

Racial and Socioeconomic Factors Impact Access to Full Skin Exams in LA County

2022 Lifespan Research Day Abstract

Research Category: Clinical & Translational

Primary Research Location: WesternU College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific

Funded By: N/A

Authors(s):

Marine Minasyan, Med Student, Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific. Dept of Dermatology

Kyra Diehl, Med Student, Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific. Dept of Dermatology

Marian Banh, Med Student, Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific. Dept of Dermatology

Elise Krippaehne, Med Student, Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific. Dept of Dermatology

Sara Yumeen, MD, Resident, Brown University. Dept of Dermatology

Terrence Vance, PhD, Associate Professor, Brown University. Dept of Dermatology

Oliver J Wisco, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, DO, Associate Professor, Brown University. Dept of Dermatology

----- Abstract -----

Background:

Access to care for dermatologic evaluation is vital in detection of cutaneous malignancies and timely access may improve outcomes.^{1,2} We aimed to analyze the influence of racial demographics, income, and insurance type (Medi-Cal vs Blue Anthem) on accessibility of full body skin exams (FBSEs) by a dermatologist in Los Angeles (LA) county.

Methods:

A quality improvement study was conducted. Population demographic data was extracted from the U.S. Census Bureau and dermatology practice information from the American Academy of Dermatology's (AAD) clinician database. Phone interviews were conducted with dermatology practices in each LA county zip code that has a dermatologist, excluding pediatric health, closed health plan, cosmetic-only and research-only practices. Medi-Cal was selected as a proxy for Medicaid and Blue Anthem as a proxy for common private insurance. Two individuals contacted offices within a 48-hour window to ask: 1. Does your office provide FBSE for new patients? 2. Do you accept Medi-Cal or Blue Anthem? 3. When is the next available appointment? Data analysis performed with SAS.

Results:

Within the 269 zip codes in LA county there are a total of 213 dermatologists of which 192 met inclusion criteria and 168 were successfully contacted. 165 (98.2%) dermatologists offered a FBSE for new patients. 33 FBSE providers accepted Medi-Cal. White-predominant zip-codes (n=74) had 136 dermatologists, Hispanic-predominant (n=76) had 20, Asian-predominant (n=5) had 2, Black-predominant (n=6) had 2, and zip codes (n=108) with no majority had 53. White-predominant zip codes had proportionally greater dermatologists than Hispanic-predominant zip codes (p<0.0001). Zip codes with one or more confirmed FBSE providers had a higher median income (\$93,700) than those without a confirmed FBSE provider (\$72,400) (p<0.0001). In offices that accepted both insurances, average wait time for a FBSE was similar (P=0.48).

Conclusion:

LA county is home to 10 million residents, yet of the 165 providers contacted, only 33 offer FBSE to our Medicaid proxy. A majority of the FBSE providers are located in predominantly-White and high income zip codes. Insurance status did not affect wait times.

1. Chiaravalloti AJ, Laduca JR. Melanoma screening by means of complete skin exams for all patients in a dermatology practice reduces the thickness of primary melanomas at diagnosis. *J Clin Aesthet Dermatol.* 2014 Aug;7(8):18-22. PMID: 25161756; PMCID: PMC4142816.
2. Kullgren JT, McLaughlin CG, Mitra N, Armstrong K. Nonfinancial barriers and access to care for U.S. adults. *Health Serv Res.* 2012 Feb;47(1 Pt 2):462-85. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6773.2011.01308.x. Epub 2011 Aug 22. PMID: 22092449; PMCID: PMC3393009.