

## Health Care Consumers' Inclination to Engage in Selected Patient Safety Practices: A Survey of Adults in Pennsylvania

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**Objectives:** To assess health care consumers' inclination to engage in selected patient safety practices.

**Methods:** A Fall 2006 telephone survey of 856 randomly selected adults (age, 18 years and older) in Pennsylvania.

**Results:** There are distinct differences in health care consumers' self-reported inclination to engage in various patient safety practices. Consumers seem to be willing to ask for explanations of things they do not understand, question unexpected procedures and unfamiliar drugs, and seek second opinions on important decisions. They seem less inclined to ask for confirmation of their identity before a procedure or to ask a health care worker if they have washed their hands.

**Conclusions:** Health care consumers are inclined to engage in practices intended to promote their own safety when interacting with the health care system. The extent of their inclination to engage in these practices varies depending on which practice is studied. Participants were inclined toward practices aimed at informing themselves. They were less inclined toward practices that may be viewed as more confrontational.

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