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HEALTH EQUITY GUIDE

December 2022



December: National Influenza Vaccination Week and HIV & AIDS Awareness Month

National Influenza Vaccination Week is the 2nd week of December. Flu vaccination coverage has been consistently lower among Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) adults.

December 1st is #WorldAIDSDay. Approximately 1.1 million people in the U.S. are living with HIV, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and approximately three quarters of those diagnosed are people of color.¹

[Dartmouth Health Launches Center for Advancing Rural Health Equity](#)

On November 7, 2022, Dartmouth Health, in collaboration with community partners, inaugurated the Center for Advancing Rural Health Equity (CARHE), a unique initiative focused on identifying and addressing persistent health disparities through collaboration, partnership, and action.

Rural health equity means that all people living in rural areas are able to live their healthiest life possible. This includes living a life free from discrimination and unfair treatment, as well as having access to healthcare and social services, safe neighborhoods and places to live, reliable transportation, healthy foods, working wages that support basic needs, and community policies that are fair to all people.

[Black People are 80% More Likely to be Hospitalized for Influenza](#)

As flu season approaches and healthcare professionals encourage the public to vaccinate against influenza, the CDC has analyzed the rates of hospitalization and vaccination across different racial and ethnic groups. In a recent [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report \(MMWR\)](#), the CDC stated that racial and ethnic minority groups had a higher rate of influenza hospitalizations and lower vaccination coverage between 2009 and 2022.

Rural/CAH Corner

[Using Z Codes to Improve Health Equity in Rural Indiana](#)

Cameron Memorial Community Hospital is an independent, critical access hospital in northeastern Indiana. As part of their health equity strategy, the hospital began using ICD-10-CM Z codes to detect and address their patients' social needs.

[As Cardiac Deaths Fall, Black and Rural Communities Lag](#)

This article from the American Heart Association reports cardiac deaths have dropped significantly in the U.S., except in Black and rural communities. The findings raise serious questions about access and quality of care and health education in rural areas and especially in Black communities.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report, 2019; 24(1). <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/library/reports/surveillance/cdc-hiv-surveillance-supplemental-report-vol-24-1.pdf>

In the News

[How Ready Is Your County to Help with Addiction Recovery?](#)

A new index is designed to assess the “recovery environment” in each U.S. county. The tool provides information on the availability of different treatment options, support systems for people in recovery, and social factors such as housing costs, transportation, and more.

[Her Child Was Stillborn at 39 Weeks. She Blames a System That Doesn’t Always Listen to Mothers](#)

Every year more than 20,000 pregnancies in the United States end in stillbirth, the death of an expected child at 20 weeks or more. That number has exceeded infant mortality every year for the last 10 years. It's 15 times the number of babies who, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS, in 2020.

[Empathetic Communication Key to Addressing Healthcare Discrimination](#)

Accommodating care access challenges and patient-centered communication may help overcome issues with healthcare discrimination.

[Major Payers Spent Less Than 1% of 2021 Income on Social Determinants of Health](#)

The share of their income that major payers spend on social determinants of health may have increased over time, but it remains a lackluster percentage, [a study published in the Journal of General Internal Medicine found](#).

[How MN Medicaid Used Community Engagement to Address Health Disparities](#)

Minnesota’s Medicaid program addressed health disparities and improved maternal health through community engagement initiatives that sought feedback from Black and American Indian beneficiaries.



For more health equity news: <https://qi.ipro.org/health-equity-resources/>

Upcoming Events

[Healthcare-Associated Infection Mini-Summit](#)

Sepsis Alliance Institute

Date: December 15

Time: 12:00 – 3:30 PM ET

[Embedding Equity in the Health Sector \(Video Series\)](#)

Raising the Bar

Recorded sessions available on demand

[Effective Communication for Healthcare Teams: Addressing Health Literacy, Limited English Proficiency and Cultural Differences](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Date: On Demand (CE available).