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Western Journal of Emergency Medicine: Integrating Emergency Care with Population Health

Title

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Permalink

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Journal

Western Journal of Emergency Medicine: Integrating Emergency Care with Population Health, 15(5.1)

ISSN

1936-900X

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Publication Date

2014

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Peer reviewed

40 Assessment of Knowledge and Attitudes about Healthcare Disparities among Students, Residents, Staff and Patients in the ED

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Background: National data continues to demonstrate that minorities have poorer outcomes from preventable and manageable diseases. The Institute of Medicine attributes this disparity to health care provider bias.

Objective: Assess the knowledge and attitudes among various levels of providers and patients about healthcare disparities.

Method: A convenience sample of 25 people in six categories (attending, resident, student, nurse, ancillary staff, patient) was surveyed using a 16 item instrument. Chi square test, simple means and proportions were used to analyze data at a 5% significance level.

Results: Based on overall score of correct survey answers, attending physicians are most knowledgeable about healthcare disparities, followed by residents, nurses, students, ancillary staff, and patients ($p=0.0013$). Patients indicated awareness of provider bias, but did not connect this to poorer outcomes ($p=0.0917$). In all categories, Blacks are twice as likely as Whites to acknowledge provider bias against minority patients ($p=0.0135$).

Conclusion: Curricula need to address not only the existence of provider bias, but the connection to poorer outcomes. There is a role for patient education about this association so that patients are empowered as self-advocates.