

CARING FOR OTHERS

# Caregivers, Presidential Candidates and Health Care Issues

by Nancy Webre, for The Bulletin

Keeping up with the twists and turns of the 2016 primary season is enough to give any voter whiplash. Regardless of where you fall on the political spectrum, it is important to understand where candidates stand on the issues that matter the most, including health care. This issue affects every American, but any changes will have a significant impact on family caregivers, seniors and those nearing retirement age.

AgingCare.com recently conducted a survey asking caregivers about their candidate preference based upon their plans for the American health care system. Of more than 1,500 caregivers, just over one-third (34%) of respondents favored Hillary Clinton's proposed health care policies. Donald Trump trailed in second place (26%) and Bernie Sanders came in as a close third (24%). At stake in this presidential election are the future of the Affordable Care Act, changes to Medicare and Social Security benefits, competing proposals for lowering the cost of prescription drugs and the potential sale of health insurance across state lines.

The second component of AgingCare.com's Health Care and the 2016 Presidential Election Survey required respondents to select three health-related concerns they believe should be top priorities for the next president. The list of issues included repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA), continuing ACA, Medicare, Medicaid, Veteran's care, prescription drug programs, sale of health insurance across state lines, coverage for pre-existing medical conditions, Alzheimer's disease, rising costs of health care, healthy living incentives and implementation of electronic medical records. Over 42% of the respondents feel that addressing the mounting costs of health care should be a top priority and just over 35% are concerned about the future of Medicare.

AgingCare.com created a tool (which can be located on their website) to assist family caregivers in making sense of these controversial topics. The guide compares each candidate's stance on health care issues. While each candidate and American citizen may differ in their opinions of what would be

best for this country's health care system, it is undeniable that something must change. Chronic illnesses, progressive conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, caregiving, and health care costs affect entire families, often over multiple generations. These hardships will only become more prevalent and troublesome as our nation continues to age. We all need to stay informed and act in support of those measures we believe to be most beneficial to our loved ones and our country. For further information about this survey, caregiver responses and candidate's positions, visit AgingCare.com.



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