



# Health Disparities

Marshala Lee M.D.  
Shane' Darby  
Adrienne Wallace  
Kalyn McDonough



**BUILDING  
PEOPLE  
POWER**

Delaware State University

[BuildingPeoplePower.com](http://BuildingPeoplePower.com)

## HEALTH DISPARITIES

Certain populations still face a number of challenges in obtaining equal pay, equal access to housing, health care and other basic necessities. Contributing factors, relevant statistics, and recommendations are included in the Pace of Progress 2020. Its goal is to shed light on the current conditions in Delaware's communities of color in areas such as housing, education, health, and employment.

The Health section presented by Lee, Darby, Wallace, & McDonough touches on the following:

- Health Disparities in Delaware
- Access to Healthcare
- Social Determinants of Health & Health Inequity
- Structural Racism as a Determinant of Health

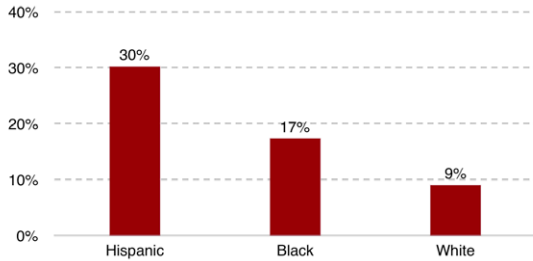
### INTRODUCTION

Since the 1900's, significant progress has been made in improving the overall health and life expectancy of Americans. Despite these advances in medicine and public health, all communities have not benefited equally. More specifically in the past two decades since the release of the Pace of Progress, Delawareans have benefited from a number of health improvement initiatives such as Medicaid expansion, but yet still significant health disparities exist for many Delawareans of Color. Health disparities are preventable differences in the burden of disease injury and violence or opportunities to achieve optimal health that is experienced by underserved populations. Disparities can be related to race, gender, sex, income, disability status, education, sexual orientation and geography.

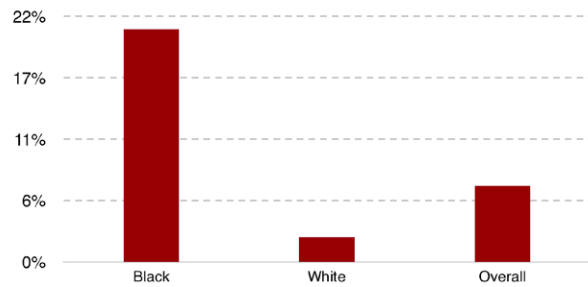


HEALTH DISPARITIES IN DELAWARE

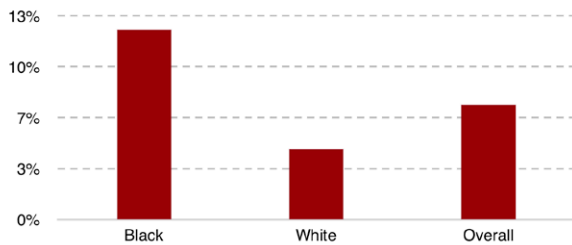
Percent of Children in Delaware, Ages <18 with less than Very Good Health by Race/Ethnicity



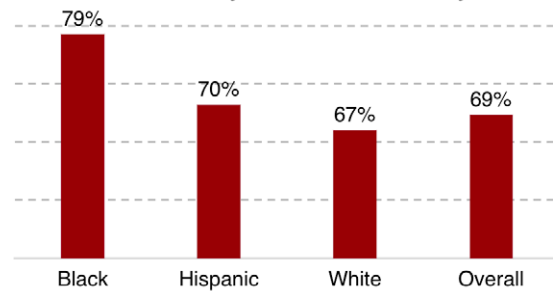
Age-Adjusted Death Rate due to Homicide



Infant Mortality Rate by Race/Ethnicity

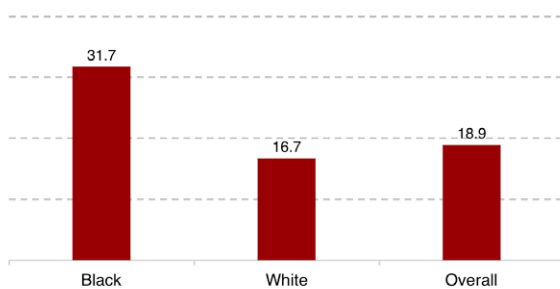


Adults who are Overweight or Obese by Race/Ethnicity



Age-Adjusted Death Rate due to Diabetes by Race/Ethnicity

Deaths/100,000 Population



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Although individual behaviors to improve one's own personal health are certainly important, organized community action and supports are often necessary to make large-scale improvements. Recommend strategies include:

### For Chronic Disease and Metabolic Syndrome

- Reduce obesity by promoting healthy diet and exercise
- Develop a health marketing campaign and educational initiatives for the following:
  - » Cancer: Prostate, Lung, Uterine, Ovarian, Breast, Colon
  - » Diabetes
  - » Asthma
  - » Heart disease
  - » HIV/AIDS and other STIs
  - » Stroke
- Increase access to healthy foods
- Improve the built environment
- Increase the cultural and linguistic competency of health care providers in Delaware.
- Expand the number of community-based initiatives that increase access to preventative health services within underserved communities.
- Promote access to remote patient monitoring for patients with chronic conditions
- Increase access to community health workers and care coordination
- Reduce lung disease (e.g. asthma, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Increase the number of primary care physicians in underserved areas
- Develop a focused effort to "make the healthy choice the easy choice"
- Develop innovative methods for providing care to transient populations

### **For Maternal & Child Health**

- Embed education for pre- and inter-conception care in schools
- Provide perinatal care for young males and females within the school wellness centers.
- Insurance supported doula services
- Increased partnerships with doula services within the hospitals
- Ensure an “all hands on deck” approach for all maternal patients in labor
- Mobile Nurse Home Visits for mothers who are considered “high-risk”

### **For Substance Use Disorders**

- Increase number of substance abuse treatment providers and recovery support services.
- Reduce tobacco and tobacco-substitute use
- Increase the cost for tobacco-based products, develop research programs within the pharmaceutical realm focusing on smoking cessation
- Reduce substance use
- Stipulate conditions for the use of Narcan and associate it with treatment services
- Develop substance use programs within the health system and include the pediatric population within the schools and pediatric hospitals
- Monitor practicing physicians/pharmaceutical programs who distribute excessive medications

### **For Mental Health**

- Improve access to behavioral and mental health services
- Recruit minority psychologists/psychiatrists for child and adult patients
- Have quarterly community health fairs or events that include mental health services
- Hold a statewide mental health marketing campaign to educate minorities on the importance of mental health

### **For System-wide Recommendations**

- Adopt a Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) change approach to promoting health in all policies, incorporating a social marketing approach, and addressing the social determinants



---

You can find this and more information about the Building People Power Campaign at [BuildingPeoplePower.com](http://BuildingPeoplePower.com). Join the Movement! Eradicate Racial Disparities! Email [info@mwul.org](mailto:info@mwul.org) to join an issue based campaign today.

**Delaware State University**