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Many Would Choose Benefits Over an Increase in Salary

A WALL STREET JOURNAL ONLINE NEWS ROUNDUP

Many people say it is important to them to get a decent raise from their employers in the coming year, but most say they would forgo a pay hike in exchange for maintaining their current levels of health insurance.

The latest WSJ Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll, conducted in September, sampled adults who have employer-provided health insurance about their views on benefits:

Over the last two or three years, have each of the following been getting better or worse?

Base: Has employer-provided health insurance

	Your Salary or Pay	Your Retirement Benefits	Your Health Insurance
Much better	14%	8%	7%
Somewhat better	39	16	10
Neither better nor worse	27	41	39
Somewhat worse	13	20	31
Much worse	5	6	11
Do not have	2	5	-
Not sure	-	3	2

As you look to next year, which is more important to you?

Base: Has employer-provided health insurance

Getting a decent pay increase	66%
Maintaining or improving your current level of health insurance	29
Don't know	5

* * *

If you were faced with a choice, which one of the following would you choose?

Base: Has employer-provided health insurance

	Total	AGE					
		18 – 24	25 – 29	30 – 39	40 – 49	50 – 64	65 +
Having no pay increase but retaining your current health-insurance benefits	56%	42%	41%	47%	59%	70%	77%
Getting a decent pay increase and having a significant reduction in your health-insurance benefits	29	35	45	38	25	17	3
Don't know	16	23	14	15	16	13	21

	Total	INCOME				
		Less than \$25,000	\$25,000 to \$34,999	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 +
Having no pay increase but retaining your current health-insurance benefits	56%	55%	48%	58%	56%	57%
Getting a decent pay increase and having a significant reduction in your health-insurance benefits	29	35	38	28	26	27
Don't know	16	11	13	14	18	16



Methodology: This study was conducted online within the U.S. between Sept. 26 and 30, 2003, among a nationwide cross section of 981 employed adults who have employer-provided health insurance. Figures for age, sex, race, education, income and number of adults were weighted where necessary to align with population proportions. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. Harris Interactive estimates the results have a statistical precision of ± 4.9 percentage points of what they would be if the entire adult population had been polled with complete accuracy.

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<http://online.wsj.com/article/0,,SB106555742333665800,00.html>

Hyperlinks in this Article:

- (1) <mailto:health@wsj.com>
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