What We Know Now

COVID-19 Health Barriers and Disparities Among Rural and Minority Populations and People with Disabilities

Definitions

**Barrier**
A hurdle or obstacle that makes it more difficult for certain individuals to access and benefit from health care services.

**Disparity**
Preventable health difference that is linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage.

Sources:
The Arc of PA Initiative to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities Among People with Disabilities

Rural and Minority Populations

Greater health disparities

Poorer health outcomes

Health Care Disparities

Rural Populations

People living in rural areas were 33% more likely to delay or forego medical care due to cost

SOURCES

Minority Populations

Racial Disparities in Ability to Pay for Health Care

![Bar chart showing racial disparities in ability to pay for health care](chart.png)

- **Uninsured**
  - White: 5%
  - Black: 7%
  - Latinx: 15%

- **Did not see doctor due to cost**
  - White: 10%
  - Black: 15%
  - Latinx: 20%

**Sources**
Health Outcome Disparities for Minority Populations

Black and Latinx populations experience the greatest disparities.

- More likely to have poor physical and mental health
- More likely to have obesity and diabetes
- More likely to get cancer
- Less likely to survive prostate, breast and lung cancer

People with Disabilities

Magnified Health Care Disparities

- Experience higher mortality rates
- Minorities with disabilities face even greater disparities.
- Visit health care providers more often
Even Poorer Health Outcomes

Percentages of Health Outcomes by Ethnicity between Adults with and without IDD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Fair or poor physical health</th>
<th>Fair or poor mental health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Adults</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx Adults</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with IDD</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People without IDD</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health Outcome Differences between Individuals with and without Disabilities

- Diabetes: 15.8% (individuals with disabilities) vs. 7.2% (individuals without disabilities)
- Stroke in the past year: 6.6% vs. 1.5%
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD): 13.2% vs. 3.1%
- Cancer: 9.0% vs. 5.3%
- Depression: 42% vs. 11.6%

Sources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Disability and Health Data System (DHDS), Chronic Conditions (2018) and Mental & Emotional Health (2019)
COVID-19 Barriers to Health Care

**Location**
Vaccines are mostly available at chain pharmacies and large hospitals that may not be present in minority communities.

**Language**
Government websites used to find vaccines often lack translation options. Vaccination clinics have limited translation help available.

**Accessibility**
People with disabilities reported not knowing how and where to get a vaccine. Information is often not provided in an accessible and easily understood format.

**Availability**
There are 54% fewer physicians in rural Pennsylvania compared to urban Pennsylvania.

**SOURCES**
COVID-19: Rural and Minority Populations

Counties that experienced greater COVID-19 death rates had:

- Greater rates of poverty
- Higher rates of people on Medicaid
- More people with disabilities

SOURCES

COVID-19 Hospitalization Rates per 10,000 People

Minorities are:

- More likely to have underlying health conditions that increase the risk of death from COVID-19
- Experience higher hospitalization and death rates from COVID-19
- Reported more concerns about being blamed for the spread of COVID-19

SOURCES
COVID-19: People with Disabilities

More likely to be unemployed

Once again, minorities with disabilities experienced the largest disparities.

Have higher rates of underlying health conditions that increase the risk of COVID-19

SOURCES
People living in residential settings especially experience higher death rates due to COVID-19.

People with developmental disabilities are 3x more likely to die following a COVID-19 diagnosis.

People with intellectual disabilities are 2.75x more likely to die following a COVID-19 diagnosis.

SOURCES
Percentage of People with IDD by Race and Ethnicity that Experienced Fair or Poor Mental Health during COVID-19

- **Black**: 38%
- **Latinx**: 42%
- **White**: 24%