

Minority Mental Health Worsened During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Source: <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/press-releases/minority-mental-health-worsened-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Nearly half of all Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and LGBTQ+ individuals say they have personally experienced increased mental health challenges over the past 12 months, but few received treatment, according to a new poll by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

Minorities and LGBTQ+ also say they have thought more about their own substance use challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, though barriers to access prevented many from receiving needed care.

The poll, conducted by Morning Consult and released today by the National Council to raise awareness about Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, underscores the toll the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on minority and LGBTQ+ individuals and the urgent need to improve health equity among minorities through Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) and other programs that dramatically boost access in underserved communities.

“The COVID-pandemic has spared no one, and now we’re facing a second public health crisis – a mental health and substance use crisis – and the impact on Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and LGBTQ+ individuals represents an immediate concern,” National Council President and CEO Chuck Ingoglia said.

“Eliminating barriers to access for mental health and substance use treatment will help reverse long-standing inequities and improve wellbeing among people of color and the LGBTQ+ communities.”

With respect to mental health and treatment for mental health challenges, the survey found that over the past 12 months, many people have neglected seeking treatment. According to the findings:

- 49% of LGBTQ+ adults have experienced more stress and mental health challenges, but just 41% say they have received treatment or care of any kind for their mental health.
- 46% of Black adults say they are experiencing more stress and mental health challenges, but just 21% say they have received treatment or care of any kind for their mental health.
- 45% of Native American adults have experienced more stress and mental health

challenges, but only 24% have received treatment for mental health.

- 42% of Hispanic adults report experiencing more stress and mental health challenges, but just 26% say they have received mental health treatment.
- 40% of Asian adults say they are experiencing more stress and mental health challenges, but just 11% say they have received treatment or care of any kind.

Many barriers to access prevent people from seeking treatment. Almost half (47%) of all adults surveyed agreed that the cost of help/treatment is an obstacle in seeking treatment for their mental health and 40% of adults agreed that cost is an obstacle to seeking treatment for a substance use challenge.

The impact of cost on seeking treatment for mental health varied, but represented the biggest obstacle for LGBTQ+ individuals (65%) and Native Americans (63%). The cost of treatment for a substance use challenge was viewed as the greatest obstacle to treatment by Asians (47%), Native Americans (46%) and LGBTQ+ (46%).

Cost is not the only barrier; access to care also represents a significant hurdle. Nearly one in five (18%) of those surveyed found it difficult to access a therapist or counselor for mental health treatment and one in six (15%) reported difficulties securing treatment to address a substance use challenge.

“The urgent need to address mental health and substance use challenges among the nation’s minority and LGBTQ+ populations existed well before the COVID-19 pandemic. The public health crisis has exacerbated the problem and heightened the importance of addressing disparities in health and health care,” Ingoglia said. “One way we can expand access and help people of color and LGBTQ+ individuals is through CCBHCs.”

Adopting the CCBHC model allows mental health and substance use treatment organizations to expand their services and increase access to treatment. Designed to expand access to care for underserved populations, CCBHCs are proving to help address health disparities and promote equity for an estimated 1.5 million people across the



October 2021 Calendar

*National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
National AIDS Awareness Month*

- 3-9 – Mental Illness Awareness Week
- 4 – Child Health Day (International)
- 5 – Teacher Day (International)
- 13 – Bullying Prevention Day (International)
- 15 – Dasara (Hindu)
- 15 – Boss’s Day (US)
- 18 – Lung Health Day (US)
- 19 – Pharmacy Technician Day (US)
- 20 – Medical Assistants’ Day (US)
- 20 – Birth of the B’ab (Baha’i)
- 24-30 – Respiratory Care Week
- 31 – All Hallows Eve (Christian)
- 31 – Halloween (International)
- 31 – Deep Diwali (Jain)

UCDH Medical Interpreters Celebrate International Interpreter/Translator Day

Every year on September 30th UCDH leadership recognizes the important contributions of staff medical interpreters to improving patient care for underrepresented patient populations. Staff interpreters are invited to a catered lunch to celebrate their professional holiday. Happy International Interpreter/Translator Day!

 **Kimberly Bleichner-Jones**
MBA, FACHE, Executive Director at UC Davis Health
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This week we are celebrating our highly skilled and dedicated Medical Interpreters and Translators at **UC Davis Health**! This amazing team helps to ensure equitable access to healthcare services for our diverse patient populations. I am so grateful for our UCDH Medical Interpreting Services Team!

#ucdavishealth #medicalinterpreters #healthcareheroes #diversity #youbelonghere

