to Cost, by Sexual Orientation

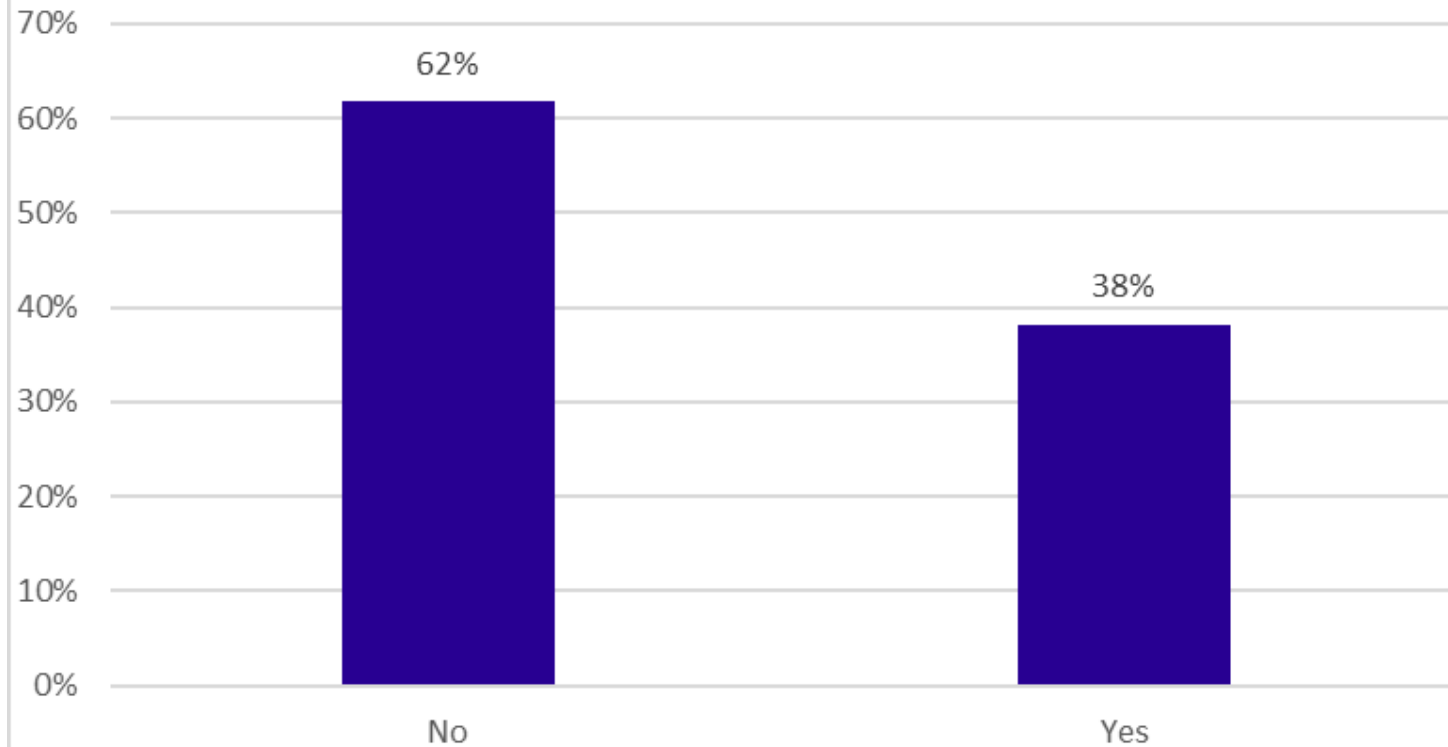




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## Medical Care vs Food and Clothing

