

Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in HIV Prevalence Among Women of Childbearing Age and People Giving Birth

Disparities in birth complications and maternal mortality are more common among women living with diagnosed HIV (WLWH) and are particularly prevalent among women who are Black and Hispanic.^{1,2} This review focuses on racial and ethnic disparities in HIV prevalence among women of childbearing age (**15-44 years**) and people giving birth to liveborn infants in New York State (NYS) from 2017-2020.

HIV Diagnoses in New York State

Number of New Diagnoses³

2011: **3,959**
 2021: **2,123**
46% decline

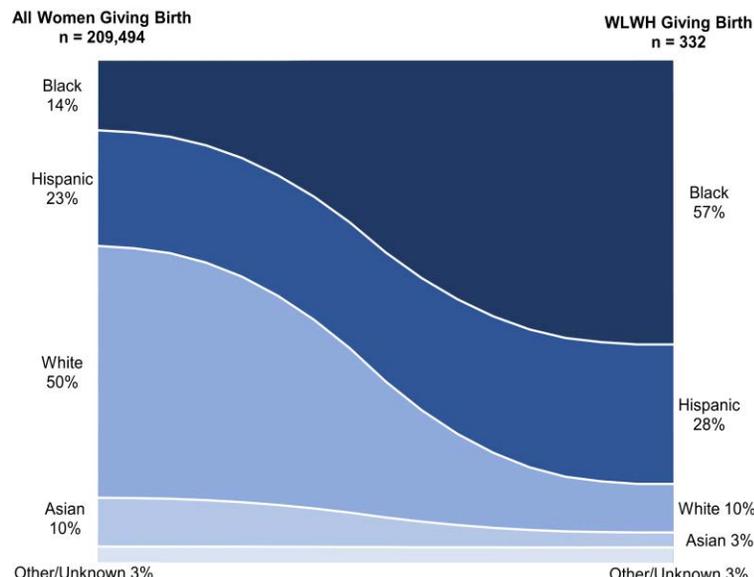
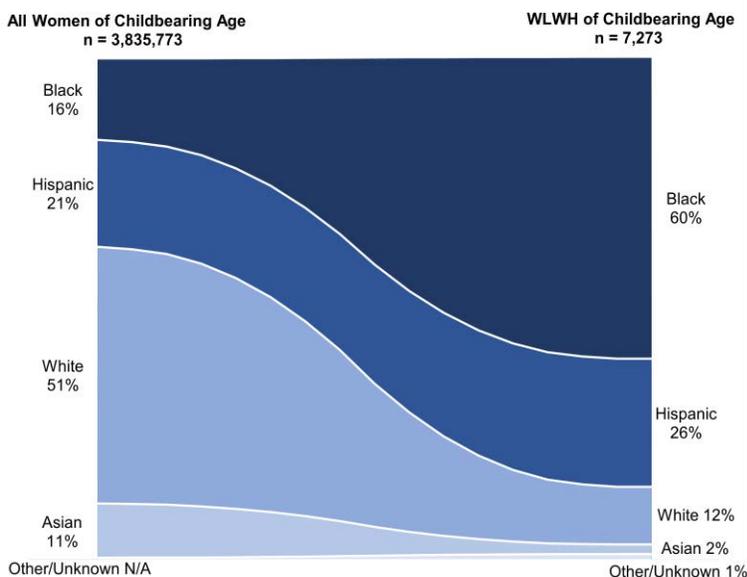
Rates Among Individuals who are Black and Hispanic³

Hispanic: **16.7/100,000 population**
 Non-Hispanic, Black: **30.5/100,000 population**
4 and 8 times higher than people who identified as White, respectively in 2021

All Women of Childbearing Age and Who Gave Birth, WLWH of Childbearing age and who Gave Birth

In 2020¹, the disparity between all women of childbearing age and those living with HIV was greatest for women who identified as Black and Hispanic²

In 2020¹, the disparity between all women who gave birth to liveborn infants and WLWH who gave birth to liveborn infants was greatest for women who identified as Black and Hispanic²



Women who identified as Black represented **16%** of all women of childbearing age but **60%** of those living with HIV; a 4-fold difference and approximately 3,000 more than expected in this group.

Women who identified as Hispanic represented approximately **1 in 5** (21%) women of childbearing age and **1 in 4** (25%) of those living with HIV, i.e., nearly 300 more than expected in this group.

Women who identified as Black represented **14%** of all women giving birth but **57%** of those living with HIV who gave birth; a 4-fold difference.

Women who identified as Hispanic represented 23% of all women giving birth but 28% of those living with HIV who gave birth; slightly more than **1 in 5** and **1 in 4**, respectively.

¹ Only graphs for 2020 are included as the disparities observed were similar across years.

² Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding; Other/Unknown includes Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Native American, Multi-Race, and Unknown.

Summary

Health Equity for All

The role of public health practitioners in providing data and support for policy change as well as the development, implementation, and evaluation of agendas that affect social, economic, environmental, and other social determinants of health remains critical.⁴

Healthcare providers are a key component to normalizing discussions of HIV, throughout the life course, as well as contextualizing and addressing health outcomes in the context of social determinants of health.



The percentage of WLWH who identified as Black and 1) were of childbearing age or 2) delivered a liveborn infant, was disproportionately high compared to their respective population size.



Similar results observed for each year from 2017-2020 indicated persistent racial and ethnic disparities for WLWH of childbearing age who identified as Black and Hispanic.



Such racial and ethnic inequity reflect missed opportunities in HIV prevention, diagnosis, and treatment among people who are Black and Hispanic.



We describe the magnitude of racial and ethnic disparities among WLWH who are of childbearing age. Addressing the underlying causes of these disparities can inform preventive public health measures, lead to greater health equity among WLWH of childbearing age, and improve access to and quality of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care.

Acknowledgement:

Sex at birth was used to identify the population described in this document. Some standardized surveillance terminology used to describe individuals who give birth may not be the same terms that individuals use to describe themselves. We recognize that behind the terms, categories, and labels, there are real people who refer to themselves differently.

References

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7792750/>

² <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24000110/>

³ https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/statistics/annual/2021/2021_annual_surveillance_report.pdf

⁴ <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/issue-brief/beyond-health-care-the-role-of-social-determinants-in-promoting-health-and-health-equity/>

Data Sources:

Women of childbearing age: United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Bridged-Race Population Estimates. Available on CDC WONDER Online Database.

WLWH of childbearing age: NYS Department of Health HIV Surveillance Data

People giving birth: Vital Statistics of New York State (https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/vital_statistics/vs_program.htm)