



HEALTH EQUITY QUARTERLY

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Director's Message

Welcome to the second edition of Health Equity Quarterly, our quarterly newsletter that highlights the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Office of Minority Health's (CMS OMH) activities, messages from leadership, and some of the great work the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is doing to address health care disparities.

This July, CMS OMH is recognizing the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As we continue to work to address barriers to equitable care for vulnerable populations, CMS OMH is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities receive equal access to quality health care information and services. In order to assist this population in achieving equal access, we have published several resources on our [Improving Access to Care for People with Disabilities](#) webpage. These resources can help providers to improve the services that they offer and help individuals with different types of disabilities navigate the health system to get care that is right for them. We will continue to work with and listen to our partners in this space to help address their needs and move health equity forward.

Newly added, is [Modernizing Health Care to Improve Physical Accessibility: A Primer for Providers](#). This resource helps staff in health care settings improve quality, satisfaction, and physical accessibility for people with disabilities. Offering strategies and resources, we hope you can use it to assist in removing barriers and delivering high-quality, patient-centered, physically accessible care for individuals with disabilities.

Looking beyond July, the current COVID-19 public health emergency and recent Executive Orders further underscore our office's critical role in ensuring that CMS and all federal agencies collaborate to achieve health equity. We must work together to understand and address the

barriers and challenges underserved communities and individuals face in accessing benefits and services.

- Dr. LaShawn McIver

Improving Access to Care for People with Disabilities

Research Update

CMS OMH maintains a series of [data snapshots, data highlights, and other reports](#). Here are the latest data reports by CMS OMH, published during the second quarter of 2021:

- [Consumers' Race, Ethnicity, and Language Preference Selections during the 2019 Health Insurance Marketplace® Open Enrollment Period](#) - This Data Highlight describes consumers who made Qualified Health Plan selections from the 39 states that participated in the 2019 HealthCare.gov Open Enrollment Period.
- [Hepatitis Disparities in Medicare Fee-For-Service Beneficiaries](#) – This Data Snapshot shows the prevalence of viral hepatitis (general) among all Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiaries and offers resources for beneficiaries and providers.
- [Ischemic Heart Disease Disparities in Medicare Fee-For-Service Beneficiaries](#) – This Data Snapshot highlights disparities in Ischemic Heart Disease among Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries and discusses the cardiovascular disease screenings that are available under Medicare Part B.
- [2021 Stratified Reporting](#) – A series of reports that describe the quality of health care received by Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans nationwide, highlighting racial and ethnic differences in health care experiences and comparing the quality of care for men and women.
- [Rural Crosswalk: CMS Flexibilities to Fight COVID-19](#) (Updated) - This crosswalk highlights COVID-19-related provisions that CMS has issued by regulation or waiver that impact Rural Health Clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Critical Access Hospitals, Rural Acute Care PPS Hospitals, and/or Skilled Nursing Facilities, and describes the significance for these rural providers.
- [Press Release: CMS Proposes Changes to Reduce Health Care Disparities Among Patients with Chronic Kidney Disease and End-Stage Renal Disease](#) – CMS recently published a press release on its proposed actions to close health equity gaps by providing Medicare patients battling End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) with greater access to care. The press release also cites CMS OMH resources – [Health Disparities Among Aged ESRD Beneficiaries, 2014](#) and the [Guide to Reducing Disparities in Readmissions](#) – that outline the existing disparities.
- [Z Codes Utilization among Medicare Fee-For-Service \(FFS\) Beneficiaries in 2017](#) – This Data Highlight analyzes the utilization of Z codes in 2017 among Medicare fee-for-services (FFS) beneficiaries

Equity Initiatives Across CMS

- [Recent Virtual Events](#) – CMS OMH recently hosted virtual events aimed at addressing health disparities:
 - Building COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence Webinar – CMS OMH, along with guest speakers from the FDA and CDC, hosted a webinar to provide information and resources to help address vaccine hesitancy in your community. A [recording](#) of the event, [slide deck](#), [supplemental handout](#), and [fact sheet](#) are available.
 - The Road to Equity: Examining Structural Racism in Health Care – During National Minority Health Month, CMS hosted a two-day virtual forum to highlight CMS's renewed focus on health equity, address structural racism in health care, and establish federal agencies' roles as equity partners. Watch the recordings ([Day 1/Day2](#)) and read the transcripts ([Day 1/Day 2](#)) to learn more.

Connect with CMS OMH

Visit the CMS OMH website to learn more about the CMS Office of Minority Health or find out more information about health equity resources like the Health Equity Technical Assistance program.

go.cms.gov/omh