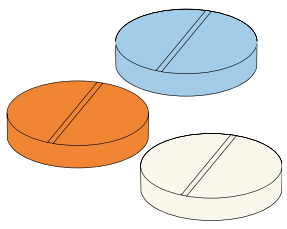
RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE

Public Health Issue:

A widespread health issue that affects a large population, requiring urgent attention. It encompasses any adverse event (natural or man-made) compromising population health. **Examples: natural flu outbreaks or COVID-19**

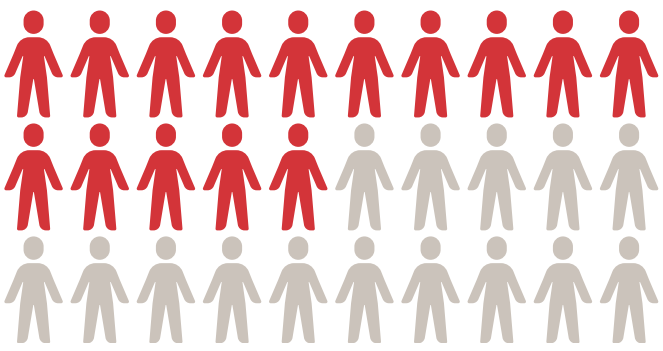


RACISM as a Public Health Issue:

Lethal to Black, Indigenous, People of Color, creating healthcare inequalities and high-profile killings by law enforcement

123

Black U.S. individuals shot to death by police in 2023



5.7%

of active physicians are Black (2023)



There is disproportionate representation in medicine, bias in justice systems, and barriers to healthcare in prisons compound this crisis



Systemic racism within institutions and widespread interpersonal biases distinguish it from conventional public health issues.

Sources: https://www.chicago.gov; https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov ; https://www.statista.com; https://www.aamc.org
https://www.nmanet.org/news/632592/Only-5.7-of-US-doctors-are-Black-and-experts-warn-the-shortage-harms-public-health.htm#:~:text=Only%205.7%25%20of%20US%20doctors,public%20health%20%2D%20National%20Medical%20Association

Impact on Health:

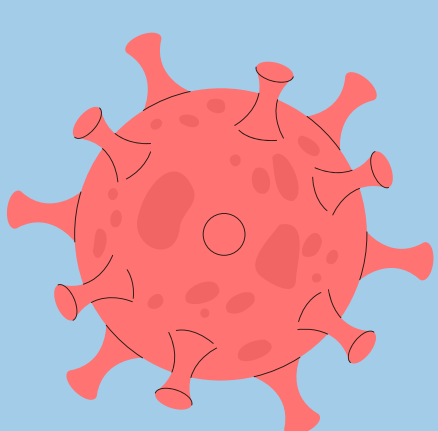
Access to Healthcare: Racial discrimination restricts quality healthcare access, resulting in poor quality treatment, medical distrust, and delayed diagnoses, worsening health issues

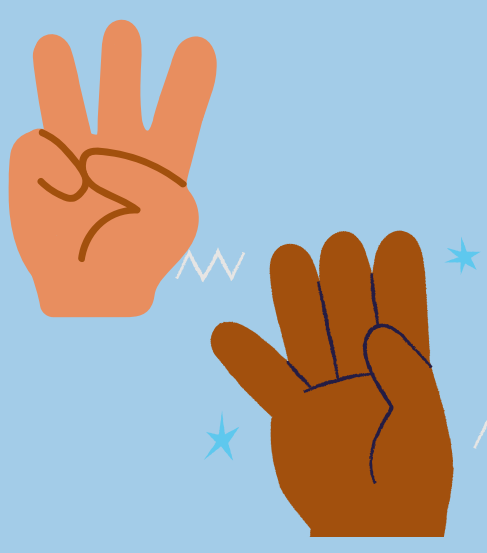
Social Determinants: Racism influences key social determinants (housing, income, education, safety), impacting well-being and life expectancy

Health Disparities: Racism drives health gaps, causing higher disease rates (diabetes, heart disease, etc.) in marginalized groups compared to dominant racial groups

Disparities During COVID-19

- Black, Latinx, and American Indian groups faced higher hospitalization and mortality rates compared to white Americans during the pandemic
- Economic disparities limited access to healthcare and exacerbated gaps in employment, education, and housing





Maternal Mortality Rates

- Black women experience significantly higher maternal mortality rates compared to white women
- Black women are 3-4 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than white women

Impact on Indigenous Communities

- The Indigenous community has the lowest life expectancy in comparison to other races/ethnicities
- Indigenous individuals are “2.3 times more likely to die from diabetes than white people and they have the highest rate of suicide compared with all other racial and ethnic groups,” (California Health Care Foundation)
- These communities experience higher rates of specific diseases due to systemic healthcare disparities and historical marginalization



Sources: https://www.chcf.org; https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

SOLVING THE ISSUE

1) Policy Changes



- Implement policies promoting equity across sectors like healthcare, education, employment, and housing to address systemic disparities

Certain criminal justice policies disproportionately affect communities of color, leading to higher incarceration rates. This disrupts their lives and impedes access to quality healthcare within the prison system, (contributing to long-term health issues)

2) Community Engagement



- Foster inclusive communities to dismantle discriminatory practices through active participation and collaboration

Collaborate with local leaders, organizations, and residents to create strategies combating discrimination, ensuring fair treatment for all community strate

3) Investment in Resources



- Increase funding towards healthcare facilities and social programs tailored to marginalized communities, addressing root causes of health inequities

4) Affirmative Action



- Affirmative action reinstatement ensures fair admission processes, providing opportunities for individuals from underrepresented backgrounds to access higher education and professional fields.

Uphold diverse enrollment in graduate and medical schools by implementing affirmative action policies, fostering inclusive learning environments

Diverse student bodies/workforce environments enrich learning experiences and promote understanding among varied racial/ethnic backgrounds, contributing to an equitable society

Lily Seifert and Kaylin Foss