



# National Association of Health Services Executives

Empowering the **Next Generation** of Health Care Leaders Today

## Election 2020:

### NAHSE Member Survey of Political Leadership in the United States

In the lead up to what many people considered the most important election in recent history, the National Association of Health Services Executives (NAHSE) conducted a brief membership survey from September 08 – September 18, 2020. Members were asked to respond to questions about the priorities, needs and concerns of their organizations and communities regarding the political and policy landscape during the current health pandemic and time of national transition. Approximately 2,000 NAHSE members received invitations to participate in the survey, and 252 members responded (12.6% response rate). The summary of responses is presented below.

### Who responded to the survey?

- The majority of the survey respondents were female (62%) versus male 38%.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Male	38.10%	96
2	Female	61.90%	156
	Total	100.00%	252

- Eighty-six percent respondents were between the ages of 25 – 64 and 11% indicated they were over the age of 65.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	18 to 24	2.78%	7
2	25 to 34	26.59%	67
3	35 to 44	20.24%	51
4	45 to 54	22.22%	56
5	55 to 64	17.46%	44
6	65 to 74	9.13%	23
7	75 or older	1.59%	4
	Total	100.00%	252

- Relative to academic preparation and highest degree earned, 67% of respondents hold a master's degrees; 20% hold doctoral degrees; 12% hold bachelor's degrees and less than 1% with associate degrees.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	High school or less	0.00%	0
2	Associate's degree	0.79%	2
3	Bachelor's degree	12.30%	31
4	Master's degree	66.67%	168
5	Doctoral degree	20.24%	51
	Total	100.00%	252

- Sixty-three percent of respondents were residents of nine states: Florida (8%); Georgia (9%); Illinois (10%); Michigan (4%); Missouri (5%); New York (4%); Pennsylvania (6%); Tennessee (5%); Texas (12%). The remainder were distributed in smaller numbers across several remaining states.
- Eighty-one percent of respondents were employed full-time; student respondents accounted for 5%, retired persons 4%, and unemployed 5%. Also included among were "other" at 5%, and the combinations of consultants, entrepreneurs, or working in another industry outside of healthcare 5%.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Employed-Academic Institution/University	15.14%	38
2	Employed-Association	2.79%	7
3	Employed-Consulting	11.55%	29
4	Employed-Hospital/Hospital System	39.44%	99
5	Employed-Insurance or Managed Care Company	3.59%	9
6	Employed-Medical Practice or Clinic	6.77%	17
7	Employed-Technology Company	2.39%	6
8	Employed-Pharmaceutical Company	0.00%	0
9	Student	4.78%	12
10	Retired	3.98%	10
11	Unemployed, seeking employment	4.78%	12
12	Other (please specify)	4.78%	12
	Total	100.00%	251

## How is COVID-19 affecting members' professional and personal lives? We asked:

- Have your employment or benefits been impacted by COVID-19? (Responses: n=266)

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, I am currently furloughed or laid off	4.51%	12
2	Yes, I was previously furloughed or laid off, but I am back at work	3.01%	8
3	Yes, my hours are currently reduced	2.26%	6
4	Yes, my hours were previously reduced, but are now back to what I worked pre-COVID	3.01%	8
5	Yes, my pay is currently reduced	3.76%	10
6	Yes, my pay was previously reduced, but is now back to what I earned pre-COVID	6.77%	18
7	Yes, my benefits are currently reduced	6.39%	17
8	Yes, my benefits were previously reduced, but are now back to what I received pre-COVID	1.50%	4
9	Yes, I have been unable to find work	4.51%	12
10	No, my employment and benefits have not been impacted by COVID-19	64.29%	171
	Total	100.00%	266

- Has another member of your household had their employment or benefits impacted by COVID-19 (Responses: n=248)

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, and it negatively impacted our household income or access to health care	14.92%	37
2	Yes, but it did not impact our household income or access to health care	9.27%	23
3	No	75.81%	188
	Total	100.00%	248

Based on 261 responses, 210 (80%) respondents indicated that they had 'no', limited, or temporary reductions in their compensation and/or benefits. Of the 261 respondents, 210 individual responses (66%) indicated that their employment benefits were not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, 7% had their pay reduced but since was restored; in addition, 8% were furloughed/laid off/ hours and/or benefits reduced temporarily but were since restored to baseline.

Of the 261 responses 51 (20%) respondents are currently furloughed, laid off, benefits / pay/ hours reduced, and/or unemployed / looking for work.

Accounting for all individuals professionally impacted by COVID-19 (either currently or temporarily), the findings account for 34% (89) of respondents.

*Interpretation:* It is comforting that 66% of respondents were not impacted professionally by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, considering that the total findings represent a fraction of the NAHSE membership, 34% of individuals were negatively (either temporary or permanently) impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in their professional lives. It is encouraging that 15% (38) of respondents have since recovered their compensation and benefits. However, it is concerning that 34% of all respondents were economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic either permanently or temporarily.

A question for NAHSE as a policy statement: How can we / What can we do to advocate for our effected members to fully recover their professional benefits that were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## What were members' perceptions and activities related to the 2020 election? We asked:

- How likely is it that you will vote in the 2020 Election? (Responses: n=246)

The overwhelming majority of respondents (>99%) indicated they would definitely (97.6%) or probably (1.6%) vote in the 2020 election.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Definitely	97.56%	240
2	Probably	1.63%	4
3	Probably Not	0.00%	0
4	Definitely Not	0.81%	2
	Total	100.00%	246

- How confident are you that your vote will be counted in the 2020 election? (Responses: n=246)

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Very confident	40.65%	100
2	Confident	39.43%	97
3	Not sure	14.63%	36
4	Less Confident	4.07%	10
5	Not confident at all	1.22%	3
	Total	100.00%	246

Many states in the United States have recently implemented voter suppression policies, which make voting more difficult, particularly for members of marginalized populations (e.g., non-white and female voters) (Nowacki et al., 2020). In the last two presidential elections, voter registration issues were exacerbated by partisan rule making, long lines, partisan “caging” and challenges to voters' eligibility, vote (Wang,

2012). In 2020, voter suppression issues included redistricting, mail-in and early voting restrictions, and social distancing fearmongering due to COVID-19. For example, with the pandemic reaction to force social distancing measures in states, a reduction in mail processing capacity for absentee ballots could have forced more in-voting behavior. If so, exposure notification apps had the potential for being hacked and incorrectly notifying users (Genarro et al, 2020).

- Are you concerned that voter suppression will impact the 2020 election results? (Responses: n=246)

In the NAHSE 2020 membership survey, the concern for voter suppression impacting the 2020 election was shared with 92.28% of respondents. This is reflected in 227/246 of respondents choosing very concerned or somewhat concerned, 160 and 67, respectively.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Very concerned	65.04%	160
2	Somewhat concerned	27.24%	67
3	Undecided	2.85%	7
4	Less concerned	2.44%	6
5	Not concerned at all	2.44%	6
	Total	100%	246

- Are you concerned that voter fraud will impact the 2020 election results? (Responses: n=240)

The concern for voter fraud impacting the 2020 election was shared by 58.34% of respondents. This is reflected in 140/240 of respondents choosing very concerned or somewhat concerned, 167 and 67, respectively. A mean of 2.56 and standard deviation of 1.47 suggests a skewed, yet distributed set of answers by respondents. One out of every eight respondents were not at all concerned that voter fraud will impact the 2020 election results.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Very concerned	34.17%	82
2	Somewhat concerned	24.17%	58

3	Undecided	5.83%	14
4	Less concerned	23.33%	56
5	Not concerned at all	12.50%	30
	Total	100%	240

- Do you favor or oppose your state allowing voters to vote by absentee/mailed in the 2020 election? (Responses: n=246)

An overwhelming majority of respondents, 91.47%, favored states allowing voters to vote by absentee/mailed ballots in the 2020 election. This is reflected in 225/246 of respondents choosing strongly favor or favor, 178 and 47 respectively. Only 6.10% of respondents were undecided.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Strongly favor	72.36%	178
2	Favor	19.11%	47
3	Undecided	6.10%	15
4	Oppose	2.03%	5
5	Strongly Oppose	0.41%	1
	Total	100%	246

- Regardless of whether it is currently available in your state, do you favor or oppose your state allowing early voting in the 2020 election?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Strongly favor	81.40%	197
2	Favor	14.05%	34
3	Undecided	3.31%	8
4	Oppose	0.83%	2
5	Strongly oppose	0.41%	1
	Total	100%	242



- How do you plan to vote in the 2020 election? (Responses: n=246)

Approximately 65% of respondents plan to vote in person on the day of the election or through early voting opportunities. Approximately 35% intend to vote via mail or absentee ballot. Only 2 respondents do not plan to vote in the 2020 election (<1%).

