



Maryland
Hospital Association

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Maryland Is First State with 100 Percent Hospital Participation in National Effort to Reduce Disparities in the Health of Minority Populations

Elkridge, Md. — Maryland is the **first state in the nation to achieve 100 percent participation** by its community hospitals in a national campaign to improve the health of minority populations by reducing disparities in health care.

The [*Equity of Care*](#) campaign, a joint effort from the American College of Healthcare Executives, American Hospital Association, Association of American Medical Colleges, Catholic Health Association of the United States, and America's Essential Hospitals, works to eliminate health disparities – the preventable differences in how varied populations (defined by factors such as race or ethnicity, gender, income, and others) are affected by disease, injury, violence or access to health care. The campaign is focused on increasing:

- the collection and use of race, ethnicity and language preference data
- cultural competency training
- diversity in governance and leadership

While this is a nationwide campaign, addressing health disparities is critical in Maryland – the state's population is on track to be 50 percent non-white by 2019 and by 2040, it's estimated that minorities will outnumber non-Hispanic whites by 1 million people. Already, Maryland is the seventh most diverse state in the nation.

And the health disparities data are highly concerning. Recent reports from the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene show, for example:

- Hispanics 65 and older report diabetes diagnoses at nearly double the rate of whites
- Blacks are two times as likely to die from kidney disease as whites; 2.3 times as likely to die from diabetes; and 11 times as likely to die from HIV/AIDS
- The infant mortality rate for whites is 4.8 percent, compared to 13.1 percent for blacks

“This is an important step toward addressing a persistent and challenging problem in Maryland,” said Maryland Hospital Association President & CEO Carmela Coyle. “Health disparities have long affected all of our communities and the 100 percent participation in *Equity of Care* by Maryland's hospitals speaks to their commitment to **everyone** we serve.”

Hospitals that participate in *Equity of Care* agree to:

- Choose a quality measure to stratify by race, ethnicity and language preference
- Determine whether a health care disparity exists, and if so, implement a plan to address the gap
- Provide cultural competency training for all staff or finalize a plan to ensure staff receives cultural competency training
- Have a dialogue with the hospital board and leadership team on how the organization reflects the community it serves, and what actions can be taken to address any gaps if the board and leadership do not reflect the community

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About the Maryland Hospital Association

The Maryland Hospital Association is the advocate for Maryland hospitals, health systems, and their patients before legislative and regulatory bodies. Its membership is composed of community and teaching hospitals, health systems, specialty hospitals, veterans' hospitals, and long-term care facilities. For more information, visit www.mhaonline.org.