Unable to Purchase Essential Goods (clothing, food) Due to Medical Costs



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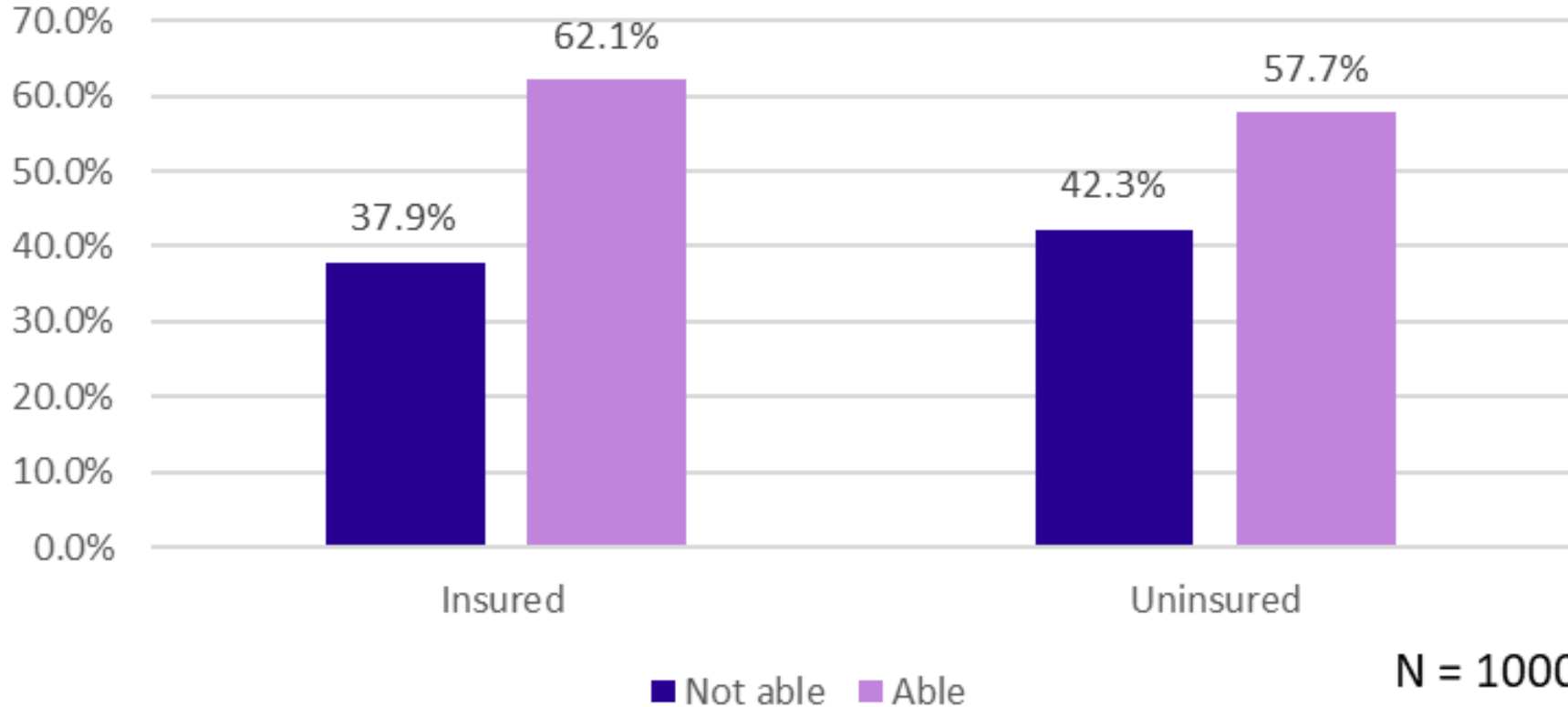
