

Mental Health and Substance Use Considerations Among Communities of Color

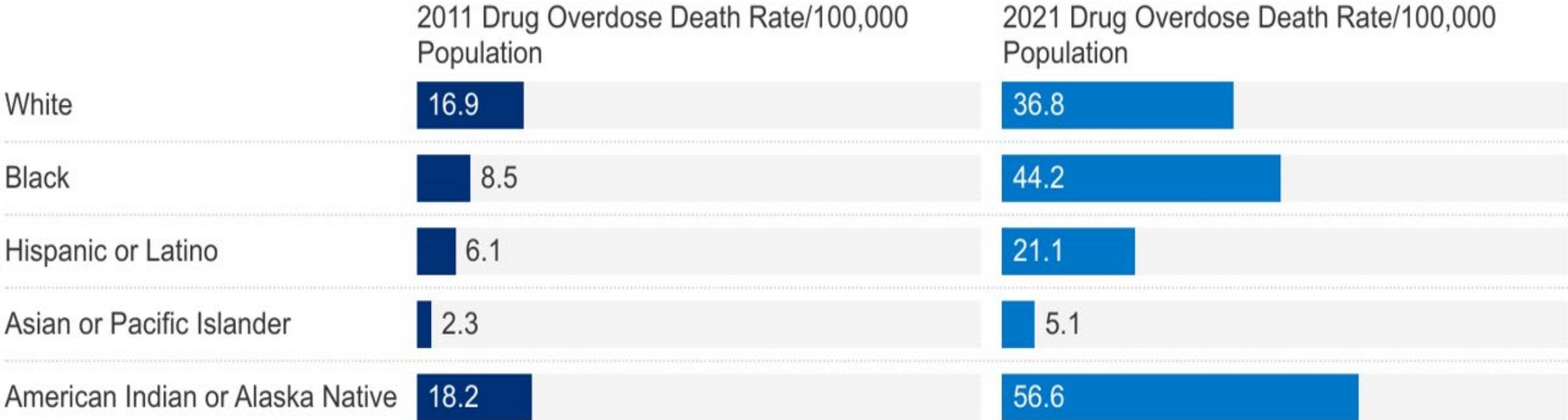
Nirmita Panchal, Senior Policy Analyst

September 2023

KFF

The independent source for health policy research, polling, and news.

Black and AIAN communities now experience the highest drug overdose death rates across all racial and ethnic groups



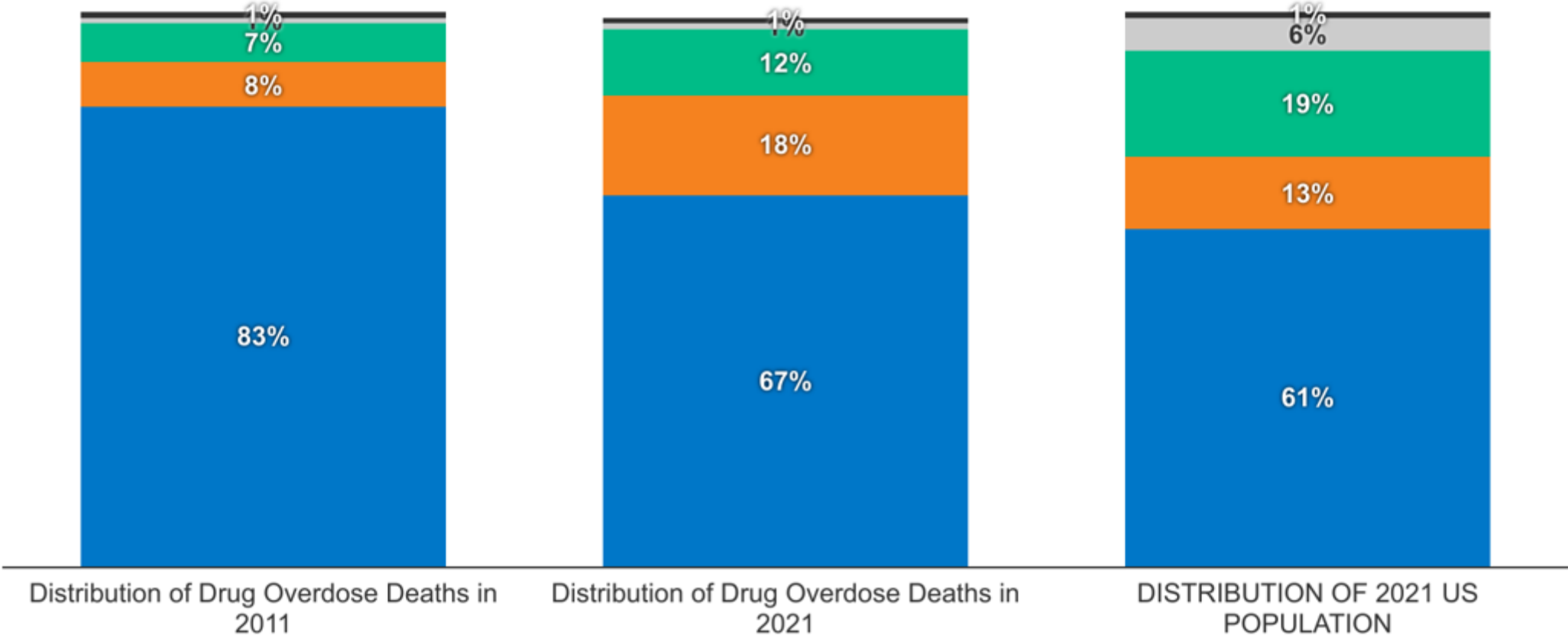
NOTES: Drug overdose deaths were classified using the following ICD-10 codes: X40–44, X60–64, X85, or Y10–Y14. Death rates are per 100,000. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis; other groups are non-Hispanic. Persons of more than one race are not included in the data.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of CDC WONDER Data



