

Fact Sheet

Racial Disparities in Vaccination

Introduction

By teaching your immune system how to fight infections quickly and efficiently, vaccinations are one of the most effective ways to prevent illness, disease, and death.¹ Although vaccinations are important for all, there are significant racial disparities in vaccination rates among NC Medicaid beneficiaries. At NC Medicaid, we are dedicated to reducing these disparities.

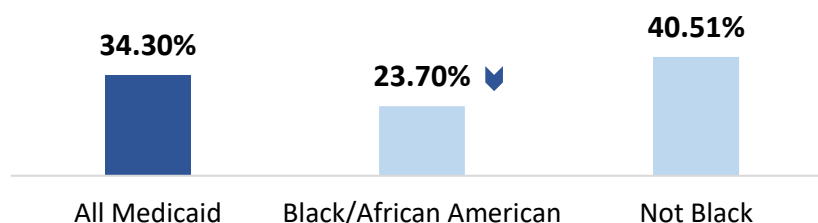
In this fact sheet, various sources were used to measure vaccination by race in the NC Medicaid population. As a result, race is classified differently depending on the source, with data drawn from quality measures* utilizing Black and Non-Black demographics and data drawn from survey measures utilizing White, Black, Multiracial, and Other.² Disparities in quality measures are identified by a relative difference of more than 10% between the group of interest (Black) and the reference group (Not Black), while disparities in survey measures are determined by tests that identify statistically significant differences between the White demographic and the Black, Multi-Racial, and Other race demographics. If you would like to learn more about how to read and interpret this fact sheet, [please click here](#).

*Quality measures are a set of data-driven measures, created and endorsed by external measure stewards (such as CMS or NCQA) as well as internal measures specific to the NC Medicaid population (developed by NC DHHS), that evaluate Medicaid beneficiaries' access to quality and effective healthcare services.

CHILDREN/ADOLESCENTS

Fewer Black children received the full set of recommended childhood immunizations (Combination 10) by their second birthday when compared to non-Black children (as seen in Figure 1). The Combination 10 includes vaccinations for DTaP, Polio, MMR, H. influenza type B, HepB, Chicken Pox, Pneumococcal, HepA, Rotavirus, and Flu.

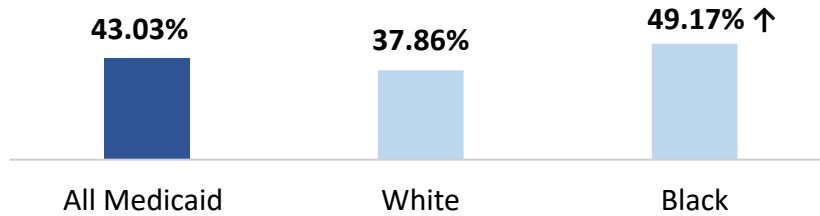
Figure 1: 2021 Childhood Immunization Status (CIS) Combination 10 Rate



▼ Indicates a disparity (a relative difference greater than or equal to 10%).

However, Black children ages 0-17 years received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at a higher rate than White children (as seen in Figure 2).

Figure 2: 2022 CAHPS* Respondents Who Reported Their Child Received At Least One Dose of COVID-19 Vaccine

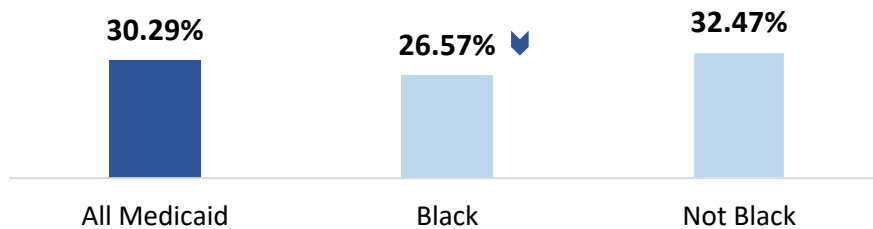


↑ Indicates the demographic category score is significantly higher than the score of White. Black respondents were compared to White respondents, not the All Medicaid average.

*Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) Survey. This survey data includes 0-17 year old respondents.

Black adolescents received the full set of recommended adolescent immunizations, including one dose of meningococcal vaccine, one Tdap vaccine and the complete set of human papillomavirus vaccines, by their thirteenth birthday less often than non-Black adolescents (as seen in Figure 3).

Figure 3: 2021 Immunization for Adolescents (IMA) Combination 2 Rate



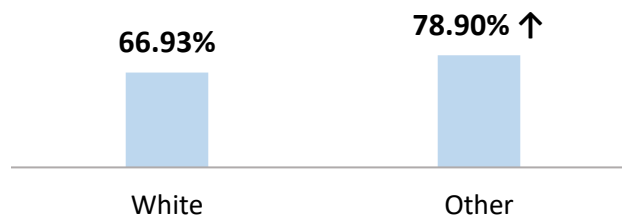
↓ Indicates a disparity (a relative difference greater than or equal to 10%).



ADULTS

As seen in Figure 4, adults who identified as Other race had at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine significantly more often than individuals who identified as White. According to 2022 CAHPS respondents, there were no significant differences by race for adult flu vaccination.

Figure 4: 2022 Adult CAHPS Respondents Who Received At Least One Dose of the COVID-19 Vaccine for NC Medicaid Program



↑ Indicates the demographic category score is significantly higher than the score of White.

NC MEDICAID'S WORK TOWARD ELIMINATING THESE DISPARITIES

Performance Improvement and Quality Improvement Projects

To improve these vaccination disparities, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has initiated efforts to improve quality assessment and performance. As part of CMS protocol, health plans are required to implement performance improvement projects ("PIPs"), which aim to improve experience of care. PIPs must measure performance, implement and evaluate interventions, and lead activities to increase/sustain improvement.

Regarding disparities in the Childhood Immunization Status – Combination 10 measure, NC health plans have implemented many PIPs, including providing incentives to parents/caregivers of Medicaid child members who complete the series and launching text message reminder campaigns. In addition to Combination 10 measures, other racial disparities exist in immunization. As a result, some health plans are dedicating more resources to regions with significant racial disparities in vaccination. One health plan has even launched a mobile health clinic.

Performance-Based Withholds

Currently, prepaid health plans receive a set payment for each Medicaid member they provide care for, known as capitation. To further drive quality improvement and address disparities in care for Medicaid managed care plan members, NC Medicaid will be implementing a Withholds Program. Under the Withholds Program, NC Medicaid will retain a portion of a prepaid health plan's set payment, and health plans must meet specific performance targets in order to receive these funds.

Regarding vaccine disparities, one element of the Withholds Program requires health plans to achieve larger improvements in performance on the Childhood Immunization Status – Combination 10 measure for the Black population. By tying a portion of plan payment to improved performance in the Black population, NC Medicaid aims to encourage health plans and providers to decrease racial disparities in vaccine utilization.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The **quality measures** displayed in this fact sheet include:

- Childhood Immunization Status (CIS)
- Immunizations for Adolescents (IMA)

These quality measures are all created by the [National Committee for Quality Assurance](#).

For more technical information on these measures, please [click here](#).

The **survey measures** displayed in this fact sheets include:

- Child Receipt of at Least One COVID Vaccine by Race (2022)
- Adult Receipt of at Least One COVID Vaccine by Race (2022)
- Adult Receipt of Flu Vaccination (2022)

These measures are all derived from the 2022 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS). For more technical information on these measures, please [click here](#).

REFERENCES

1. "Vaccine Basics," US Department of Health and Human Services, November 9, 2022, <https://www.hhs.gov/immunization/basics/index.html>.
2. For this analysis, the "Other" category includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Other.

