

Healthcare Disparities in Cancer Services: Challenges for Racial and Ethnic Minority Patients



According to a new study published in JAMA Oncology, obtaining radiology services is notably more challenging for individuals who are Black or Latino and reside in the U.S.

UCLA researchers sought to investigate this issue in more depth finding that imaging options for these two demographics are included in few hospitals, hinting at their lack of resources to deliver cancer care.

The team identified 10% of nonfederal acute care and cancer hospitals that serve the highest proportion of Black or Hispanic patients. American Hospital Association survey data were then utilised to assess the availability of 34 different cancer-related services.

They discovered that hospitals catering to racial and ethnic minorities had significantly lower odds of providing 7 out of 12 diagnostic radiology exams (e.g., PET, with an odds ratio of 0.73). This trend extended to all core cancer services (e.g., oncology at 0.51), 4 out of 5 radiotherapy modalities, and 4 out of 5 other treatment modalities (e.g., interventional radiology, 0.76).

Disparities in the availability of cancer care resources likely stem from limited funding for hospitals serving racial and ethnic minority groups, potentially contributing to variations in quality among hospitals and, consequently, to cancer-related services offered to Black and/or Hispanic patients.

It is clear that more work is required to understand how factors including geography, linguistics, cultural beliefs, and costs may play a role in limiting access to cancer-related services.

Furthermore, the study found that Black and Latino patients faced reduced odds of accessing other imaging modalities, PECT (0.51), PET-CT (0.55), multislice spiral CT with more than 64 slices (0.61), and virtual colonoscopy (0.74).

Source: [JAMA](#)

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