Quick Start Guide

Chronic diseases, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease, pose a significant problem in the United States,¹ and disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities.² The Mapping Medicare Disparities (MMD) Tool provides two components, the Population View and the Hospital View. The Population View identifies differences between sub-groups (e.g., racial and ethnic populations) in health outcomes, utilization, and spending. The Hospital View identifies disparities in selected health outcome and quality measures between hospitals. Visually displaying the geographic differences is a crucial step in understanding health disparity, informing policy decisions, and targeting populations and geographic areas for effective interventions.

How do I zoom and navigate in the map?

1) You must first click on a county/state/territory of interest.

2) If you are using a mouse: push the mouse scroll wheel up/down to zoom in/out.

3) If you are not using a mouse: use the zoom in/out gesture by pulling (placing one finger on the Trackpad and dragging a separate finger away from the first) and pinching (pressing one finger on the Trackpad while dragging a separate finger toward the first).

4) You may also navigate in the map by left-clicking and holding while moving your mouse or finger on your Trackpad.

How can I compare differences in measures in the Population View?

Under the Analysis drop-down menu, when an option other than Base Measure is selected, you can choose to visualize differences between patient characteristics, thereby comparing health outcomes, spending, or utilization. For example, if interested in the difference of diabetes prevalence rates at a county level between Asians and whites you can select:

Prevalence under Measure
Within County Difference under Analysis
Diabetes under Condition/Service
Asian/Pacific islander under Race and Ethnicity
White under Comparison Race and Ethnicity


How do I interpret my comparison results in the Population View?

When selecting options other than *Base Measure*, the map will display three values when you hover over a specific county/state. The first value (A) presented in the summary box is the rate calculated for the Primary patient group. The second value (B) is the rate calculated for the Comparison patient group. The difference between the first rate (A) and the second rate (B) is displayed in the third row (A – B = C). A positive value indicates a county or state/territory in which the chosen Primary patient group shows a higher rate than the chosen Comparison patient group. A negative value indicates a county or state/territory in which the chosen Comparison patient group shows a lower rate than the chosen Primary patient group.

How can I evaluate hospital performance for a certain measure in the Hospital View?

In the Hospital View, a user can select one or multiple comparisons to evaluate hospital performance. Potential comparison options include: Geographic (Nation, State, or County), Hospital Type (Acute Care, Children, or Critical Access), or Hospital Size (under 100 beds, 100 to 200 beds, Over 200 beds).

Where can I find additional information?

For additional information on how to use the tool, consult the technical documentation or frequently asked questions (FAQs) at these links: