

# What We Know Now

COVID-19 Health Barriers and Disparities Among Rural  
and Minority Populations and People with Disabilities

## Definitions

### Barrier

A hurdle or obstacle that makes it more difficult for certain individuals to access and benefit from health care services.

### Disparity

Preventable health difference that is linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage.

## SOURCES

## Rural and Minority Populations



## Health Care Disparities

### Rural Populations

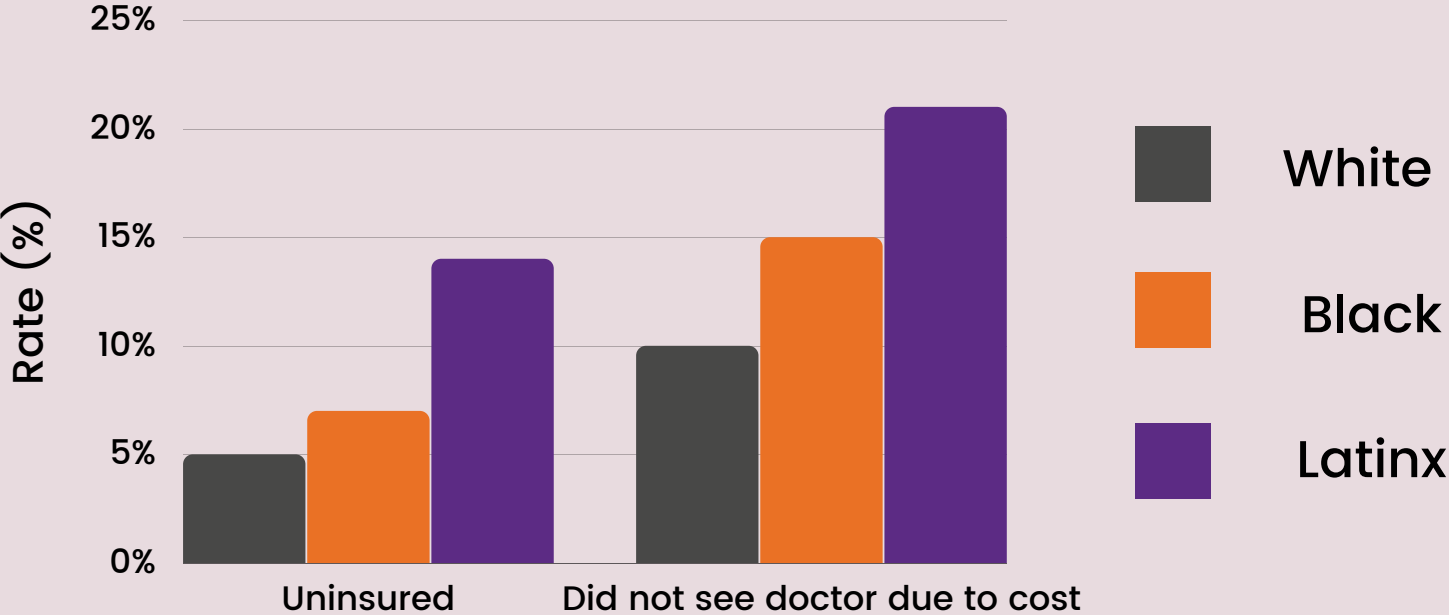


People living in rural areas were  
33% more likely to delay or  
forego medical care due to cost

