David R. Williams, PhD, MPH

Florence & Laura Norman Professor of Public Health
Chair, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
Covid-19 and Communities of Color

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Florence & Laura Norman Professor of Public Health
Chair, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Professor of African & African American Studies and of Sociology
Harvard University
Black Deaths by Location
Deaths through May 7, 2020

- DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (226 DEATHS) - 79
- MICHIGAN (1,781) - 43
- LOUISIANA (1,185) - 58
- WISCONSIN (112) - 30
- ILLINOIS (1,030) - 34

Percentage of Deaths
Percentage of Population

APM RESEARCH LAB, https://www.apmresearchlab.org/covid/deaths-by-race
Life Expectancy, 1950-2015

NCHS, Health United States, 2016
There are large Racial Inequities in Economic Status in the U.S.
Racial Differences in Income are Substantial:

- Whites: $70,642
- Asians: $87,194
- Hispanics: $51,450
- Am Indians*: $41,882
- Blacks: $41,361

U.S. Census Bureau, Semega et al., 2019; *for 2017; US Census Bureau, ACS, 2017
## Median Household Income and Race, 2018

### Racial Differences in Income are Substantial:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Income Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>1 dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asians</td>
<td>1.23 dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>73 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am Indians*</td>
<td>59 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>59 cents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*U.S. Census Bureau, Semega et al., 2019; * For 2017; US Census Bureau, ACS, 2017*
Wealth versus Income

• Home ownership
• Other real estate
• Checking, savings, money market accounts, CDs
• Vehicles
• Businesses
• IRA/Keogh, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, treasury bills
• Subtracting mortgages and debt
Median Wealth and Race, 2016

For every dollar of wealth that Whites have,

- Blacks have 10 cents
- Latinos have 12 cents
- Other Races have 38 cents

Dettling et al., FEDS Notes, Federal Reserve Board (SCF), 2017
What Low Economic Status Means

We are in the same storm, but in different boats
Low Income and Covid-19

• Not everyone can work from home

• For low-wage, non-salaried workers with unpredictable and unstable hours, working from home is a luxury

• In poor neighborhoods, with overcrowded housing, social distancing is not a viable option.

• Low income & minority workers overrepresented among essential workers – our drivers, building maintenance staff and grocery store employees.
Race, Stress and Health

Lower economic status, living in disadvantaged, segregated, neighborhoods and exposure to racism leads to higher levels of:

1. Economic Stressors
2. Psychosocial Stressors
3. Racial Discrimination
4. Physical & Chemical Stressors

Williams, J Health and Social Behavior, 2016
Air Pollution and Covid-19

• Air pollution is associated with hypertension and asthma
• These are linked to more severe severe cases of Covid-19
• Air pollution linked higher death rates from Covid-19
• Poor & minority communities at higher risk (power plants, industries, car and truck emissions)

Xiaao Wu et al MedRiv, 2020
The Stress of Discrimination and its effects on Health
Every Day Discrimination

In your day-to-day life how often do these happen to you?

- You are treated with less courtesy than other people.
- You are treated with less respect than other people.
- You receive poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores.
- People act as if they think you are not smart.
- People act as if they are afraid of you.
- People act as if they think you are dishonest.
- People act as if they’re better than you are.
- You are called names or insulted.
- You are threatened or harassed.

What do you think was the main reason for these experiences?

Williams, Yu, Jackson, Anderson, J Health Psychology, 1997
# Everyday Discrimination & Adult Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Nicotine dependence</th>
<th>CAC (coronary artery calcification)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Metabolic Syndrome</td>
<td>Binge eating</td>
<td>IMT (intima media thickness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CVD outcomes</td>
<td>Smoking &amp; drug use</td>
<td>Visceral fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Breast cancer</td>
<td>At-risk drinking</td>
<td>HRV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Type 2 diabetes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Atrial fibrillation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Adult onset asthma                                                   | Sleep duration      | Inflammation (CRP, IL-6, e-selectin) |
| Nocturnal amb. BP                                                    | Sleep quality       | Cortisol                             |
| Cognitive function                                                   |                     | Telomere length                      |
| Increases in SBP, DBP                                                |                     | Allostatic load                      |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waist circumference</th>
<th>Breast cancer screening</th>
<th>DSM Disorders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obesity</td>
<td>Cervical cancer screening</td>
<td>Emotional Distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight gain</td>
<td>Lower adherence</td>
<td>Well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delays in seeking treatment</td>
<td>Changes in personality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Consequences

“Accelerated Aging”
“Premature Aging”
Biological “Weathering”
Earlier Onset of Chronic Disease
Earlier Onset of High Blood Pressure

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2015
Earlier Onset of Diabetes

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2015
## Comorbidities of Covid-19 Patients

5,700 patients, 12 NY hospitals, March 1 to April 4; Av age: 63

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obesity</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease (CAD; CHF)</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory disease*</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Safiya Richardson et al. JAMA, April 22, 2020 *(Asthma 9%, COPD 5%, sleep apnea 3%)*
Number of Comorbidities, Covid-19 Patients

- None: 6%
- One: 6%
- More than 1: 88%

Safiya Richardson et al. JAMA, April 22, 2020
Individual Discrimination and Health Care
Racial Bias in Medical Care
Reducing Racial Inequities in Health

What Can We Do?
Communities of Opportunity
• Ensure access to quality care
• Invest in early Childhood
• Reduce Childhood Poverty
• Enhance Income and Employment Opportunities for Youth and Adults
• Improve Neighborhood and Housing Conditions
• Provide Care that Addresses the Social context
• Raise Awareness levels of Racial Inequities and Build Political Will to Address them

David R Williams & Lisa Cooper, Int J Environmental Res & Public Health, 2019
“It may well be that we will have to repent in this generation. Not merely for the vitriolic words and the violent actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence and indifference of the good people...”

Martin Luther King