Over time, people of color are accounting for a growing share of drug overdose deaths

■ White ■ Black or African American ■ Hispanic or Latino ■ Asian or Pacific Islander ■ AIAN



NOTES: Drug overdose deaths were classified using the following ICD-10 codes: X40–44, X60–64, X85, or Y10–Y14. Death rates are per 100,000. AIAN refers to American Indian and Alaska Native people. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis; other groups are non-Hispanic. Persons of more than one race are not included in the data.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of CDC WONDER Data



Suicide death rates have increased over time, particularly among AIAN, Black, and Hispanic people

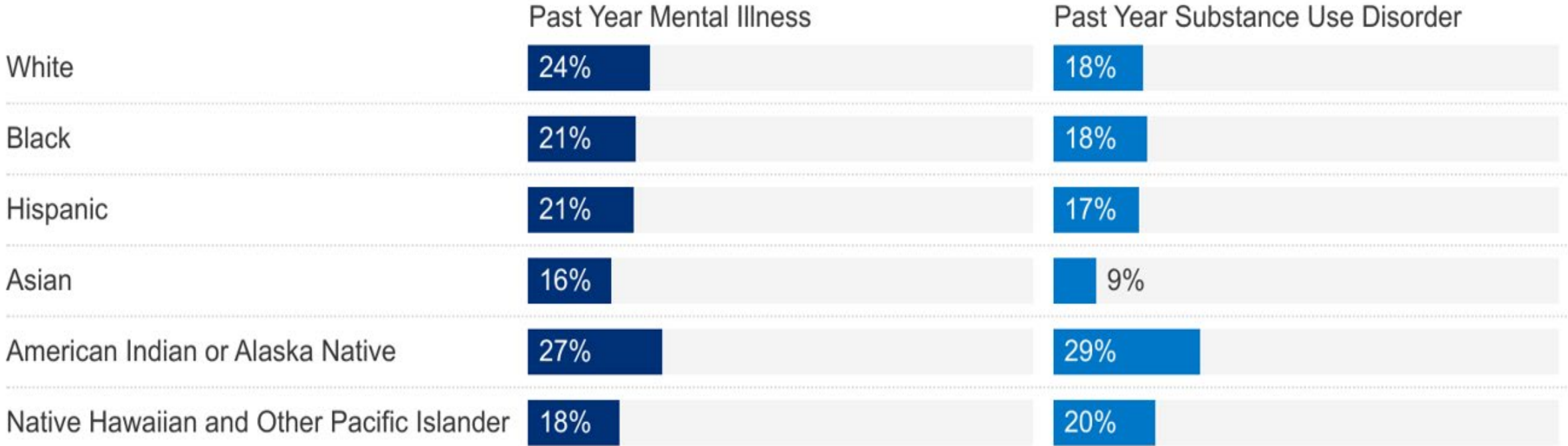


NOTE: Suicide deaths were identified using ICD-10 113 Cause List, Intentional self-harm (U03, X60-X84, Y87.0). Rates are age-adjusted. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis; other groups are non-Hispanic. Data were insufficient to allow for analysis of other racial groups.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of CDC WONDER Data, <https://www.kff.org/mental-health/issue-brief/a-look-at-the-latest-suicide-data-and-change-over-the-last-decade/>



Prevalence of mental illness and substance use disorders across racial and ethnic groups



NOTE: Includes adults with mild, moderate, or serious mental illness according to NSDUH (DSM-IV); or mild, moderate, or severe substance use disorder according to NSDUH (DSM-V). Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis; other groups are non-Hispanic.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 2021



