



ACOs and Health Equity: Promise or Peril?



NAACOS Resources on Health Equity



- Hot off the press this week: White Paper
- Friday 10 am panel: ACO Approaches to Addressing Health Equity
- Coming soon: Institute for Accountable Care analysis

Useful Definitions

- Health Equity (a principle): Everyone has an equal opportunity to be as healthy as possible
- Health Disparities (metrics of inequity): (Preventable) population-specific differences in the presence of disease, health outcomes, or access to healthcare
- Social Determinants of Health (drivers of inequity): conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks

Recent Literature

- 2012-13 data: MSSP groups and physicians were less likely to be in geographic areas with vulnerable populations (income, race, insurance etc) (Lewis et al., 2013; Yasaitis et al., 2016), however, using data through 2016 a physician group's proportion of vulnerable patients did not change after joining the MSSP (Lee et al., 2020)
- 2010-14 data: MSSP-participating groups cared for more clinically high-risk patients than non-MSSP groups, and with no difference in social vulnerability (Werner et al., 2019)
- 2012-15 data: MSSP's with high proportion of non-white bene's spent more on infrastructure and were more likely to earn shared savings (Hartzman & Rhodes, 2017). Though quality scores were lower in 2012-2014 (Lewis et al., 2017), they were equal in 2015.
- 2017 MIPS data: Physicians who serve more dual-eligible bene's had lower MIPS scores (Khullar et al., 2020)

Unpublished Analysis – I4AC



- 2019 data: MSSP ACO's with a higher % of racially/ethnically diverse beneficiaries have:
 - Higher savings rates
 - Smaller size
 - Higher % dual eligible
- However, these are only 7% of MSSP participants
- Proportion of white bene's in MSSP program is higher (86%) than for the overall FFS population (77%) and especially than the MA population (67%).