

Healthcare Disparities

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Healthcare Disparities

- A recent national poll found that a majority of Americans (68%) are unaware that disparities exist in the quality of healthcare delivered to different racial and ethnic groups.

Definition of Health Disparities

- Differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups in the United States.

National Institute of Health (NIH) Strategic Research Plan to Reduce & Ultimately Eliminate Health Disparities (October 6, 2000)

Heckler Report 1984

- Secretary of Health & Human Services, Margaret Heckler
- Established the Task Force on Black & Minority Health
- 1985: Issued a landmark report – the Secretary's report on Black and Minority Health
- Recognized the disparities in healthcare that existed for minorities
- Establishment of the Office of Minority Health within the Department of Health & Human Services

Key Studies

- Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report
Unequal treatment -- Confronting Racial
and Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare
- Medical Expenditure Panel Survey
(MEPS) -- Comparing Urgent Medical
Care
- Agency for Healthcare Research and
Quality (AHRQ) -- National Healthcare
Disparities Reports

HHS Focus Areas

- The most serious disparities in health access and outcomes
 - Infant mortality
 - Cancer screening and management
 - Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)
 - Diabetes
 - HIV Infection/AIDS
 - Immunization
 - Hepatitis

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said:

“We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.”