## SOURCES

**Minority Populations**

**Racial Disparities in Ability to Pay for Health Care**



SOURCES

## Health Outcome Disparities for Minority Populations



**Black and Latinx populations experience the greatest disparities.**



More likely to have poor physical and mental health



More likely to have obesity and diabetes



More likely to get cancer



Less likely to survive prostate, breast and lung cancer

## People with Disabilities

## Magnified Health Care Disparities



Experience higher mortality rates



Visit health care providers more often

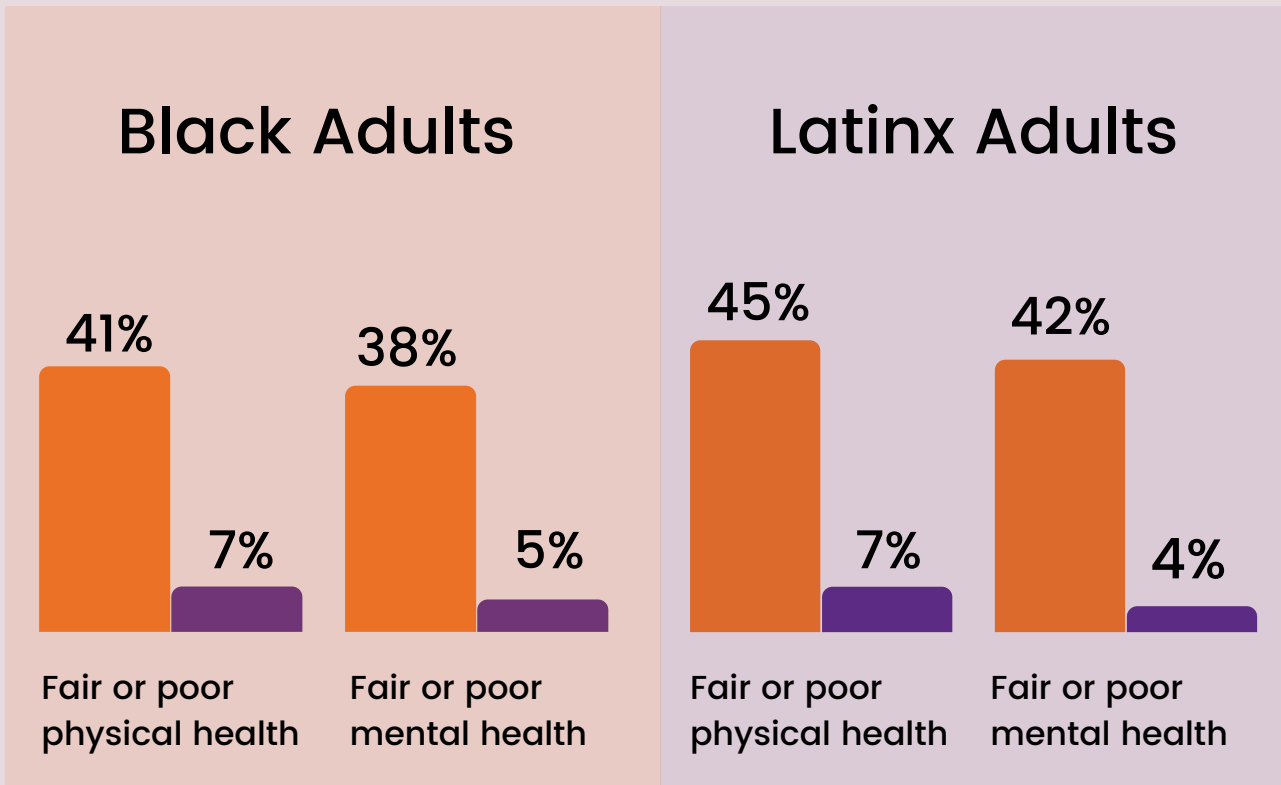


**Minorities with disabilities face even greater disparities.**

## SOURCES

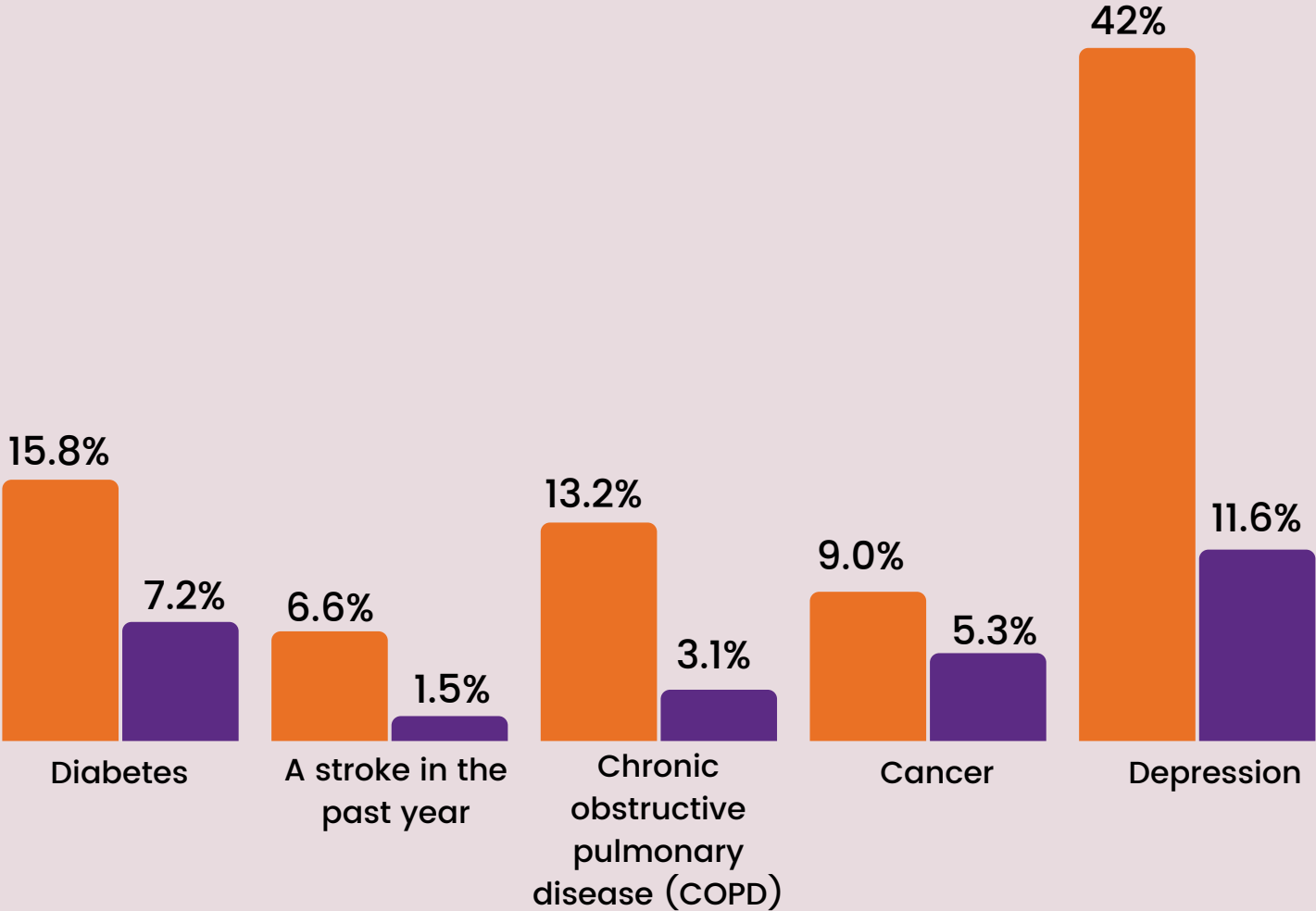
**Even Poorer Health Outcomes**

**Percentages of Health Outcomes by Ethnicity between Adults with and without IDD**



SOURCES

# Health Outcome Differences between Individuals with and without Disabilities



SOURCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Disability and Health Data System (DHDS), Chronic Conditions (2018) and Mental & Emotional Health (2019)

## COVID-19 Barriers to Health Care

### Location

Vaccines are mostly available at chain pharmacies and large hospitals that may not be present in minority communities.



### Language

Government websites used to find vaccines often lack translation options. Vaccination clinics have limited translation help available.



