

1999 to 2018 saw increase in barriers to timely medical care

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From 1999 to 2018, barriers to timely medical care in the United States

increased for all race and ethnic groups, with disparities between groups also increasing, according to a study published online Oct. 28 in *JAMA Health Forum*.

César Caraballo, M.D., from Yale New Haven Hospital in Connecticut, and colleagues describe trends in racial and ethnic disparities in barriers to timely [medical care](#) in a cross-sectional study of 590,603 adults from 1999 to 2018. Temporal trends in disparities relating to five specific barriers to timely medical care were assessed: inability to get through by telephone, no appointment available soon enough, long waiting times, inconvenient office or clinic hours, and lack of transportation.

The researchers found that the proportion reporting any of the five barriers to timely medical care was 7.3, 6.9, 7.9, and 7.0 percent for Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latino, and White individuals, respectively, in 1999. From 1999 to 2018, there was an increase seen in this proportion across all race and ethnicity groups (by 5.7, 8.0, 8.1, and 5.9 percentage points for Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latino, and White individuals, respectively), resulting in a slight increase in the between-group disparities. In 2018, the proportion reporting any barrier was 2.1 and 3.1 percentage points higher among Black and Hispanic/Latino individuals, respectively, versus Whites.

"There is considerable scope for implementing changes to remove the barriers to medical care and to eliminate these racial and [ethnic disparities](#)," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the [health care industry](#).

More information: César Caraballo et al, Trends in Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Barriers to Timely Medical Care Among Adults in the US, 1999 to 2018, *JAMA Health Forum* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamahealthforum.2022.3856](#)

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