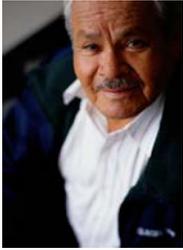


Health Disparities in the Medicare Population

HIV/AIDS

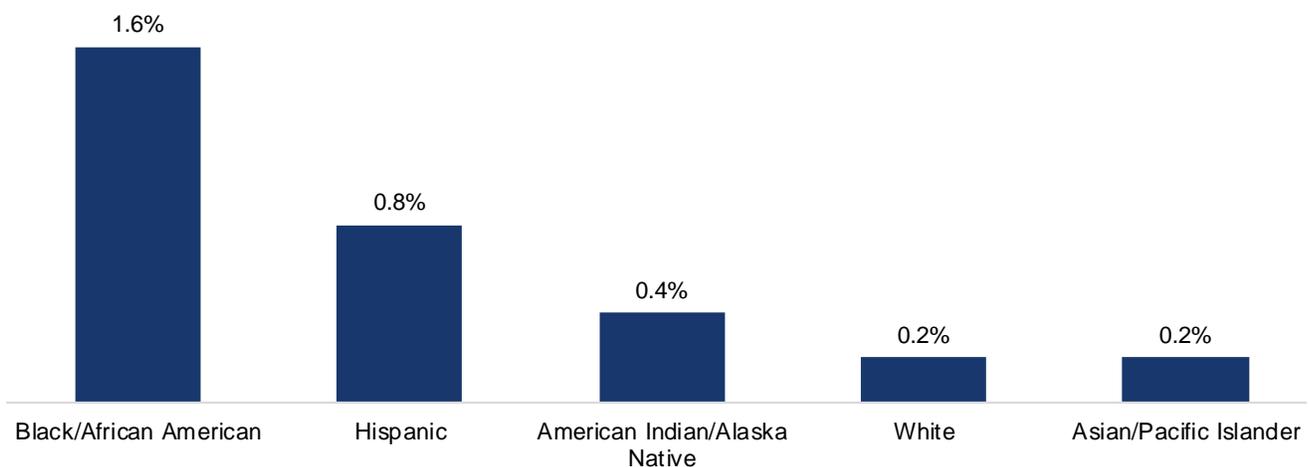


Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) interferes with the immune system causing increased susceptibility to common infections. Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) develops in the last stage of the disease when the immune system becomes too weak to fight off infections. There is no cure for HIV/AIDS but medication can slow down the progression of the disease and with new treatments, people with HIV can live long healthy lives. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 1.2 million people in the United States have HIV/AIDS and nearly one in eight of them (12.8%) don't know that they have it.¹

There are few health conditions with as profound racial/ethnic disparities as HIV/AIDS. CDC states that American Indians/Alaska Natives have lower rates of infection than other racial and ethnic groups but higher rates than Asians and Whites.² In 2014, 0.4% of all Medicare Fee-For-Service (FFS) beneficiaries had claims with a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS.³ As shown in the figure below, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS varies among beneficiaries by race and ethnicity. In 2014, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS was highest among Black/African American beneficiaries (1.6%), followed by Hispanic (0.8%), American Indian/Alaska Native (0.4%), White (0.2%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (0.2%) beneficiaries.

The [National HIV/AIDS Strategy](#), a five-year plan that was first released in July 2010 and updated in July 2015, has three major goals: reducing new infections, increasing access to care and improving health outcomes among people living with HIV, and reducing disparities and health inequities.⁴ Medicare beneficiaries have access to the care they need to live healthy, long lives. [Your Guide to Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage](#) provides more information about medication coverage offered in different Medicare plans.

Prevalence of HIV/AIDS among Medicare Beneficiaries by Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Chronic Condition Data Warehouse (CCW)

Note: Population is limited to Medicare Fee-For-Service beneficiaries. RTI Race Code used for analysis. Racial categories of White, Black/African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Asian/Pacific Islander are classified as non-Hispanic. Hispanic ethnicity includes all race categories.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/overview/ata glance.html>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HIV/AIDS Among American Indians and Alaska Natives. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/racialethnic/aiian/index.html>
3. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Chronic Conditions. <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Chronic-Conditions/index.html>
4. National HIV/AIDS Strategy. <https://www.aids.gov/federal-resources/national-hiv-aids-strategy/overview/>