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Need to Know

What Patients and Doctors Want from Healthcare Systems

A story on Making Access Happen at [Sandoz.com](https://www.sandoz.com)

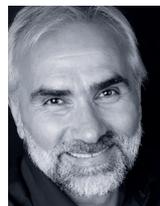
SANDOZ A Novartis
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What does access – to healthcare – mean to you? A 12-country survey looks at trends and concerns

With age comes wisdom, people would like to believe. In truth, with age comes disease, most people seem to think. Through changing demographics, many societies will soon have millions more seniors, and treating old-age related illnesses will greatly burden healthcare systems. This is what a sample of the public – nearly 7,000 people and another 400 medical professionals – said in a 12-country survey by Sandoz on public opinion and expert perception on the most pressing issues in healthcare across industrialized and newly developed economies (SHIPS 2016).

What Does Access Mean to You?

What patients need, and expect, from healthcare services depends mainly on where they live. In upper middle- to high-income countries – for this survey, Australia/New Zealand, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, USA – most infectious diseases are under control. Nearly all mothers and children have skilled birth care, and life expectancy is high. Healthcare systems are mature, and spending for health services is rising.



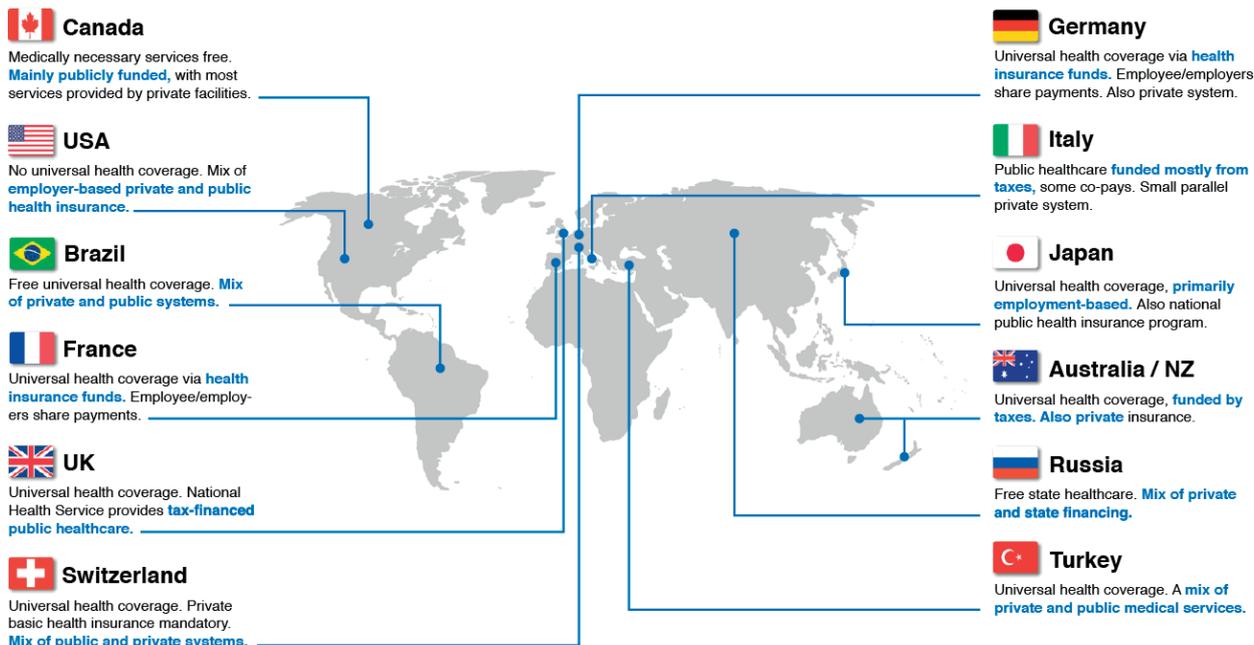
Dr. Rusen Yildirim
Chairman of the Health Business
Council operating under DEIK (Foreign
Economic Relations Board), Turkey

What is the top future healthcare trend in your country?

“The aging population will be a major challenge for the Turkish healthcare system. The situation has changed a lot in the past 30 to 35 years. My first job in 1983 was in a health unit. Top issues were vaccinations, children’s diseases and communicable diseases. But nowadays people are dealing with hypertension, obesity, coronary, artery problems and cancer, obviously.”

Health Coverage

A 12-country comparison



Source: Access Survey, WHO, World Bank

Top Three Concerns

One reason that healthcare costs are rising in middle-to high-income countries is that populations are getting older. Thus, the survey starts by looking at future trends. The public in developed countries tends to worry about three things. About 80 percent of people are concerned that, as the society ages, more money will have to go to health care. Just over 70 percent worry about higher costs of treating one or more chronic diseases. Finally, 68 percent of patients fear that bacteria are developing resistance to antibiotics – and higher numbers of healthcare experts are concerned about all three points.

Questions of Access

When looking at opinions on healthcare, the top question of the SHIPS 2016 survey is how well the systems are meeting needs. In the upper middle-to high-income countries surveyed, half of the public thinks that access to medicine is low. In particular, patients want to know whether there are affordable treatment options, particularly generic pharmaceuticals. Experts in middle-to-high income countries rate access to medicine lower than the public does.



Oleg Feofilaktov
managing editor, Aptekniy Business (Pharmacy Business) magazine, Russia

What do you see as challenge to your country's healthcare system?

“Antibiotic resistance is a global problem, but a national one, too. A solution to this problem, unlike an aging population or health insurance coverage, is a medical issue rather than one that requires mostly social measures. We need to ration antibacterial treatment and to search for new approaches to the treatment of infectious diseases.”

During medical treatment, patients want to know more about their conditions or about their medications. Are they finding answers to their questions? The SHIPS 2016 survey suggests not. 62% of people (74% of experts) think that access to medical information is low in their country. Importantly, the survey reveals that the older people get, the worse they perceive access to medical information. Those that suffer from chronic diseases, and women, are also more inclined to believe that perception. Seeing the doctor more often makes them somewhat, but not a great deal, happier in this respect.

The survey also reveals that healthcare experts themselves believe that patients need to know more about the benefits and side effects of treatments.

Finally, in the SHIPS 2016 survey, people were asked whether there are enough healthcare experts and facilities. Fewer than one-fourth of people in the countries surveyed believe capacity building is a problem – although three out of four patients say they have to wait too long to see a doctor. Healthcare experts, too, feel that the wait times are too long, and, in contrast to patients, think capacity building – such as hiring more doctors and nurses – could be much better.

Though opinions may vary, understanding what access means will help to improve healthcare all over the globe. With improved access to medicine, capacity building and particularly medical information, for people across the world and in different countries, older may indeed mean wiser – and healthier, too.



Dr. Joao Paulo Nogueira Ribeiro
Horas de Vida, Brazil

What does access mean to you?

“To me, access means having empathy to listen to patients and understand what their problems are, to engage in dialogue and stimulate the role of self-care. In Brazil, only 25% of the population owns some kind of health insurance. The public system, despite being very comprehensive, cannot offer everything to everyone.”

Source: Sandoz Healthcare Issues Perception Study 2016 (SHIPS 2016) – a 14-country survey of public opinion and expert perception on the most pressing issues in healthcare across industrialized and newly developed economies with 6,199 participants and in-depth expert interviews (386 participants). US, Canada, Brazil, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Russia, Japan, Australia/New Zealand, Egypt*, South Africa* (*added later)

This story at:
<https://www.sandoz.com/stories/access-healthcare/need-know-what-patients-and-doctors-want-healthcare-systems>