Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities in Health and Health Care
St. Louis Regional Data

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Quantitative Data Overview

✦ Access
✦ Prevalence
✦ Suboptimal and Avoidable Utilization
✦ St. Louis Data
  • Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
  • Missouri Information for Community Assessment
✦ Highlights of Studies to Show Trends
✦ Chronic Conditions of Concern in MO
  • Asthma
  • Diabetes
  • Hypertension
✦ Contract with MFH to look at race and ethnicity only; limited by what is collected -- Caucasian, African American, Hispanic
Was There A Time In The Past 12 Months When You Needed Medical Care, But Could Not Get It?

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
What Is The Main Reason You Did Not Get Medical Care?

- **Cost/No Insurance**: 74% (White), 50% (African American), 56% (Hispanic)
- **Too Long Appt Wait**: 25% (White), 6% (African American), 13% (Hispanic)
- **No Transportation**: 8% (African American), 1% (Hispanic)

*Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007*
Where Do You Go When Sick Or Need Advice About Health?

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
Do You Have Any Kind of Health Care Coverage?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>68%</td>
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Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
What Type of Health Care Coverage Do You Use To Pay for Most of Your Medical Care?

- **Employer:**
  - White: 58%
  - African American: 49%
  - Hispanic: 41%

- **Individual:**
  - White: 9%
  - African American: 3%
  - Hispanic: 6%

- **Medicare:**
  - White: 28%
  - African American: 26%
  - Hispanic: 12%

- **Medicaid:**
  - White: 2%
  - African American: 15%
  - Hispanic: 6%

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
Marital Status

Married: 45% White, 27% African American, 27% Hispanic
Divorced: 14% White, 19% African American, 9% Hispanic
Widowed: 14% White, 16% African American, 9% Hispanic
Never Married: 18% White, 28% African American, 32% Hispanic

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
Have You Ever Been Told That You Had Asthma?

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
Asthma Emergency Room Visits

Missouri Information for Community Assessment

Monday, September 13, 2010
Asthma Related Clinical Services

- African American and Latino children have higher rates of asthma prevalence, morbidity and mortality
- African American patients are more likely:
  - To receive treatment for asthma in the emergency room
  - To receive care in inferior quality facilities
  - To not seek regular follow-up

Asthma Related Clinical Services

- African American patients had asthma related emergency room visits rates four times higher than White patients.
- The black/white ration increased from 2.5 in 2000 to 4.5 in 2004 and 2005.
- The disparity exist among all age groups, with the biggest gap observed in the youngest age group\(^1\).

Have You Ever Been Told That You Had Diabetes?

10% White
16% African American
16% Hispanic

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
Diabetes Emergency Room Visits

Missouri Information for Community Assessment

Monday, September 13, 2010
Diabetes Preventable Hospitalizations

Missouri Information for Community Assessment

Monday, September 13, 2010
Diabetes Related Clinical Services

✦ According to the Center for Disease Control diabetes is a much bigger burden for minority populations¹.
  • 14.7% of African Americans, 14.2% of American Indians and Alaska Natives and 10.7% of Latinos have diabetes, compared to 6.6% of Whites (aged 20 years or older)

✦ Being poor, without college education and Hispanic or African American are factors that are connected with the management of diabetes².

Diabetes Management

✦ Diabetes management test rates (A1C levels) are similar among various racial and ethnic groups.¹
✦ There are disparities in testing for other indicators, like the low density protein (LDL).²
✦ African Americans and Latinos are more likely to have the test results (A1C levels) below the recommended values for a good diabetes control.³
✦ African American patients have lower odds of achieving ideal and adequate control of diabetes management indicators (A1C levels, low density protein(LDL) and blood pressure).³

Have You Ever Been Told That You Had Hypertension?

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007
Hypertension Emergency Room Visits

Missouri Information for Community Assessment

Monday, September 13, 2010
Hypertension Preventable Hospitalizations

Missouri Information for Community Assessment

Monday, September 13, 2010
Conclusions and Insights

✦ Data shows differences in health and care between races
✦ See a disparity in access and prevalence of disease
✦ Gap widens as we look at utilization of suboptimal and avoidable care
✦ Follows national patterns and trends
✦ How does this data compare to what you see in your health care setting or in your work with populations?
✦ What should we do differently?
✦ Where should we focus? Interventions? Studies? Care?
Do African Americans and Hispanics Feel They Are Treated Differently Than Caucasians By The Health Care System?
Study Methodology

- Qualitative study conducted by the Research and Planning Group, Spring, 2010
- Asked about specific personal experience
- Those with health care encounter in last 6 months
- In-depth interviews with 20 African Americans and 20 Hispanics
- Western region (K.C. and western MO), Central region (Columbia, Springfield, Jefferson City and central MO), Eastern region (St. Louis and eastern MO)
Participants Responded To 25 Questions in 5 Areas

1. Determine what the health care experience is like for African American and Hispanic patients
2. Perceived differences that might exist in health care for Af. Am. and Hisp.
3. Factors that may contribute to receiving different treatment in health care services
4. Perceived amount of health care knowledge Af. Am. and Hisp. Patients feel that they possess
5. Uncover stories of health care experiences that illustrate reasons why perceived differences in health care might exist
Determine What The Health Care Experience Is Like for African American and Hispanic Patients

- Patients were very satisfied overall with their health care experience and felt they were treated well
- Most believed they received excellent service and that staff were attentive
- A few cited problems:
  - Expensive services
  - Unsatisfactory hospital interpreters
- Insurance and language were considered barriers to being treated well
Verbatim Comments from Survey

