



## **Americans Believe Non-profit Hospitals Should Provide Charity Care and Support Regulation and Penalties If They Fall Short**

A Community Catalyst survey showed that Americans believe hospitals – especially non-profit hospitals – have obligations to their communities and provide a critical safety net for care. They are sympathetic to hard-working patients who are unable to access care, and they believe hospitals should have clear, fair, transparent charity care policies.

### **All non-profit hospitals, because of their tax-exempt status, have responsibilities to their communities.**

- Americans overwhelmingly (90 percent) believe that non-profit hospitals have an obligation to serve the community.
- A majority of Americans (79 percent) believe non-profit hospitals have an obligation to provide charity care.
- Non-profit hospitals have an obligation to work with patients who don't have enough money to pay for care up front, and to help them with a financing plan, according to most Americans (82 percent).

### **Non-profit hospitals must treat people fairly.**

- A strong majority of Americans (88 percent) believe the prices hospitals charge their patients – especially their uninsured patients – should be regulated so they don't add a huge markup to the cost of their services.
- Americans (82 percent) understand that when people can't get hospital care because of their ability to pay, the health and well-being of the entire community suffers.

### **All non-profit hospital policies should have open and transparent charity care policies.**

- Americans overwhelmingly (90 percent) believe non-profit hospitals should be required to provide information to the public on the free and low-cost programs and services they offer to the community.
- A majority of Americans (74 percent) think that non-profit hospitals should adopt and actively implement charity care policies and that policymakers should assess how much charity care non-profit hospitals provide and should impose penalties when they fall short.

*Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey that was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers between November 12-17, 2008. The survey reached a total of 800 likely voters nationwide. Telephone numbers for the sample were generated by random digit dialing (RDD). The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.5%.*