

## Millennials twice as likely to have private healthcare as baby boomers

*New survey by Top Doctors UK service reveals changing face of private healthcare market in the capital*

**28 September, London UK:** A survey of more than 1,000 Londoners for Top Doctors UK has shown that nearly 1 in 3 people (31%) have private healthcare insurance cover, but that there are large differences between the age groups surveyed.<sup>1</sup> Historically, private healthcare coverage has been much more common in older people,<sup>2</sup> but the new research showed that the 55 and over group was now the least likely to have insurance – 20% in this age group have coverage compared with 41% of 18-34 year olds.

Although the majority of those covered have private healthcare through their employer (15%), nearly as many have a personal plan (13%) with some even having both (3%). However, over half of the people who have private healthcare had never used it, with half (50%) of 18-34 year olds having never used it, rising to over 60% (61%) in the 35-54 category. Those in the 55 and over group were most likely to have used their coverage, with only 35% never having used it.

Another perception challenged by the research was that our political affiliations drive our choices around going private, but, in fact, there were similar levels of coverage across supporters of each of the main parties (37% of Conservative voters, 31% of Labour voters, 30% of Liberal Democrat voters).

The trend of the younger generation leaning toward private healthcare is also reflected in those who self-pay to see a private specialist. Overall, 21% of people have paid for themselves but this rises to 30% in the 18-34 category, compared with 18% and 15% in the 35-54 and the 55 and over categories, respectively.

***‘This survey challenges some of the preconceptions that people may have about private healthcare and the people that use it,’*** says Dr Mark Vanderpump, Consultant Physician and Endocrinologist, The Physicians’ Clinic, London, a member of Top Doctors UK. ***‘In my experience, people see it rather like paying to see a dentist or a lawyer. They have lot of reasons for choosing to see a private specialist – they may just want reassurance that it is safe to wait for their NHS appointment, be concerned with avoiding missing time off work and potential loss of income, be driven by concerns over their symptoms having researched them online, or simply want a second opinion. Whatever the reason, if people are worried about a health condition and think they or their family need specialist help, they should speak to their family doctor. If a referral is needed, Top Doctors offers a new way to help them connect to the right specialist.’***

Not surprisingly, people are least likely to be prepared to wait to see a specialist for heart-related conditions or cancer, with over half of people wanting to see someone within 1-2 days (56% for both) and most in less than a week (80% for heart, 76% for cancer). With the majority also not wanting to wait more than a week for conditions like diabetes/endocrine

disorders (63%), blood related issues (64%), gastrointestinal and liver-related issues, respiratory conditions, urinary conditions (all 65%) or neurological disorders (69%).

The survey also showed that health of children takes priority in private healthcare. Nearly a third (30%) of parents had paid for their child to see a private specialist doctor or consultant compared with only 21% respondents having paid for a private specialist for themselves. Millennials are even more likely to pay for their child to see a private doctor (40% have done so). They also want their children to be seen quickly, with nearly half wanting to see a specialist for their child within 1-2 days (48%) and the majority (71%) in less than a week.

After success in the US, Europe and Latin America, Top Doctors is now available in London, allowing private patients in the capital quick access to the capital's leading consultants specialising in their particular illness or condition. This can be completed either through the website or the dedicated customer care line. The online service provides a one-stop shop for finding and booking from among the top 10% of specialists. People who prefer the personal approach can talk their needs through with one of Top Doctors' customer care line representatives, who can arrange appointments with a chosen specialist on their behalf or help them navigate a GP referral, where needed.

Having established the UK service in the capital, Top Doctors plans to roll out the service to strategic hubs in major cities throughout the UK. Top Doctors is a global company with 25 years of experience connecting patients with the leading private specialists. With their counterpart in the US – Castle Connolly Top Doctors, which was founded in 1992 – Top Doctors has expanded internationally and now represents specialists in the USA, Europe and Latin America.

***'Health is of utmost importance, and when something goes wrong we all want to see the right specialist as soon as possible' says Alberto Porciani, CEO of Top Doctors. 'Whether people already have private healthcare, or are happy to self-pay to get an answer, not everyone feels confident in knowing where to find the best specialist for their health issue. This is where Top Doctors helps you to make that connection quickly and easily to find a leading specialist that meets your needs. It removes the extra step of having to personally research consultants, and can provide a referral to an exclusive selection of clinicians that are listed among the very top of their field'***

Top Doctors UK helps patients find a specialist that is right for them and navigate the referral and booking process to get an appointment as rapidly as possible, using the latest web and eHealth technologies for an easy and smooth user experience.

-ENDS-

## References

1. Survation. Private Healthcare Usage in London: Survey for Top Doctors Europe. September 2017. Data on file.
2. Doyle Y. Role of private sector in United Kingdom healthcare system. *BMJ* 2000; 321: 563-565.

## Notes to Editors

### Media contact

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### About Top Doctors

Top Doctors is a global company which selects the leading private doctors across every speciality to help patients access the very best healthcare available. Top Doctors creates a simple and effortless journey for patients to access high-quality treatment.

Top Doctors was founded by experienced professionals in the healthcare sector whose vision was to provide patients with accurate information about doctors and tailored guidance on their health, while helping doctors to secure an online reputation that reflects their professional standing and expertise.

Via a rigorous four-step selection process, Top Doctors hand-picks only the top 10% of specialists. To carry this out they use peer to peer recommendation, external evaluation by Adecco Medical & Science, approval by a panel of expert Clinical Leaders, and personal interviews.

Globally, Top Doctors has over 60,000 doctors signed up, it has had more than 10 million site visits to date, and more than 500,000 appointments are booked per year.

First launched in the USA, Top doctors is now present in Spain, Italy, Mexico, Colombia, Chile and now the UK. The company recognises that the future of eHealth is vital to patient convenience and wellbeing, and is investing in the latest technology and innovation.

For more information about Top Doctors UK please visit <https://www.topdoctors.co.uk/>

### Survey methodology

The survey was carried out by independent market research agency Survation on behalf of Top Doctors UK. The 16-question online survey was fielded between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017. Just over 1,000 adults completed the survey (1,034 people aged 18+). Those surveyed were residents of London's 33 boroughs and the results were divided into North, East, South, West and Central regions. Those surveyed were also asked their sex, age, 2017 vote, socio-economic group and ethnicity. Targets for weighted data were derived from the Office for National Statistics 2011 Census data, the results of the 2017 General Election and the results of the 2016 EU Referendum.