

# FAST FACTS LOUISIANA'S SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

## Demographics, Social, & Economic Data

Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama are especially high in stroke rates (CDC, 2021). In Rapides, LA, Blacks have the highest rate of heart disease & stroke compared to whites & other ethnic groups (CDC, 2021). Stroke & cerebrovascular disease is a leading cause of death & African Americans or Blacks have the highest death rates from stroke with approximately 1.4 times higher rates than Whites (BMHA, 2020).



## DATA DESCRIBING COMMUNITY

The community of Rapides, LA is similar to surrounding communities in the area & these data & statistics describing the community are comparable across communities throughout Louisiana. Median family income for Caucasians is \$45,765, African Americans \$23,917, Hispanics \$38,137, & Asians \$42,255 (BMHA, 2020; LDH, 2021). Poverty status by race is Caucasians 13% & Blacks 42% (BMHA, 2020; LDH, 2021). Other challenges that exist in the community include a lack of diversity in the healthcare workforce, lack of health literacy, lack of financial resources, lack of a regular source of healthcare, & lack of health insurance (BMHA, 2020; LDH, 2021).

## COMMUNITY VALUES INFLUENCING COMMUNITY HEALTH



Multiple factors affect community values & community health in the state of Louisiana, the community of Rapides, & other similar communities within the state. For example, ethnic customs, culture, religious beliefs, dietary customs, health customs, & interpersonal customs can influence individuals, groups, patients, & families (BMHA, 2020; LDH, 2021). In addition, preferred ethnic foods & cultural beliefs play a significant role in health outcomes for various racial groups within Louisiana (BMHA, 2020; LDH, 2021).

## COMMUNITY ASSETS

Community health assets in the state of Louisiana include the "Bureau of Minority Health, Governor's Council on Physical Fitness & Sports, Louisiana Primary Care Associations, Louisiana Community HealthCenters, Community Preparedness Response Network, Louisiana Summer Enrichment Camps for Children, Louisiana Back-to-School Activities, & Louisiana Children's Health Project" (BMHA, 2020; LDH, 2021). The state of Louisiana has multiple community partnerships serving the population such as "Xavier University Louisiana - Center for Minority Health & Health Disparities Research & Education (CMHDRE), Louisiana Cancer Prevention & Control Program, Louisiana State University, Southwest Louisiana AHEC, Southern University Ag Center, Louisiana Public Health Institute, Louisiana Primary Care Association, & a variety of Community Partnerships & Health Equity Leadership teams" (BMHA, 2020; LDH, 2021).

Louisiana state has a vast and expansive parks and recreation department that boasts activities throughout the state such as wildlife viewing, RV camping, parks and reserves, paddling, horseback riding, historic sites, hiking, glamping, fishing, disc golf, camping, cabins, boating, and biking. Finally, the Louisiana parks and recreation department promotes extensive outdoor recreational activities throughout state, regional, and local public parks and lakes for citizens and tourists.

Public health educators should be culturally competent & linguistically trained to understand diversity related issues & effective educational methods to reach multiple & disparate groups within the state to improve health outcomes (BMHA, 2020; De Cocker et al., 2020; Jervelund et al., 2021; Sheffield & Irons, 2021). Building confidence & trust within communities to address health culture & health beliefs can aid in forming strong partnerships while addressing health disparities & health equity challenges (BMHA, 2020; De Cocker et al., 2020; Jervelund et al., 2021; Sheffield & Irons, 2021).

## OBSTACLES & SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC CONDITIONS INFLUENCING HEALTH

Obstacles existing in the community can include individual barriers such as psychological, linguistic, & cultural (BMHA, 2020; Khashoggi & Murad, 2020). Socioeconomic barriers can include absence of services, lack of culturally competent providers, intolerance or discrimination from providers, long wait times, & lack of information provided to individuals & groups in need (BMHA, 2020; Khashoggi & Murad, 2020). Institutional barriers exist such as legal, social, linguistic, financial, & lack of healthcare insurance (BMHA, 2020; Jervelund et al., 2021). Low income, unemployment, & low educational attainment or opportunities are both a consequence & cause of poor health in the area (BMHA, 2020; Jervelund et al., 2021).

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## Increasing Health Access



Promoting health within the community can involve increasing health awareness and access to health education. For example, developing strategies for addressing health issues via training and education should be planned and delivered (BMHA, 2020; Virani et al., 2020). Raising awareness regarding critical health issues within the community should be part of a population engagement strategy (BMHA, 2020; Virani et al., 2020). Facilitating processes for bringing resources to underserved individuals & groups should be involved in a comprehensive outreach program (BMHA, 2020; Virani et al., 2020). National & local scholars should be involved in conducting minority health research through a promotional agenda to advance healthcare science (BMHA, 2020; Virani et al., 2020).

### SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Addressing social determinants of health can include public health systems & medical care (CDC, 2020; Jervelund et al., 2021; Pinheiro et al., 2021). Extending beyond these systems can involve collaboration with multiple sectors such as environment, agriculture, transportation, justice, labor, housing, & education (CDC, 2020; Jervelund et al., 2021). Addressing social determinants of equity can involve attention to systems of power & intervention on societal structures (CDC, 2020; Jervelund et al., 2021; Pinheiro et al., 2021). Examining values, norms, practices, policies, & structures should be considered (CDC, 2020; Jervelund et al., 2021).

### OTHER WAYS TO END OR REDUCE HEALTH DISPARITIES

Other ways to end or reduce health disparities can involve observing cultural differences within healthcare systems with techniques such as immersion into other cultures, including community members & family, offering culturally competent health promotion, training, retention & recruitment, & providing interpreter services (CDC, 2020; BMHA, 2020; Sullivan & Katajamaki, 2015).



### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTHCARE STRATEGIES



#### Focusing on Programmatic Initiatives

- Analyzing data to categorize which individuals and groups are at greater risk for risk behaviors and targeted health problems.
- Targeting resources and efforts supporting programmatic and policy efforts addressing individuals and groups at greater risk.
- Supporting implementation and design of linguistically and culturally appropriate evidence-based programs and interventions focusing on individuals and groups at greater risk (BMHA, 2020; CDC, 2020; De Cocker et al., 2021; Khashoggi & Murad, 2020).

#### Increasing Awareness

- Learning more regarding disparity causes using evidence-based strategies for comprehensively assessing certain issues found in specific individuals and groups at greater risk.
- Educating agencies, organizations, the public, and policy makers regarding educational and health disparities, causes, and evidence-based strategies for comprehensively assessing certain issues found in specific individuals and groups at greater risk (BMHA, 2020; CDC, 2020; De Cocker et al., 2021; Khashoggi & Murad, 2020).

#### Establishing Partnerships

- Strengthening and sustaining partnerships in collaboration with organizations and agencies aiding individuals and groups at greater risk.
- Participating broadly with coalitions to assess root causes of educational and health disparities such as discrimination, healthcare access, and poverty.
- Actively involving individuals and groups at greater risk in councils or advisory boards that create programs assessing educational and health disparities (BMHA, 2020; CDC, 2020; De Cocker et al., 2021; Khashoggi & Murad, 2020).

#### Cataloguing Impact

- Monitoring behaviors and health outcomes among individuals and groups at greater risk and programs and policies addressing behaviors and outcomes among individuals and groups.
- Evaluating programs and activities focusing on individuals and groups at greater risk and using findings for program improvement.
- Documenting and widely sharing lessons learned, challenges, and successes in reaching individuals and groups at greater risk (BMHA, 2020; CDC, 2020; De Cocker et al., 2021; Khashoggi & Murad, 2020).

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