

# Health Disparities in the Medicare Population

## Ischemic Heart Disease

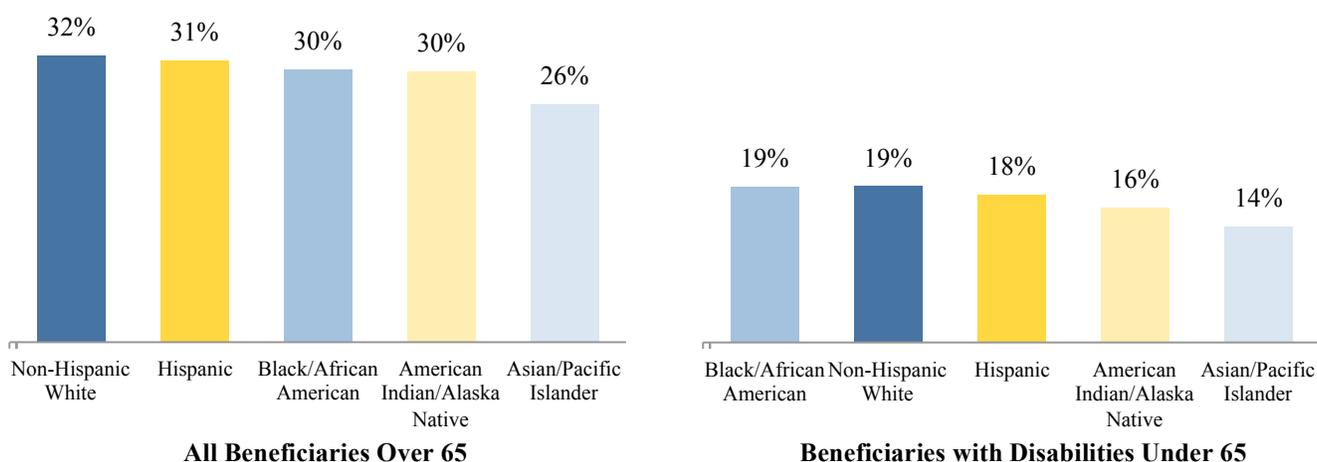


July marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In recognition, this snapshot details the racial disparities in the treated prevalence of ischemic heart disease (IHD) among Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiaries under 65 years old with disabilities and all Medicare beneficiaries over age 65, including those with disabilities. IHD, also known as coronary artery disease, is the number one cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the United States. IHD affects the supply of blood to the heart when cholesterol deposits begin to narrow or block blood vessels, frequently leading to a heart attack. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that about 610,000 people die of heart disease in the US every year—that's 1 in every 4 deaths.<sup>1</sup>

In 2012, 29% of all Medicare FFS beneficiaries had a diagnosis of IHD. Among beneficiaries age 65 and older, 31% were diagnosed with IHD as compared to 17% of beneficiaries with disabilities under 65. The data demonstrate that there are relatively small disparities among ethnicities for Medicare beneficiaries over 65 or for beneficiaries under 65 with disabilities — with the exception that Asian/Pacific Islanders have lower rates in both populations.<sup>2</sup>

[Your Guide to Medicare's Preventive Services](#) and [Your Guide to Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage](#) describe benefits covered by Medicare that can detect and treat conditions that may lead to a heart attack. [Million Hearts®](#), a national initiative that was launched by the Department of Health and Human Services in 2011 to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017, offers resources, tools, and videos to help Americans live longer, healthier, more productive lives. Beneficiaries should talk to their provider about which preventive services are right for them and what they can do to improve their heart health.

**Prevalence of Medicare Beneficiaries with Ischemic Heart Disease, by Race/Ethnicity and Disability**



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.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Heart Disease Facts. <http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts.htm>
2. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Chronic Conditions. <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Chronic-Conditions/index.html>