#	Answer	%	Count
1	In person, day of election	26.75%	65
2	In person, early voting	37.86%	92
3	Absentee/mailed ballot	34.57%	84
4	I do not plan to vote in the 2020 election	0.82%	2
	Total	100%	243

- In what ways have you personally contributed to voter engagement activities in your community?

The majority of respondents (43.2%) did not contribute to voter engagement activities. However, 22.2% reported making financial contributions to voting rights advocacy group(s), 10.3% helped with voter education, 9% helped with voter registration, and 9.8% made other contributions.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Helping with voter registration	8.79%	21
2	Helping with voter education	12.13%	29
3	Making financial contributions to voting rights advocacy group(s)	21.76%	52
4	Volunteering time with voting rights advocacy group(s)	5.02%	12
5	Hosting a candidates forum	0.42%	1
6	I have not contributed to voter engagement activities	42.26%	101
7	Other (please specify) [see below]	9.62%	23
	Total	100.00%	239

*Other:*

- Helping with planning of educational session for local chapter
- Increase awareness about registering to vote via social media campaigns
- Multiple options (couldn't be selected above) - Voter registration, voter education, volunteering time with voting rights groups
- Signage urging persons to vote; verbal communication to colleagues and young persons
- Voter education, helping people to vote and contributing to voting rights organizations
- Phone banking
- Promoting candidates via social media
- Helped friends and family register to vote
- Encourage friends and family member to register and vote. Use social media to promote voting rights advocacy groups.
- Making Democratic calls
- Provided voter registration forms in my office
- Multiple - voter registration, voter education, hosting candidates' forums, financial contributions
- I will be working at an election precinct on November 3rd.
- Donating funds to the Joe Biden
- Asking and reminder family, friends, and co-workers to register and vote
- Encouraged others to vote
- Calling registered voters
- Also helped with voter registration. Q17 only allows one response.
- Working the polls on election day
- First 4 choices all apply
- Will be volunteering at polling place
- Serve as a poll worker

## What were members' perceptions about the direction of the country (pre-election) and the way forward? We asked:

- Would you say things in the United States today are generally headed in the right direction or on the wrong track? (Responses: n=238)

The majority of respondents, over 92%(n=220) feel that the country is on the wrong track. Only five respondents felt that the country was generally going in the right direction (<3%) and thirteen respondents were unsure (5.5%)

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Generally headed in the right direction	2.10%	5
2	Off on the wrong track	92.44%	220
3	Not sure	5.46%	13

	Total	100.00%	238
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- What are the top 5 most pressing problems that must be addressed by the next administration? (Respondents: n=249)

Forty-two percent of respondents ranked the COVID-19 pandemic as the #1 problem to be addressed by the next administration; overall, 65% ranked COVID-19 among the top 5 problems. Nearly half of respondents ranked criminal justice / police brutality (49.0%); health care access and costs (48.6%); or race relations / racism (48.2%) among the top 5 problems. Also ranked among the top 5 problems by a large number of respondents were health inequities (36.5%); jobs / economic insecurity (36.1%); the economy (33.7%); and education (32.1%).