### Accessibility

People with disabilities reported not knowing how and where to get a vaccine. Information is often not provided in an accessible and easily understood format.



### Availability

There are 54% fewer physicians in rural Pennsylvania compared to urban Pennsylvania.



## SOURCES

Ryerson, A., et. al. (2021). Disparities in COVID-19 Vaccination Status, Intent, and Perceived Access for Noninstitutionalized Adults, by Disability Status – National Immunization Survey Adult COVID Module, United States, May 30–June 26, 2021, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 70(39): 1365–1371.

Sabatello, M., Burke, T., McDonald, K., Appelbaum, P., (2020). Disability, Ethics, and Health Care in the COVID-19 Pandemic, *American Journal of Public Health*, 110(10): 1523–1527.

## COVID-19: Rural and Minority Populations

Counties that experienced  
greater COVID-19 death rates  
had:



- Greater rates of poverty



- Higher rates of people on Medicaid

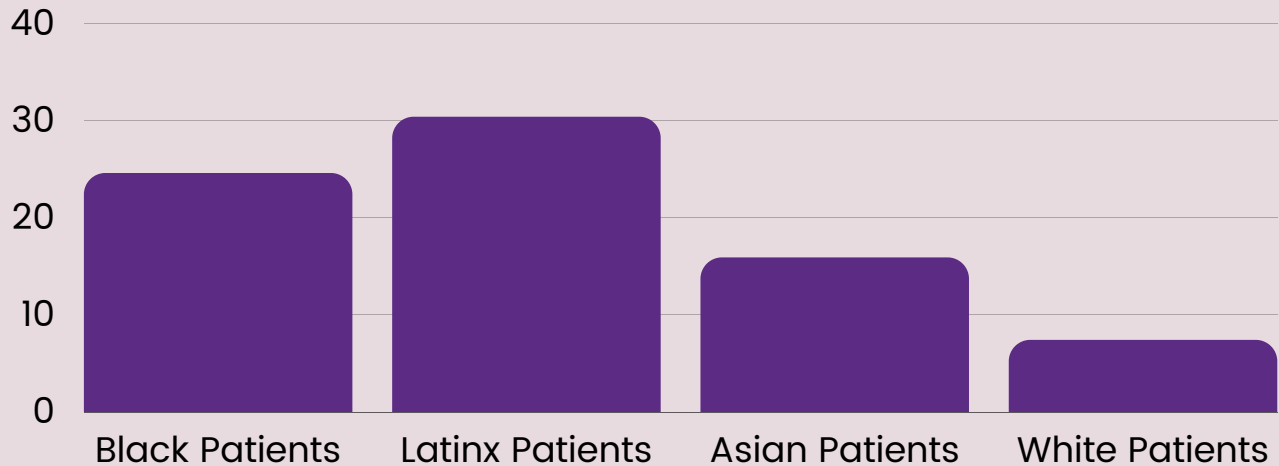


- More people with disabilities

### SOURCES



## COVID-19 Hospitalization Rates per 10,000 People



### Minorities are:

- More likely to have underlying health conditions that increase the risk of death from COVID-19
- Experience higher hospitalization and death rates from COVID-19
- Reported more concerns about being blamed for the spread of COVID-19

#### SOURCES

## COVID-19: People with Disabilities



More likely to be unemployed



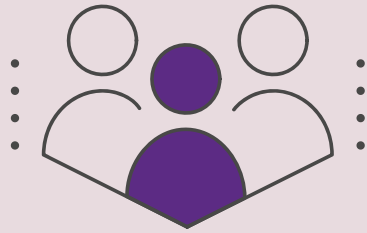
Once again, minorities with disabilities experienced the largest disparities.



