

New Survey: Walgreens' Customers Flock to Independent Pharmacies

Walgreens' Exit Shows How Preferred Pharmacy Networks Can Help Community Drugstores, Consumers

(Washington, DC)— According to a national survey of independent pharmacists, Walgreens' exit from key pharmacy networks is benefiting local drugstores and consumers who changed pharmacies. Independent pharmacists say former Walgreens' consumers are more satisfied, switched pharmacies with ease, and still have many choices despite the absence of almost 8,000 Walgreens stores in their networks.

This survey reveals significant upsides to preferred pharmacy networks and comes on the heels of recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) [research](#) showing that plans with preferred pharmacy networks are now a popular choice among Medicare seniors.

“Since there are now more pharmacies than McDonalds, Burger Kings, Taco Bells, Pizza Huts and Starbucks combined, public and private payers can offer drug benefits that weed out drugstores that overcharge,” said **Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA) President and CEO Mark Merritt**. “That’s good news not only for consumers, but also for local drugstores. According to a survey of independent pharmacists, Walgreens’ customers are now flocking to community pharmacies, switching to them with ease, and getting better care than they did at Walgreens. This shows how preferred pharmacy networks help employers, consumers, and drugstores that offer quality care at a reasonable price.”

Results from the national survey of independent pharmacy owners are below (and [here](#)):

- 1. Seventy percent of the independent pharmacists with a Walgreens in their area have seen former Walgreens’ customers start filling prescriptions at their pharmacy in the last few months.** These pharmacists say they have seen former Walgreens’ customers start filling prescriptions in their pharmacy by a 70 to 23 percent margin.
- 2. Three-fifths of the independent pharmacists with a Walgreens in their area say former Walgreens’ customers are more satisfied with their new pharmacies.** By a 59 to 2 percent margin, independent pharmacists with a Walgreens in their area say former Walgreens’ customers are more satisfied with their new pharmacies (13 percent say they are just as satisfied and 25 percent do not know).
- 3. Independent pharmacists say they have benefited from the Walgreens contract dispute by a two-to-one margin.** These pharmacists say independent pharmacies have benefited by a 50 to 24 percent margin, including a 57 to 22 percent margin among independent pharmacists with a Walgreens in their area.

4. Nearly all independent pharmacists say pharmacy customers have adequate access to pharmacies in their area. Independent pharmacists say customers in their area have adequate access to pharmacies by a 98 to 2 percent margin overall, including a 99 to 1 percent margin among pharmacists with a Walgreens in their area.

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PCMA represents the nation's pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), which improve affordability and quality of care through the use of electronic prescribing (e-prescribing), generic alternatives, mail-service pharmacies, and other innovative tools for 216 million Americans.