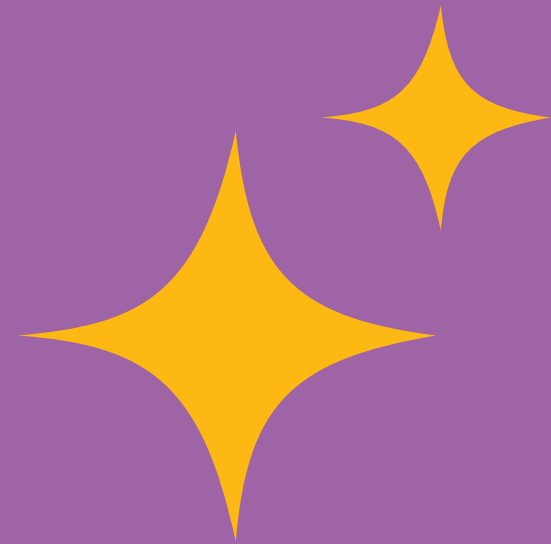


Seen But Not Heard: The Hidden Cost of Racism on Health Care Access for African American Women in Mississippi



Community Leading the Way

Mississippi ranks last or near last in nearly every major health indicator in the country, and the disparities are worst for the communities who historically report fascism, racism, and discrimination when they access health care.

Researchers from the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health listened to over **200 African American women and providers across Mississippi** to understand whether perceived racism affects health care seeking and interactions. The voices and experiences of African American women across the state shaped the research and were the foundation of the project.



What Did This Research Reveal?

Based on the participants' responses to the Perceived Racism Scale, all women reported experiencing discrimination/racism when accessing health care with frequency ranging from daily to several times a year.

These experiences caused women to delay care, avoid providers, and disengage from the health care system — **directly worsening their health outcomes.**

What Did This Research Reveal?

More than 50 percent of respondents felt that because they were African American, they were getting less favorable insurance and care, and that because of their race, their input was not taken into consideration for their health care and their treatment.



Why are These Findings Important?

Racism in health care is not just an individual problem: it is a system problem.

Addressing this will require **policy and organizational changes** that build culturally appropriate, **respectful care** into everyday practice, not just one-time sensitivity training for individual providers.



How the Research is Shaping the Future

The research provides **clear evidence** that health systems and medical training need to integrate **culturally and linguistically appropriate practices** to support equitable care among African American women.

Researchers from the Institute for the Advancement of Minority Health are now partnering with the Mississippi Medical Association, the Mississippi State Department of Health, nursing schools, and public health programs to **share findings, shape trainings, and inform policy conversations**, including advocating for the adoption of culturally and linguistically appropriate care standards at the organizational and systems level across Mississippi.

Researchers are also holding a Community Research Fellows Training Program to encourage more members of the community to engage with research to address local health needs.



Learn More

AcademyHealth supports community-led researchers producing evidence for community-driven solutions. Learn more about all Community Research for Health Equity grantees at:

www.academyhealth.org/CRHE