



Ambulatory Surgery  
Center Association

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### POLL CONFIRMS THAT PATIENTS CONTINUE TO TRUST DOCTORS, BEFORE GOVERNMENT AND INSURERS, TO PUT PATIENT HEALTH FIRST

**ALEXANDRIA, VA**—While the political debate about how best to reform America’s health care system continues, one thing is certain: By an overwhelming margin, Americans trust doctors—before both the government and insurers—to recommend the medical care and procedures they need to protect their health. The source of that information is a recent survey conducted by the nationally renowned polling company Public Opinion Strategies.

“Put simply, these poll results are a striking indication of the importance Americans place on the doctor–patient relationship,” said POS Partner Glen Bolger. “They are asking us to remember that the bedrock of our health care system isn’t a government formula or an insurance company, but the crucial relationship between patient and doctor.”

Key findings of the study include:

- 90 percent of poll respondents said that they trust their physicians more than a government health specialist or insurance company to make decisions about patient care;
- 84 percent of respondents trust their physician to put a patient’s medical needs before financial gain; and
- When asked whether they would prefer a doctor who is employed by a hospital or who owns his own office, 55 percent say they want a physician who owns and supervises his or her own practice.

The poll also showed that, as the government, insurance companies and large medical corporations take an ever larger role in the American health care system, patients continue to support innovations, like ambulatory surgery centers (ASC), that reduce bureaucracy and give patients more control over their own care. ASCs are medical facilities that provide outpatient surgical care, including diagnostic and preventive procedures. They are routinely recognized for providing high-quality care in a convenient setting at less cost than hospital outpatient departments.

“Most ASCs are owned entirely, or in part, by the same physicians who perform procedures in them, providing doctors with maximum control over the clinical environment and allowing patients to address needs directly to the physicians who treat them. While our health care system becomes more centralized and consolidated, there is still clear support for the convenience and quality that patients find in physician-owned ASCs,” says Ambulatory Surgery Center Association (ASCA) Chief Executive Officer William Prentice. “Policymakers must assure that health care reforms do not throttle the innovative, efficient and patient-centric care that these centers provide. As 65 percent of the survey respondents indicated in this survey, physician-owned ASCs cut costs and lead to more efficient and effective care.”

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**About ASCs:** ASCs are an integral part of the health care system, providing critical access to surgical and diagnostic care, including preventive services. As essential Medicare providers of surgical and cancer screening services, ASCs perform more than 40 percent of Medicare colonoscopies.

**About the Ambulatory Surgery Center Association (ASCA):** ASCA is working to raise awareness of the important role that ASCs play in the US health care system and the high-quality, cost-effective care that ASCs provide. For more about ASCA, go to [www.ascassociation.org](http://www.ascassociation.org).