



NEWS RELEASE

Nine in 10 Voters Express Concern That Medicare Lab Payment Cuts Will Harm Patient Access to Diagnostic Lab Testing, Finds National Survey from Quest Diagnostics

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75% of registered voters surveyed call diagnostic testing "very important" to their care, and a bipartisan majority wants Congress to pass the RESULTS Act before additional Medicare cuts are scheduled to take effect January 2027

SECAUCUS, N.J., Sept. 16, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- **A new national survey** finds the overwhelming majority of American voters rely on diagnostic laboratory testing to guide their healthcare decisions and are deeply concerned about scheduled Medicare payment cuts that could put that access at risk.

The survey of 1,024 registered voters found that 83% relied on a diagnostic lab test in the past two years to help a doctor make a medical decision, and 96% consider these tests important to their own or their family's care with 75% saying they are "very important." Yet, about half (50%) say Medicare seniors, rural communities, and people managing cancer or other chronic diseases will all be hurt most if cuts take effect.

Quest Diagnostics (NYSE: DGX), one of the nation's leading providers of diagnostic information services, commissioned the survey and is providing a report of the findings: **Left Out, Left Behind: Who's Harmed by Medicare Lab Payment Cuts?**

Concern intensifies sharply once voters learn how Medicare laboratory payment rates have previously been set. The Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA), which passed into law in 2014, was meant to establish market-based rates for clinical laboratory services paid under the Clinical Lab Fee Schedule (CLFS) through collection of private payor rate data and volumes from independent, hospital outreach, and physician office laboratories. However,

when PAMA was implemented, this goal was not achieved, as CLFS rates were set based on data collected from less than one percent of all laboratories, resulting in artificially low payment rates and cutting nearly \$4 billion from the CLFS between 2018 and 2020.¹ Without congressional action, essential laboratory tests will be subject to up to 15% in CLFS rate cuts beginning January 1, 2027, with further reductions of up to 15% planned for 2028 and 2029.

Key findings include:

- 96% of registered voters surveyed say diagnostic lab tests are important to their or their family's care, and 83% said they had relied on a laboratory test in the past two years to help a doctor make a decision about their care.
- 88% of registered voters would have concerns if Medicare lab payment rates were set too low.
- 93% are likely to support a congressional candidate who works to protect Medicare patients' access to diagnostic testing.
- 74% say Congress should act now to prevent the cuts, rising to 80% once voters learn the cuts could delay access to newer tests for cancer, heart disease and diabetes.
- 50% say Medicare seniors, rural communities, and people managing cancer or other chronic diseases will all be hurt most if cuts under PAMA take effect.

Support for congressional action held firm across party lines with an average of 75% of Republicans, Democrats and Independents alike saying Congress should act now to prevent Medicare lab payment cuts before they harm patients, reflecting bipartisan agreement.

"For many dangerous health conditions, laboratory insights are the only tool available to identify disease risks in early, preventable stages," said Lee H. Hilborne, MD, MPH, Senior National Medical Director, Quest Diagnostics and Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, UCLA. "This survey confirms that ordinary Americans understand the essential role of laboratory insights to quality, effective healthcare and recognize that when access to reliable, innovative testing is at risk, they and their families are the ones who will pay the price."

The RESULTS Act, a bipartisan bill with approximately 130 congressional sponsors, aims to create more stable and representative Medicare rates for lab services. It would achieve this by giving the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) access to comprehensive private payor data and establishing annual guardrails to prevent destabilizing rate cuts. The bill is backed by a broad coalition of over 70 medical and patient advocacy organizations, including American Cancer Society, American Medical Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Hospital Association, the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the Alliance for Patient Access. On July 30, 2026, the Congressional Problem Solvers caucus **issued a statement** calling for passage of RESULTS.

"For older Americans, timely access to diagnostic testing is not optional — it is essential to detecting disease early, managing chronic conditions and making informed decisions about their care. Seniors should not face fewer choices or longer waits because of Medicare's flawed payment system. The bipartisan RESULTS Act offers a commonsense solution, and Congress should prioritize passing it this year," said Mark Gibbons, President and CEO of **RetireSafe**.

With the American Clinical Laboratory Association (ACLA), Quest Diagnostics is calling on Congress to pass the RESULTS Act before the next round of scheduled cuts take effect January 1, 2027, to ensure Medicare's laboratory payment rates reflect the true cost of the testing patients depend on.

"These findings are consistent with the strong bipartisan support in Congress for protecting access to laboratory services," said Susan Van Meter, president of the American Clinical Laboratory Association. "Laboratory tests are the GPS of healthcare for all patients and physicians -- detecting disease, guiding treatment decisions to ensure the right therapy is provided at the right time, and managing chronic conditions. Congress should pass the bipartisan RESULTS Act before the scheduled cuts take effect to protect patient access to these essential services."

The full report, *Left Out, Left Behind: Who's Harmed by Medicare Lab Payment Cuts?*, **is available here**. For more information on contacting Congress about the RESULTS Act, visit **www.StopLabCuts.org**.

About the Survey

The survey was commissioned by Quest Diagnostics and conducted by Regina Corso Consulting among 1,024 self-identified registered voters nationally, with an oversample of 624 additional respondents across six cities: Dallas, Houston, Las Vegas, Boston, Tampa and Atlanta. This survey was conducted online between June 11 and 19, 2026 and the sample was balanced to match the U.S. Census of registered voters. The sampling error for this is +/- 3.1%.

About Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics works across healthcare to create a healthier world, one life at a time. We connect people, from clinicians to consumers, with laboratory insights that illuminate a path to better health. With a focus on delivering smarter, simpler testing, we help reveal new avenues to identify and treat disease, empower healthy behaviors and improve healthcare management. Quest Diagnostics serves half the physicians and hospitals in the United States and one in three American adults each year, and our nearly 60,000 employees work together to deliver diagnostic insights that inspire actions to transform lives. **www.QuestDiagnostics.com**

1 ACLA and 30+ Leading Provider Organizations Urge Congress to Pass RESULTS Act to Protect Access to Clinical Laboratory Services | American Clinical Laboratory Association

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