

Diabetes Disparities in Medicare Fee-For-Service Beneficiaries



Diabetes is a chronic condition in which blood glucose (blood sugar) levels in the body are too high and can cause heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and lower-extremity amputations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists diabetes as the seventh leading cause of death in the United States in 2019.¹ According to the National Diabetes Statistics Report, 34.2 million Americans, or 10.5% of the population, had diabetes in 2018, and 1.5 million Americans are diagnosed with diabetes every year.² Furthermore, in 2018, 88 million Americans age 18 and older had prediabetes, a condition where blood

glucose levels are above the normal range but are not high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes. People with prediabetes are also at increased risk for heart disease and stroke.³

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) Chronic Conditions Data Warehouse indicates that 27.5% of Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiaries had a diagnosis of diabetes in 2019.⁴ The Mapping Medicare Disparities Tool developed by CMS Office of Minority Health shows the prevalence of diabetes among Medicare FFS beneficiaries varied by race and ethnicity and geographic areas in 2020.⁵ As shown in Figure 1, the age standardized prevalence of diabetes was higher among Medicare FFS beneficiaries who are American Indian/Alaska Native (41%), Black/African American (39%), Hispanic (37%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (35%) than their White (24%) counterparts. The tool shows Colorado had the lowest prevalence rate (18%) and Alabama, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York and West Virginia had the highest prevalence rate (30%) as in Figure 2. Figure 3 shows geographic differences in diabetes prevalence among minority racial and ethnic groups. American Indian/Alaska Native's diabetes prevalence for 2020 was more concentrated in the west, with

Figure 1. Age Standardized Prevalence of Diabetes among Medicare FFS Beneficiaries by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

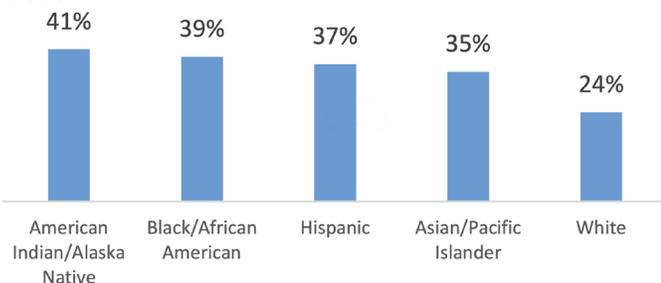
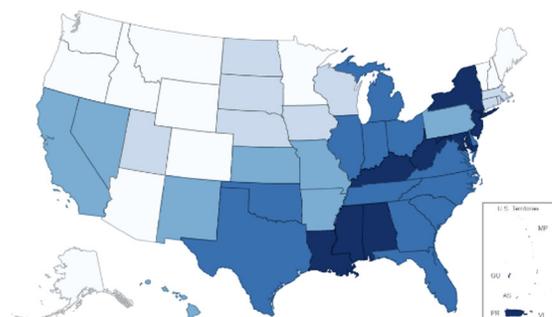
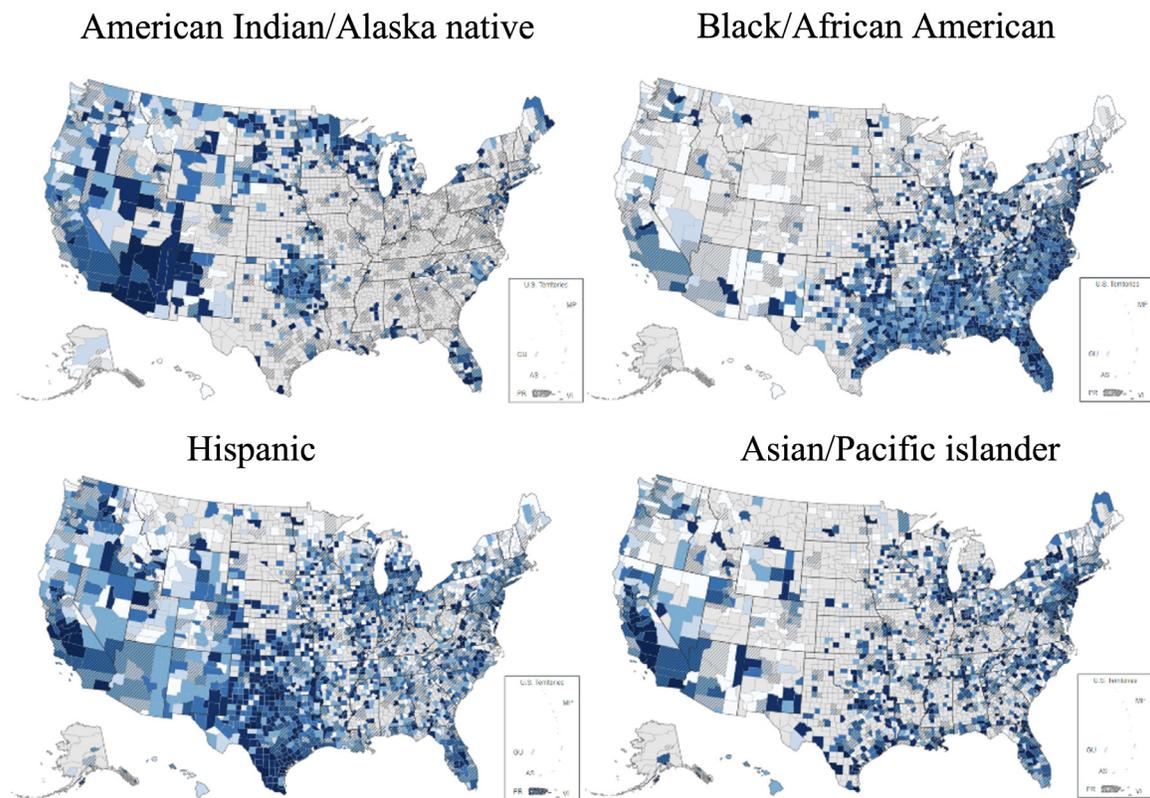


