

# Study reveals racial differences in the use of rehabilitation services

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In a *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* study of 6309 community-dwelling Medicare enrollees (1276 of whom reported receiving rehabilitation services in the previous 12 months), the likelihood of receiving rehabilitation services was 1.4-times greater in whites than in blacks.

Of those receiving therapy, whites were more likely to receive home-based and inpatient rehabilitation services (rather than outpatient services), but there were no [racial differences](#) in improvement in function.

"In this sample, a higher proportion of blacks had the lowest functional ability while having lower use of [rehabilitation services](#). Our findings suggest that further work is needed to examine possible barriers to accessing rehabilitation for older black Americans, as [rehabilitation](#) use may have the potential to improve Medicare-wide differences in functioning by race," said lead author Dr. Tamra Keeney, of the MGH Institute of Health Professions.

**More information:** *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.15136](https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.15136)

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