Have higher rates of underlying health conditions that increase the risk of COVID-19

### SOURCES

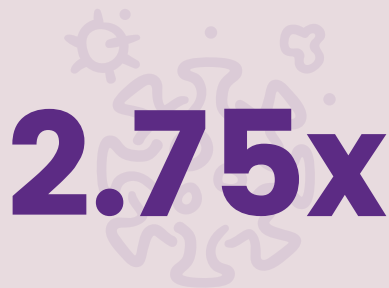
## COVID-19: People with Disabilities



People living in residential settings especially experience higher death rates due to COVID-19.



People with developmental disabilities are 3x more likely to die following a COVID-19 diagnosis

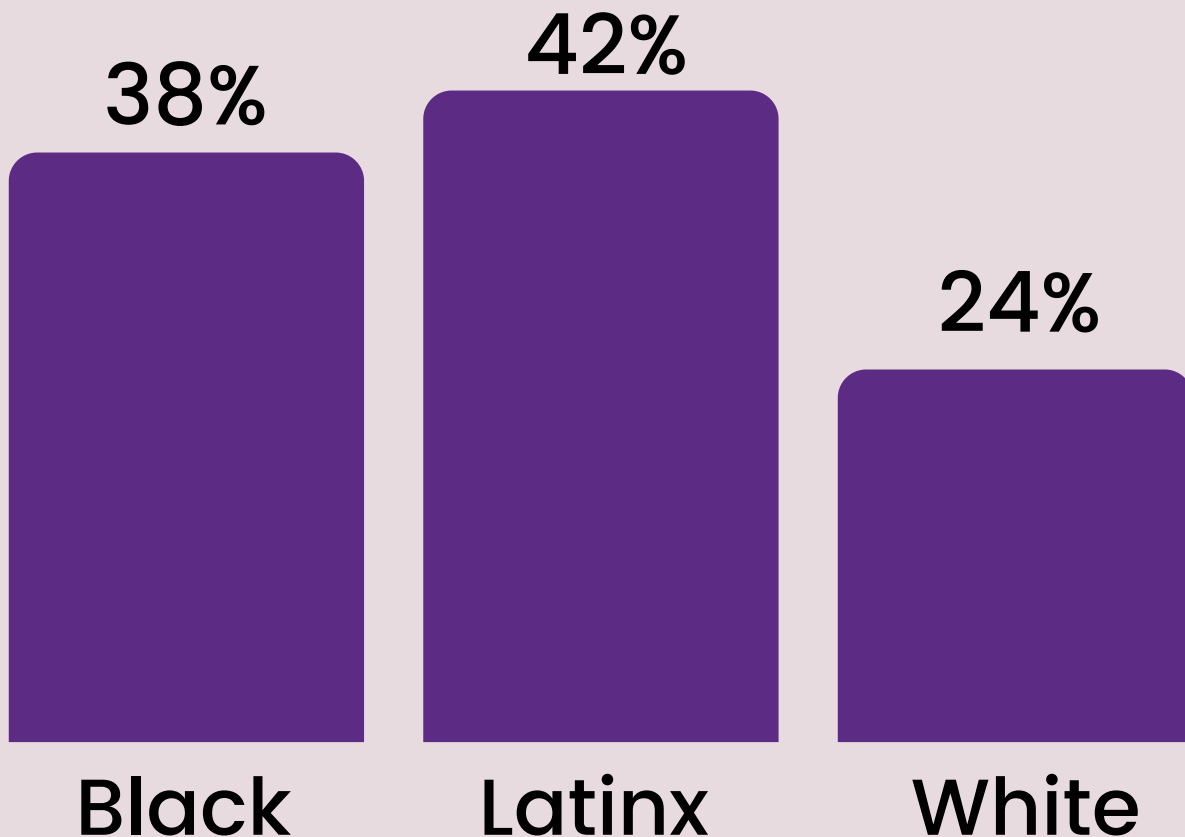


People with intellectual disabilities are 2.75x more likely to die following a COVID-19 diagnosis

### SOURCES

## COVID-19: Mental Health Disparities

Percentage of People with IDD by  
Race and Ethnicity that  
Experienced Fair or Poor Mental  
Health during COVID-19



### SOURCES