

Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare

- **There are well-documented racial and ethnic disparities in healthcare access and quality.** (Morehouse, 1999; Lurie & Dubowitz, 2007; Trivedi, Zaslavsky, Schneider, & Ayanian, 2006)

The following are the major findings from a study released June 2007 titled “Closing The Divide: How Medical Homes Promote Equity in Health Care” (Beal, Doty, Hernandez, Shea, & Davis). There were 3,535 participants.

- **Disparities of care largely disappear when patients have a medical home.**

A medical home is defined as:

- a. A regular provider**
 - b. No difficulty contacting the provider by phone**
 - c. No difficulty obtaining care or advice on weekends and evenings.**
 - d. Office visits are well organized and on schedule.**
- **Hispanics and African Americans are vulnerable: their uninsured rates are higher and they are less likely than whites to have access to a regular doctor or source of care.**
 - **Use of reminders for preventive care is associated with higher rates of preventive screening. Among patients with medical homes, there are no racial disparities in terms of receipt of preventive care reminders.**
 - **Adults with medical homes are better prepared to manage their chronic conditions – and have better health outcomes – than those who lack medical homes.**
 - **Community health centers and public clinics – which care for many uninsured, low-income, and minority adults – are less likely than private doctors’ offices to have features of a medical home.**

References:

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Morehouse Medical Treatment and Effectiveness Center. (1999). A synthesis of the literature, racial and ethnic differences in access to medical care. Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. 1-87. Retrieved July 9, 2007 from <http://www.kff.org/minorityhealth/loader.cfm?url=/commonspot/security/getfile.cfm&PageID=13293>

Trivedi, A. N., Zaslavsky, A. M., Schneider, E. C., & Ayanian, J. Z. (2006). Relationship between quality of care and racial disparities in Medicare health plans. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 296(16), 1998-2004. Retrieved July 6, 2007 from www.jama.com.