

Understanding the impact of racism in healthcare and how it is affecting African American Women

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Healthcare is the most sacred part of every person's life and should be accessible. However, the experience for many is that "you either go it or you don't". A way to help "get it" is through workplace insurance, however, this is not accessible to many. This is especially the case for minority communities who cannot afford insurance plans, if and when offered by their employers, or other alternatives for accessing affordable health care. The terms "affordable and health care" are a paradox, for African American women. Because of this, it is very difficult to obtain coverage for basic needs, rendering Black women to choose their families' health over their own. The purpose of this session is to report on exploratory research using published articles regarding African American women's experience with the health care system. Research regarding their experience varies from personal stories to data surrounding similar death stories. Based on our initial exploration, there appears to be implicit and explicit bias against African American women, especially in prenatal and post-partum care. This may be a contributing factor as to why the pregnancy-related mortality ratio of African American women older than 30 was four to five times as high as it was for white women (CDC, 2019). Although we are at the initial stages of this research, there seems to be a connection between insurance coverage, health care access, and prenatal and post-partum care. There has been a growing number of deaths of African women giving birth and it is happening at an alarming rate. Birth although is very dangerous, compared to other races the numbers differ at a large sum and it is a concern for many. We surmise that this connection is deeper and is rooted in systemic racism in the country's health care system; a system that does not believe Black Lives Matters ... from conception.

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