		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	Tot Rank 1-5
1	Budget deficit:	9	5	4	3	6	27
2	Climate change/environment:	6	5	10	14	16	51
3	COVID-19:	105	24	10	13	11	163
4	Criminal justice/police brutality:	21	43	25	15	18	122
5	Economy:	17	32	27	3	5	84
6	Education	8	9	18	19	26	80
7	Global affairs	2	8	2	5	17	34
8	Health care access and costs	12	19	29	28	33	121
9	Health inequities	12	14	26	20	19	91
10	Immigration	0	1	4	6	7	18
11	Jobs/economic insecurity (e.g., unstable income, housing, food)	18	17	14	19	22	90
12	Race relations/racism	20	29	29	24	18	120
13	Social justice	8	11	12	17	14	62
14	Substance abuse (including opioid crisis)	1	1	0	0	5	7
15	Terrorism	1	1	1	4	5	12
16	Transportation	1	0	0	1	1	3
17	Voting rights	4	5	11	9	5	34
18	Other	4	0	2	3	1	10
		<b>249</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>229</b>	

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Budget deficit:	3.6%	2.2%	1.8%	1.5%	2.6%
Climate change/environment:	2.4%	2.2%	4.5%	6.9%	7.0%
COVID-19:	42.2%	10.7%	4.5%	6.4%	4.8%
Criminal justice/police brutality:	8.4%	19.2%	11.2%	7.4%	7.9%
Economy:	6.8%	14.3%	12.1%	1.5%	2.2%
Education	3.2%	4.0%	8.0%	9.4%	11.4%
Global affairs	0.8%	3.6%	0.9%	2.5%	7.4%
Health care access and costs	4.8%	8.5%	12.9%	13.8%	14.4%
Health inequities	4.8%	6.3%	11.6%	9.9%	8.3%
Immigration	0.0%	0.4%	1.8%	3.0%	3.1%
Jobs/economic insecurity (e.g., unstable income, housing, food)	7.2%	7.6%	6.3%	9.4%	9.6%
Race relations/racism	8.0%	12.9%	12.9%	11.8%	7.9%
Social justice	3.2%	4.9%	5.4%	8.4%	6.1%
Substance abuse (including opioid crisis)	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
Terrorism	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	2.0%	2.2%
Transportation	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.4%
Voting rights	1.6%	2.2%	4.9%	4.4%	2.2%
Other	1.6%	0.0%	0.9%	1.5%	0.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

- What can NAHSE do to ensure that the top 5 problems you identified are addressed by the next administration?

Members comments regarding the potential role of NAHSE in addressing the top five problems identified generally fell within two broad categories: (1) education and advocacy, and (2) leadership and collaboration. Specific ideas included developing white papers; leveraging website communication and newsletters; speaking engagements and educational forums; collecting and sharing data with Congress; Capitol Hill visits; coordinated advocacy efforts to reduce health care costs and inequities; promoting diversity in administrative, clinical, and executive levels; partnering with other organizations to lead on important issues. Representative quotes are summarized below.

## Education and Advocacy

- *Leverage the capacity of our organization to be a leading voice in engaging the administration. Engage in direct, intentional advocacy focused on the top 5 problems identified by members.*
- *Coordinated advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels. Funneling important white papers and briefs to elected officials to help inform them on key issues.*
- *Push to be recognized on a global platform and outwardly support that racism is a public health crisis.*
- *Be real. Don't be afraid to take a stand on issues and problems that we all know are there.*
- *Advocate for social justice across all spheres (police reform, health access and costs; health equity; education)*
- *Focus advocacy on specific actions, especially from policy makers that will lead to move living wage jobs, better educated students, increased community owned thriving businesses, total restructuring of the penal system in our communities...It is imperative that NAHSE is represented in discussions that impact health care policy as are other major associations. We should speak for ourselves.*
- *Gather state-specific pain points, proposed solutions, and consolidate into a brief to present to legislators.*
- *Continue to help prepare minorities for positions in the C Suite; continue to host forums to assist minority awareness of the issues*

## **Leadership and Collaboration**

- *Identify a way to have a "seat at the table" or at least a "voice."*
- *By making sure that the organization and its members are at the table and our collective experience and skills are deployed for our communities nationwide.*
- *Be in the room, join coalitions and amplify your voice. More letters, more press releases, less talking to one another, more speaking truth to power.*
- *Get involved and become the industry thought leaders.*
- *Collaborate with AHA, ACHE, and other national associations to ensure the voices of our members and communities are heard on large platforms.*
- *Work with local, state, and national representatives to let them know what the Association membership's concerns and suggestions might be.*

## References

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