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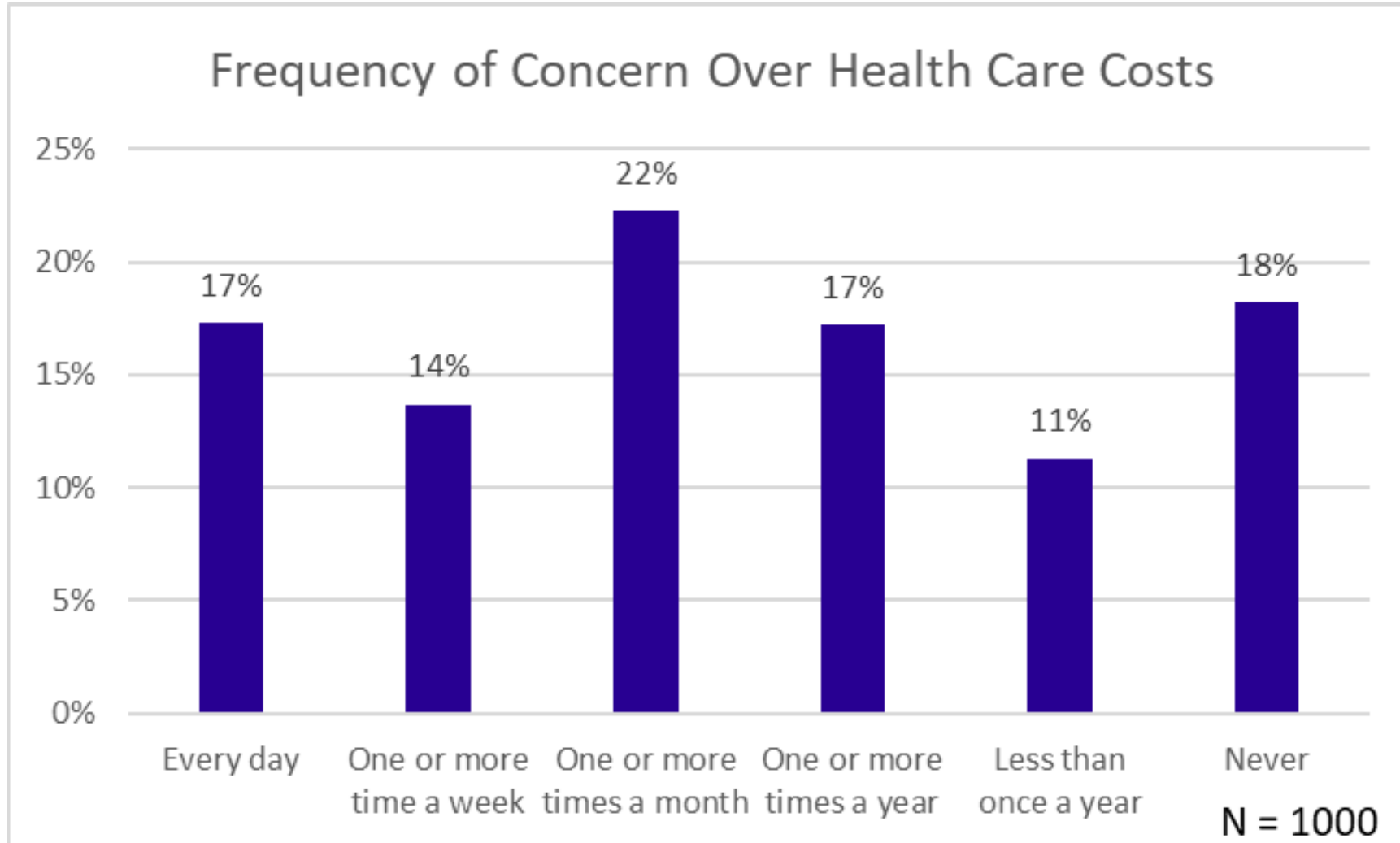
## Ability to Purchase Food and Clothing by Insurance Status



