

# DAY 10: How Your Race Affects Your Health

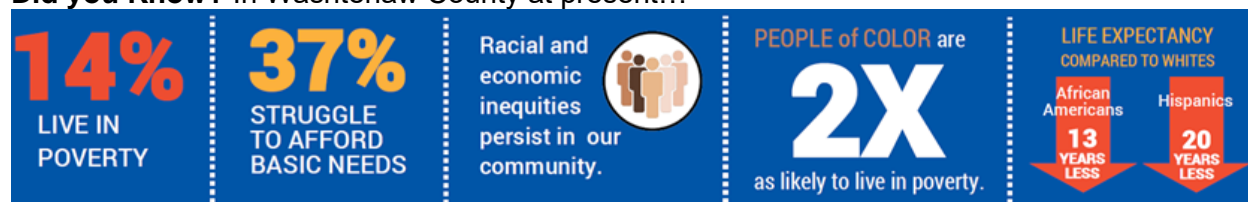
You may have heard about the wealth gap, but have you heard about the wealth-health gap? According to the NY Times 1619 Project, "[racial health disparities are foundational as democracy itself](#)." Socioeconomic status and institutional racism lead to disparities across living conditions, limit access to quality health care, and contribute to chronic stress. The factors lead to shorter life spans and higher likelihood of adverse health outcomes for people living in poverty and people of color.

Healthcare costs also make up a significant portion of a household's annual budget, placing additional stress on families that may or may not have insurance and access to quality care. In developing the 2019 [ALICE Report](#), the most significant driver of increases in the Household Survival Budget from 2010 to 2017 was health care costs, including an average 59 percent increase in out-of-pocket costs.

[In Washtenaw County](#), we are seeing how race and income can disproportionality impact individuals' health. Importantly, the studies cited below illustrate that this is not a result of individual choices, but rather institutional racism:

- Published in the journal, Nature, a recent study found that [millions of black people have been affected by racial bias in health-care algorithms used by many U.S. hospitals](#), resulting in black people being less likely than white people who were equally sick being referred to programs.
- A study by the American Bar Association notes that "[the poverty in which black people disproportionately live cannot account for the fact that black people are sicker and have shorter life spans than their white complements](#) . . . racial and ethnic minorities receive lower-quality health care than white people—even when insurance status, income, age, and severity of conditions are comparable."

**Did you Know?** In Washtenaw County at present...



## Today's Challenge:

**Option 1:** Listen to Bill Manns, president of the St. Joseph Mercy Health Systems hospitals in Ann Arbor and Livingston, discuss his plans for increasing health equity on WEMU's [Washtenaw United](#).

**Option 2:** Read this [blog post](#) about how Kelly Stupple, a child health advocate with Success by 6 Great Start Collaborative in Washtenaw, acts like a 'health care GPS' helping underserved children get the health and dental care they need to be successful.

**Option 3:** [Watch David. R Williams, a public health sociologist, on the TED stage](#) discuss why race and deep-rooted systemic racism have such a profound impact on health.

**Option 4:** Hear Dr. Camara Phyllis Jones explain social determinants of health through her [analogy of the "cliff of good health"](#) in a video collaboration with the Urban Institute.

**Option 5:** Check out this [Fact Sheet from the American Psychological Association](#) exploring the compounding impact of socioeconomic status and race on health.

**Option 6:** [Hear the story of Henrietta Lacks](#), an African American woman whose cells have been used to test the effects of radiation and poisons, to study the human genome, to learn more about how viruses work, and played a crucial role in the development of the polio vaccine.

**Share your reflections** on today's topic on social media using the hashtag [#unitedforequity](#) and tag [@uwwashtenaw](#).