Health Care Disparities
Introduction for GME New Resident Orientation

Shon Rowan, MD
Disclosures

• None
Objectives

• Provide new trainees with discussion about health care disparities (HCD)
• Re-enforce knowledge about factors associated with HCD
• Touch upon Appalachian and rural population characteristics
• Discuss individual solutions to decrease HCD
Definitions

– Health and health care disparities refer to differences in health and health care between populations.
– Disparities in “health” and “health care” are similar but not synonymous, concepts.
– Health disparity - higher burden of illness, injury, disability, or mortality experienced by one population group relative to another
– Health care disparity - differences between groups in health insurance coverage, access to and use of, and quality of care.
– Health inequality and health inequity, are also often used interchangeably to describe differences that are socially-determined and/or deemed to be unnecessary, avoidable, or unjust.

Institute of Medicine, 2002

• Approximately 600 studies reviewed
• Minorities experienced:
  – Fewer routine screenings
  – Less pain medications
  – Less surgery
  – Less dialysis
  – Fewer organ transplants

Even when SES and insurance status matched
Factors Associated with HCD

• Patient Characteristics
  – Educational attainment
  – Household income
  – Insurance status
  – Health literacy

• Physician Characteristics
  – Biases
  – Discriminatory behavior
  – Clinical uncertainty

• Systemic Factors
Definition of Health Literacy

• “the ability to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions and follow instructions for treatment”
Low Health Literacy

- =poorer health
- =worse outcomes
- =higher rates of health services utilization
- =higher health care costs

Be Aware of Patient’s Health Literacy Level!
Everyone has Biases

- **Explicit Bias** has decreased significantly over the past 50 years
- **Implicit Bias** is common and present

![Two Decision Making Routes Diagram](image)
Implicit Bias

• “an unintentional, unacknowledged preference for one group over another”

Institute of Medicine Finding 4.1: *Implicit bias is a plausible cause of HCD*

Chapman et al, 2013
Implicit Bias

- Can be activated quickly and unknowingly by situational cues
- **Exerts more influence when individual is stressed, fatigued**
Predictors of Increased Implicit Bias

- Having heard negative comments from attendings
- Unfavorable contact with attendings

Negativity Breeds Negativity!

Van Ryn et al, 2015
Implicit Bias and Patient-MD Dyad

• Providers with greater implicit bias:
  – Rated as less “patient-centered”
  – Rated as less knowledgeable about patient
  – Rated as providing poorer communication

Note: Studies concerning implicit bias effects on treatment decisions and health outcomes are lacking

Keep in Mind.....

• Patients who evaluate their clinicians more positively on patient-centeredness are more satisfied with their care, are more likely to adhere to treatment and follow-up with their clinician, and have better health outcomes.

Better Communication = More Patient Satisfaction = Less Law Suits

Multiple References
Examples of Disparities in WV
### Health Disparities Profile for WV

Examines 22 health indicators at the state level for different racial and ethnic populations in each of the 50 states + 4

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<th>Major causes of death (rate per 100,000)</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic White</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>American Indian/Alaskan Native</th>
<th>Asian/Pacific Islander</th>
<th>State Total</th>
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<td>166.6</td>
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<td>Total cancer</td>
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Barriers to Care in WV

- More than half (51.3%) of the population of WV or nearly one million residents live in rural areas in the state.

Characteristics of Rural WV

- Has fewer physicians
  - 47/55 counties are Health Professional Shortage Areas

Characteristics of Rural WV

• Environmental, transportation, financial and attitudinal barriers:
  – Isolation
  – Trust
  – Poverty
  – Education
  – Fatalism
  – Religion
  – Confidence

Individual Solutions

• Continue to strive to excel in all competencies, especially **Interpersonal and Communication Skills**

• Develop and adhere to **clinical routines**

• Use **evidence-based management strategies** on all patients
Tackling Implicit Bias

• Increase Self-Awareness; Take IAT
  – [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit)

• Individuating

• Perspective-Taking; Increase Empathy

• Participate in wellness events
Summary

• HCD exist in WV and USA
• HCD associated with the patient, physician and system factors
• Each individual health care provider is a part of the solution to decrease HCD
• Practice, Practice, Practice with each patient encounter
The End
Questions?
Thank-you!