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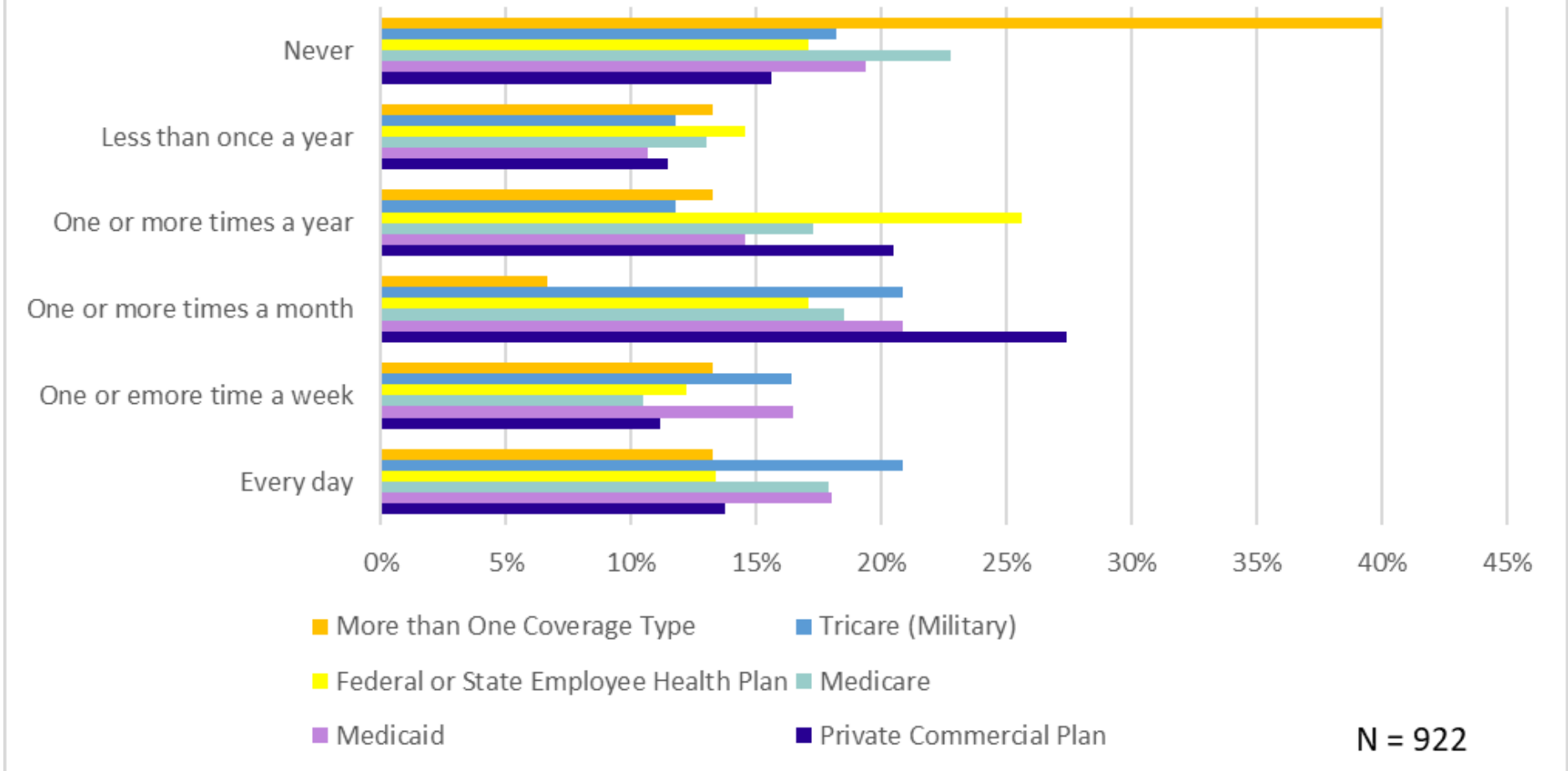


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### Concern About Health Care Expenses by Insurance Type





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If I Did Not Have To Worry About Health Insurance Coverage I would:  
(note - multiple response question; percents may not add to 100%)