✦ “They allow me to explain what I feel. They make me feel that there are no stupid questions.”  (African American, St. Louis)

✦ “My doctor has in my records what I do professionally and keeps tabs on my business, how my children are doing, and how that impacts my health. They address me with a title and always apologize if I wait too long.”  (African American, St. Louis)

✦ “I like the quality of care which I received. I feel very secure and confident about the treatments I received.”  (Hispanic, St. Louis)

✦ “They taught me what to eat and what not. They understand my fears and my condition.”  (Hispanic, St. Louis)
Verbatim Comments from Survey

✦ “You never get a clear answer to know if you can afford a treatment or not.” (Hispanic, St. Louis)

✦ “I don’t think it was a black and white issue. It’s based on insurers vs. non-insured: that’s where you see the discrimination.” (African American, St. Louis)

✦ “I think white people are treated differently, especially when they are insured.” (African American, St. Louis)
Perceived Differences That Might Exist In Health Care for African Americans and Hispanics

- Overall, respondents were very positive about health care they received
- Most did not feel they were treated differently at the hospital or clinic than Caucasian or English speaking patients
- A few said they were treated with impatience because of the language difference and need for use of interpreters made nurses impatient
Verbatim Comments from Survey

✦ “At XXXX, there is absolutely no difference. There, you find kids from different nationalities and races. In other places, there is a difference. The nurses get impatient with those of us who don’t understand English. Their tolerance is not too good. They seem to think that by speaking loud we will be able to understand.” (Hispanic, St. Louis)

✦ “There’s really no different.” (African American, St. Louis)

✦ “I personally feel there is no difference in the treatment I receive from the one that a white, English-speaking person receives.” (Hispanic, St. Louis)

✦ “That the surgery was excellent, and to see my knee was getting better. Therapy at the Student Health Center was wonderful and also fun.” (Hispanic, St. Louis)
Verbatim Comments from Survey

✦ “They can’t do it any better than they do. They take their time. Their patience and understanding of the situation is fantastic. I left understanding everything and had great hope.” (Hispanic, St. Louis)

✦ “I think people get treated differently if they have money or not.” (African American, St. Louis)
Factors That May Contribute To Receiving Different Treatment In Health Care Services

✦ **Most respondents** said they did not feel that being an African American or Hispanic affected their treatment or the amount of respect at the hospital or clinic.

✦ **Most respondents** said they received respect from the doctors and nurses at their hospital or clinic.

✦ A few African American respondents felt they were treated or respected differently because
  
  • they were uninsured,
  
  • did not have a lot of money, or
  
  • Caucasians received more respect because they were perceived as more educated

✦ Some Hispanic respondents said they were treated differently due to
  
  ✦ prejudice of a small community,
  
  ✦ language barrier or
  
  ✦ nurses who grew impatient with having to interpret
Verbatim Comments from Survey

✦ “My husband and I received a lot of respect from the staff. We were explained the steps that they wanted to take, and they respected our decisions and concerns. They even asked for my opinion.” (Hispanic, St. Louis)

✦ “The clinic I go to now is mostly African American, and I get a lot more respect. I went to another clinic and the people acted like they were uncomfortable every time I came in (it was a white clinic).” (African American, St. Louis)

✦ “I think the doctor I have now works very well with my condition. As an African American, he understands my condition. Before him, no one else could properly treat my hypertension.” (African American, St. Louis)
Verbatim Comments from Survey

✦ “It is a lot easier to understand the doctors than the nurses. They nurses and technicians don’t seem to understand that there are other cultures around the world and other ways of living.” (Hispanic, St. Louis)

✦ “Some of my past doctors didn’t respect me. My previous doctors weren’t taking time to explain, and my condition was getting worse.” (African American, St. Louis)
Perceived Amount of Health Care Knowledge African Americans and Hispanic Patients Feel That They Possess

- Respondents said it is very easy for them to understand what the doctors and nurses are telling them.
- Most respondents said their doctors and nurses did a good job helping them understand their condition by offering a detailed explanation or information.
- When respondents returned home, almost all said it was easy for them to follow the instructions the doctor or nurse gave them.
- A small number of respondents gave negative responses about understanding their condition, specifically that doctors
  - did not answer their questions or
  - gave too much information and were overwhelmed
Verbatim Comments from Survey

- “They are knowledgeable. They give me visuals and brochures. They also give me material to take home to help me understand the terminology.” (African American, St. Louis)

- “They explain every step that I go through. They also help me understand if I need extra treatments in the future.” (African American, St. Louis)

- “When I have had questions, they have given the answers to me in layman terms.” (African American, St. Louis)

- “When you’re educated, you feel better. They educated me about side effects.” (African American, St. Louis)
Verbatim Comments from Survey

- “They take their time and break it down real well so I can have a complete understanding of the condition.” (African American, St. Louis)
- “My doctor explains everything very thoroughly. I had to switch doctors because they weren’t explaining things as well.” (African American, St. Louis)
Conclusions and Insights

✦ Patients interviewed were very satisfied overall with their experience and how they were treated
✦ Most patients interviewed felt they were not treated differently because of their race
✦ Most patients interviewed felt they received the information they needed about their condition and treatments and that their questions were answered
✦ Respondents generally felt they received respect from the hospital or clinic regardless of their race
✦ Some African Americans felt they were treated differently because of financial factors
✦ Some Hispanics felt they were treated differently because of language barriers
✦ How does this compare to what you see in your health care settings or in your work with populations?
✦ How does this compare with what you hear from patients?
✦ What are some other questions we should be asking?
✦ If patients don’t feel they are treated differently because of race, where and how do we address the racial differences we see care?