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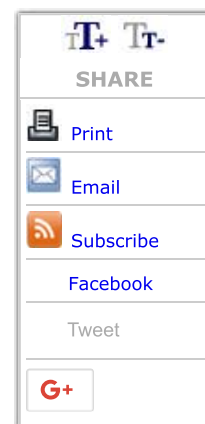
Report Finds Significant Health Disparities For People With Disabilities

August 25, 2011

DURHAM, N.H. – Compared to racial and ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities are generally more likely to experience poorer health, according to a new report from the University of New Hampshire’s Institute on Disability (IOD). The report, “Health Disparities Chart Book on Disability and Racial and Ethnic Status in the United States,” examines the health status of working-age (18-64) people with disabilities, as reported to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, the nation’s premier public health survey.

Among the key findings in the report:

- If people with disabilities were a formally recognized minority group, at 19% of the population, they would be the largest minority group in the United States.
- The highest proportion of people who say their health is fair or poor is found in people with disabilities (40 percent, compared to 23 percent of Hispanics, 22 percent of American Indian/Alaska Natives, 18 percent of blacks, and 8 percent of Asians).
- People with disabilities have the least desirable prevalence rates for ten of the fourteen selected health indicators including cardiovascular disease and diabetes.



“Relatively little research has been conducted comparing the health of people with disabilities to that of people from racial and ethnic minority groups,” says Charles Drum, IOD director and report co-author. “However, research has consistently documented that, as a group, people with disabilities experience poorer health than the general population. Specifically, people with a variety of physical and cognitive disabilities are more likely to experience poorer health status, potentially preventable secondary conditions, chronic conditions, and early deaths.”

The development of the Health Disparities Chart Book was a collaboration among the Institute on Disability and Oregon Health & Science University. The report was supported in part by the Health Disparities Disability and Rehabilitation Research project, a research grant funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR).

For more information on the Health Disparities Chart Book and to download a copy, visit www.iod.unh.edu.

The Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire was established in 1987 to provide a coherent university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policies, and practices related to the lives of persons with disabilities and their families. Its mission is to strengthen communities to ensure full access, equal opportunities, and participation for all persons. The IOD is affiliated with UNH’s College of Health and Human Services.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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