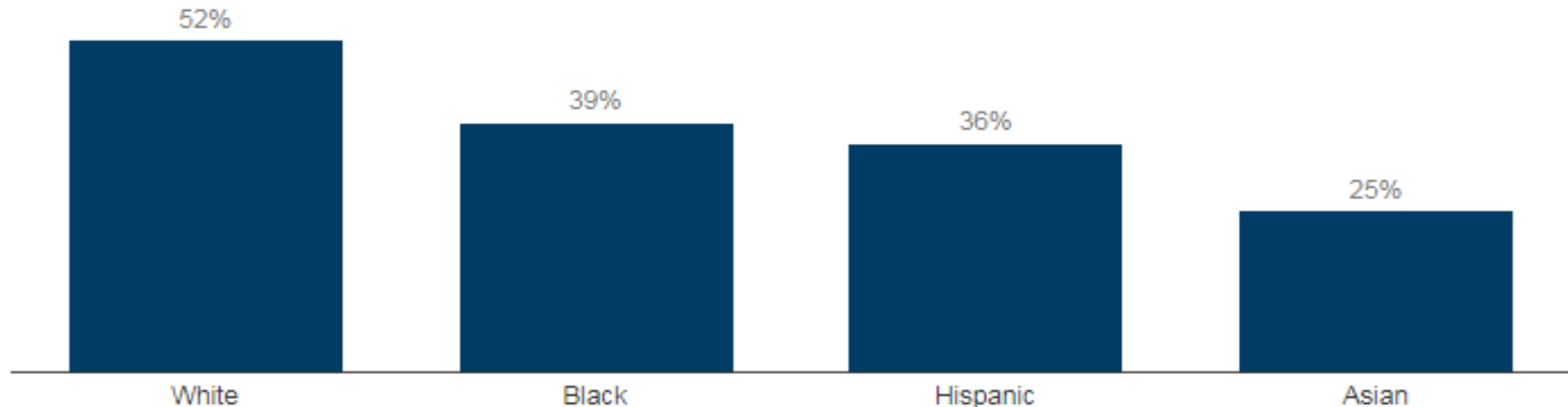
Factors contributing to underdiagnosis of mental illness among people of color

- Lack of culturally sensitive screening tools that detect mental illness
- Structural barriers
- Symptoms among people of color are more likely to be labeled as disruptive or criminal compared to their White counterparts
 - This may result in people being diverted into the justice system instead of treatment centers

People of color face barriers to accessing mental health care for a number of reasons

- Structural inequities, including lack of health insurance and financial and logistical barriers to accessing care
- Lack of a diverse mental health workforce, absence of culturally informed treatment options, and stereotypes and discrimination associated with poor mental health
- These barriers may have worsened during the pandemic

Among adults with any mental illness, smaller shares of people of color receive mental health treatment compared to their White counterparts



NOTE: Mental Illness aligns with DSM-IV criteria and is defined as having a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder, other than a developmental or substance use disorder. Mental health services includes receipt of inpatient or outpatient mental health services, prescription medication for a mental health issue, or virtual services in the past year. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis; other groups are non-Hispanic. Persons of more than one race are not included in the data. Data were unavailable for AIAN and NHOPI people.

SOURCE: KFF analysis of SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health Data, 2021.

Many children of color are also experiencing poor mental health and substance use outcomes

- During the pandemic, Black and Hispanic youth experienced the highest increases in drug overdose deaths compared to all other racial and ethnic groups
- American Indian and Alaska Native adolescents have the highest suicide death rate compared to their peers
 - They are over three times as likely to die by suicide than White adolescents (22.7 vs. 7.3 per 100,000 in 2020)
- Firearm death rates have sharply increased among Black and Hispanic youth

Looking Ahead

- A recent KFF survey found that among adults with the greatest mental health needs, many reported their health insurance coverage was lacking and reported forgoing needed care
- Children of color are also impacted
- Recognizing the impacts racism, discrimination, and adverse childhood experiences have on mental health could play a role in developing culturally informed care

More Information

- KFF Mental Health Resources
 - <https://www.kff.org/mental-health/>
- KFF State-Level Mental Health Resources
 - <https://www.kff.org/statedata/mental-health-and-substance-use-state-fact-sheets/>
 - <https://www.kff.org/state-category/mental-health/>
- KFF Survey of Consumer Experiences with Health Insurance
 - <https://www.kff.org/private-insurance/poll-finding/kff-survey-of-consumer-experiences-with-health-insurance/>

Thank you

Nirmita Panchal
nirmitap@kff.org

KFF

The independent source for health policy research, polling, and news.