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POLL: 70% of Wisconsin Voters Concerned with Hospital Closures

New Healthy Wisconsin Alliance Polling shows WI voters are worried about accessing care

A new poll from the Healthy Wisconsin Alliance, a 501(c)(4) affiliate of the Wisconsin Hospital Association, shows that a large portion of the electorate is fearful of hospital closures and difficulty accessing care ahead of the 2026 midterms. Seventy percent of Wisconsin voters are at least somewhat concerned about additional hospital closures, with over 50% of those concerned saying they are most worried about difficulty accessing care.



The survey, commissioned as part of Platform Communications' Badger Battleground Poll, also found that news of hospital closures is having an impact—with closure concerns rising even higher in markets like Eau Claire, where two hospitals and nearly a dozen clinics closed in 2024. Eighty-five percent of Wisconsin voters in the Eau Claire media market are at least somewhat concerned about hospital closures. Concern for hospital closures disproportionately affects communities "outstate," as four out of five voters in rural areas are at least somewhat concerned about hospital closures in their communities.

In addition to hospital closures, several hospitals throughout the state have been forced to close service lines, particularly in services that serve a higher number of patients on Medicaid. The Center for Healthcare Quality & Payment Reform recently released a study showing Wisconsin has the 11th highest rate of labor and delivery closures in the entire country.

"This poll validates what we already know—voters care about their local hospitals and access to care," said WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding. "Underfunding from government programs has been a primary driver of hospital closures in Wisconsin and across the nation. Voters are concerned, but Wisconsin lawmakers can act by increasing Medicaid rates for hospitals."

Wisconsin hospitals are only reimbursed 63% of the cost to provide care to patients on Medicaid, resulting in a \$1.6 billion annual loss. Medicaid reimbursement rates are determined by state officials, as Medicaid is a jointly funded program between the federal and state government, but is administered by states.

Overall, Wisconsinites ranked hospitals as incredibly trustworthy actors in health care. Sixty-seven percent of Wisconsinites say that hospitals are more likely to act in the patient's best interest when compared to insurance companies, which only stood at 6%. Hospitals are the favorites across every political demographic by a wide margin. The poll asked voters if they or someone they love has experienced barriers receiving care caused by insurance companies. Approximately one in three voters have personal experience with difficulty receiving care due to insurance company denials.

[Read the full polling memo here.](#)

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Critical Access Hospital (CAH) Conditions of Participation Series