Figure 2. Diabetes Prevalence by States among Medicare FFS Beneficiaries, 2020



emphasis around the southwest area and in Oklahoma, while for Black/African Americans it was concentrated in the south and up the middle Atlantic. For Hispanics, the prevalence was more spread across the country from the west to the south and small groups around east north central and along the east coast. And lastly, for the Asian/Pacific Islander populations, the concentration was along the west coast with small groups throughout the south, northeast, and east north central.

Figure 3. Diabetes Prevalence Maps of Minority Race/Ethnicity by County among Medicare FFS Beneficiaries, 2020



Under the Medicare program, Medicare Part B covers screenings to check for diabetes; however, analysis of CMS claims data found that only 4% of Medicare beneficiaries took advantage of this benefit in 2020.⁵ In 2018, CMS established a behavior change intervention known as the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP) with the goal of preventing type 2 diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries with prediabetes.

Beneficiary Resources

- Medicare & You: diabetes (video)
- Medicare Coverage of Diabetes Supplies, Services & Prevention Programs
- Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP) - Frequently Asked Questions
- Managing Diabetes: Medicare Coverage & Resources
- American Diabetes Association
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) Clearinghouse
- National Diabetes Education Program

Provider Resources

- Diabetes Prevention Program: Equity Tailored Programs (PDF)
- Diabetes Management: Directory of Provider Resources (PDF)
- Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program Expanded Model (PDF)
- Pre-Diabetes Services: Referring Patients to the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program (PDF)
- Diabetic Self-Management Training (DSMT) Accreditation Program
- Diabetes Self-Management Training Accrediting Organizations Fact Sheet (PDF)
- National Diabetes Prevention Program
- Association of Diabetes & Education Specialists

References/Sources

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2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.pdf>
3. American Diabetes Association. <http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/statistics/>
4. Chronic Conditions Data Warehouse. <https://www2.ccwdata.org/web/guest/medicare-charts/medicare-chronic-condition-charts>
5. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Mapping Medicare Disparities Tool. <https://data.cms.gov/tools/mapping-medicare-disparities-by-population>

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If you have any questions or feedback, please contact HealthEquityTA@cms.hhs.gov.