

Perceptions of discrimination when accessing health care among adults in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky

December 2017

Research has shown that an effective health care environment includes a positive relationship between a patient and provider. When patients feel disrespected or judged by their health care provider, it can affect their health behaviors and outcomes.¹

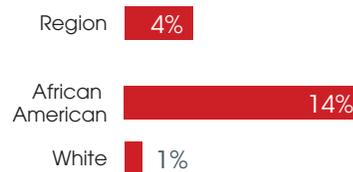
In 2012, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation conducted a survey as part of its Aligning Forces for Quality (AF4Q) project to learn how individuals were interacting with the health care system.² This survey included questions about individual perception of discrimination within the physician-patient relationship.

In 2017, the University of Cincinnati's *Transformation of Mission-based Health Care through Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into the Third Century* project asked adults in Greater Cincinnati³ several questions from the AF4Q survey to learn more about perceptions of discrimination in our community. The survey asked:

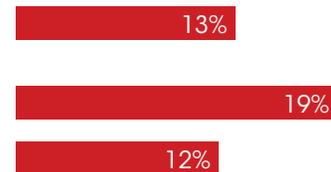
1) Have you ever felt that the

Have you ever felt that the doctor or medical staff you saw judged you unfairly or treated you with disrespect because of ...

... your race or ethnic background



... your ability to pay or the type of health insurance



doctor or medical staff you saw judged you unfairly or treated you with disrespect because of:

- Your race or ethnic background
- How you speak English⁴
- Your ability to pay for the care or the type of health insurance you have
- Your age
- Your gender

2) Do you think there was ever a time when you would have received better medical care if you:

- Belonged to a different race or ethnic group
- Spoke English more fluently

- Were younger
- Were a woman (asked of men only)
- Were a man (asked of women only)

African American adults more likely to feel discrimination because of race, ability to pay

Responses to several questions varied by the race of the respondent. Among African American adults in the region, 14% felt they had been judged unfairly or treated with disrespect by a doctor or medical

Continued on next page

¹ Sorkin, D.H., Ngo-Metzger, Q., & De Alba, I. (2010). Racial/Ethnic discrimination in health care: Impact on perceived quality of care. *J Gen Intern Med*, 25 (5): 390-396. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2855001/>.

² For more information about Aligning Forces for Quality, see <http://forces4quality.org>.

³ Questions were included on the Greater Cincinnati Survey (GCS) conducted by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. The counties in the survey were Hamilton, Clermont, Butler and Warren in Ohio; Boone, Kenton and Campbell in Kentucky; and Dearborn in Indiana. For the winter 2017 GCS a total of 1,852 randomly selected adults from Greater Cincinnati were interviewed by telephone between Jan. 31, 2017, and Feb. 14, 2017. This included 936 landline interviews and 916 cell phone interviews. The data have been weighted to correct for potential sampling biases on age, race, sex, education and county of residence using U.S. Census data. The potential sampling error for the survey is $\pm 2.3\%$. Caution should be used when interpreting subgroup results because the margin of error for any subgroup is higher than that of the overall survey.

⁴ Note: survey was conducted entirely in English.

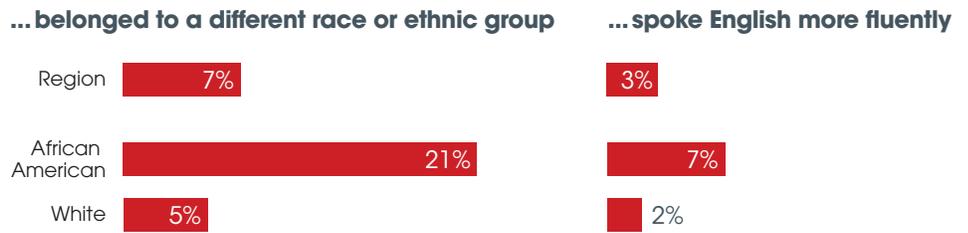
staff because of their race or ethnicity. This compares with about 1% of White adults.

More than 2 in 10 African American adults (21%) think they would have received better medical care if they had belonged to a different race or ethnic group. This compares with only 5% of White adults.

Ability to pay and type of health insurance also influenced perception of care. Overall, about 1 in 10 adults (13%) in the region felt they had been judged unfairly or treated with disrespect by medical staff because of their ability to pay for care or their type of health insurance. These responses varied by race. Nearly 2 in 10 African American adults (19%) felt they had been judged unfairly or treated with disrespect because of their ability to pay or the type of health insurance they had. This compares with only 12% of White adults.

African American adults were also slightly more likely to feel they had been discriminated against because of how they spoke English. Among African American adults, 7% thought they would have received bet-

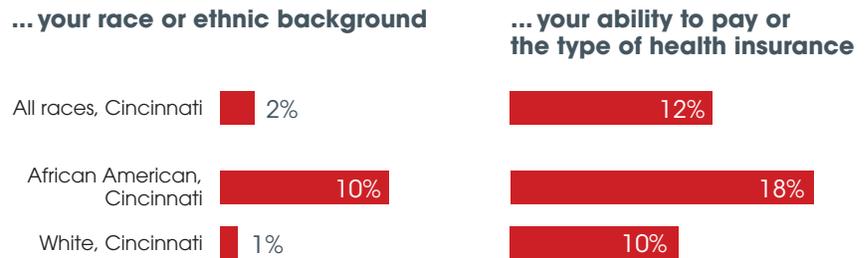
Do you think there was ever a time when you would have received better care if you ...



INTERACT FOR HEALTH

Have you ever felt that the doctor or medical staff you saw judged you unfairly or treated you with disrespect because of ...

(Cincinnati results only, 2012 AF4Q survey)



ter medical care if they spoke English more fluently, compared with 2% of White adults.

2017 local results similar to 2012 AF4Q survey

These questions were taken from the 2012 Aligning Forces for Quality survey done by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Cincinnati was one of 18 communities in which the survey

was conducted. The methodology and geography of the 2012 survey differed from the 2017 Greater Cincinnati Survey. However, findings were similar in both surveys. African American adults were more likely than White adults to feel that that a doctor or medical staff had judged them unfairly or treated them with disrespect because of their race or ethnic background or their ability to pay.