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Americans Rate Canadian Health Care System Better Than U.S. System

In a recent survey by Harris Interactive (Harris Poll #56, August 4, 2004), a cross-section of adult Americans were asked to pick countries about which they felt very positively. Specifically, they were asked about six different elements of life in these countries, ranging from their systems of government to the quality of life there and their economies. One of the six things asked about was the health care systems in these countries.

With one exception, more Americans feel very positively about their own country than about the other countries. They rate the U.S. Constitution and system of government much more highly than those of other countries. Americans also rate the quality of life, the present government, the economy and the environment in the U.S. more highly than those in other countries – or to be literally accurate, more Americans feel “very positive” about these things than they do about them in Canada or the major European countries. **The one exception to their generally more positive views of things in this country is the U.S. health care system.**

On five of the six criteria, majorities of adults feel very positively about the U.S., from the 77 percent who feel very positively about the U.S. Constitution and system of government and about the quality of life in the United States to the 51 percent who feel very positively about the environment in this country. Again there is one exception; only 34 percent of adults in America feel very positively about the U.S. health care system.

The most striking find however is that, **by 49 percent to 34 percent, substantially more Americans feel very positively about the Canadian health care system than about the U.S. health care system.**

These are the results of a nationwide survey of 2,242 adults conducted online by Harris Interactive between July 12 and 16, 2004.

Downloadable PDFs of the Harris Interactive *Health Care News* are available at http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_healthcare.asp.

TABLE 1

Americans Who Feel Very Positively About Six Factors In Canada And Europe.

“Please indicate which countries you feel very positive about...”

Base: All Adults

Feel Very Positively About:		In United States	In Canada	In France	In Germany	In Italy	In Great Britain	In Spain
The Constitution and system of government	%	77	42	17	20	17	43	14
The quality of life	%	77	53	31	30	33	45	25
The present government	%	54	38	13	17	16	41	13
The economy	%	54	31	12	19	11	30	10
The environment	%	51	47	17	19	19	26	16
The health care system	%	34	49	12	16	10	28	9

TABLE 2

Those Who Feel Very Positively About The Health Care Systems In Ten Countries.

“Please indicate which countries you feel very positive about the health care system.”

Base: All Adults

	American Perceptions
	%
Canada	49
United States	34
Great Britain	28
Germany	16
France	12
Japan	12
Italy	10
Spain	9
China	4
Russia	2

Methodology – U.S. Survey

The Harris Poll® was conducted online within the United States between July 12 and 16, 2004 among a nationwide cross section of 2,242 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. “Propensity score” weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

In theory, with probability samples of this size, one could say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a sampling error of ± 2 percentage points of what they would be if the entire adult population had been polled with complete accuracy. Unfortunately, there are several other possible sources of error in all polls or surveys that are probably more serious than theoretical calculations of sampling error. They include refusals to be interviewed (non-response), question wording and question order, and weighting. It is impossible to quantify the errors that may result from these factors. This online sample was not a probability sample.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive (www.harrisinteractive.com) is a worldwide market research and consulting firm best known for *The Harris Poll*®, and for pioneering the Internet method to conduct scientifically accurate market research. Headquartered in Rochester, New York, Harris Interactive combines proprietary methodologies and technology with expertise in predictive, custom and strategic research. The Company conducts international research from its U.S. offices and through wholly owned subsidiaries—London-based **HI Europe** (www.hieurope.com), Paris-based **Novatris** and Tokyo-based **Harris Interactive Japan**—as well as through the Harris Interactive Global Network of independent market- and opinion-research firms. EOE M/F/D/V

To become a member of the Harris Poll OnlineSM and be invited to participate in future online surveys, visit www.harrispollonline.com.

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