

Racial Disparities in Health and Health Care

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Filling the need for trusted information on national health issues.

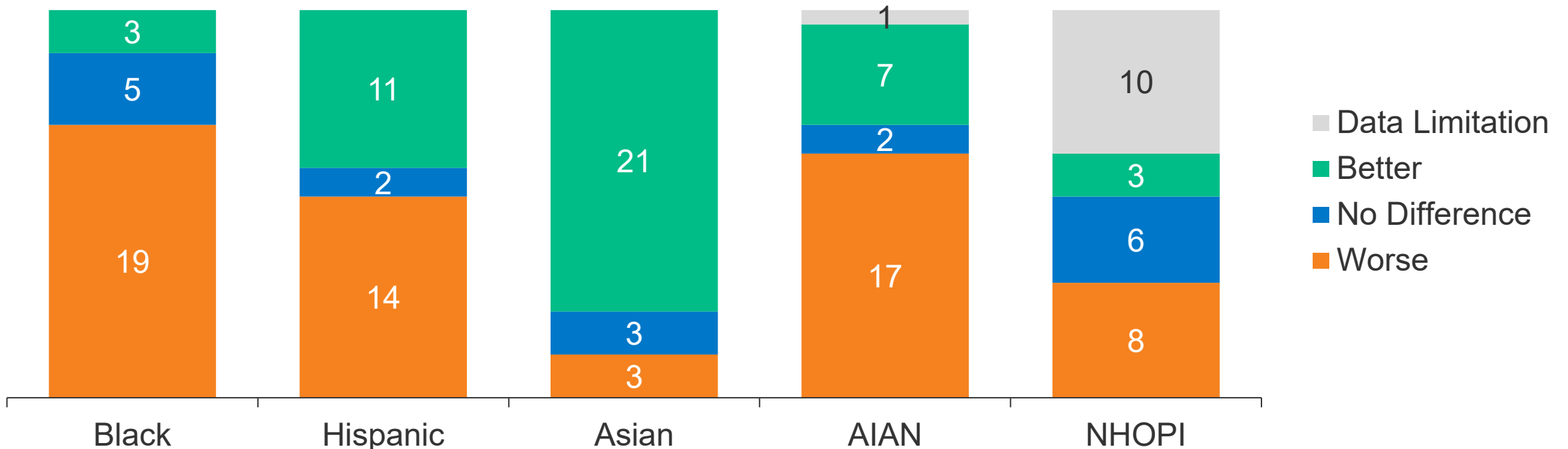
What are health and health care disparities?

- Differences in health and health care between populations
 - Higher burden of illness, injury, disability, or mortality
 - Differences in insurance coverage, access to and use of care, and quality of care
 - Closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental inequities
- Arise from a complex and interrelated set of individual, provider, health system, societal, and economic factors
- Occur across a broad range of dimensions: race/ethnicity; socioeconomic status; gender; age; disability; sexual orientation or gender identity; geographic location, etc.
- Remain a longstanding and persistent issue

Figure 2

People of color fare worse than their White counterparts across a range of health measures.

Number of health status measures for which group fared better, the same, or worse compared to White counterparts:



Note: Measures are for 2018 or the most recent year for which data are available. “Better” or “Worse” indicates a statistically significant difference from Whites at the $p < 0.05$ level. No difference indicates no statistically significant difference. “Data limitation” indicates data are no separate data for a racial/ethnic group, insufficient data for a reliable estimate, or comparisons not possible due to overlapping samples. AIAN refers to American Indians and Alaska Natives. NHOPI refers to Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis; other groups are non-Hispanic.

Figure 3

Health disparities are a symptom of social and economic inequities.

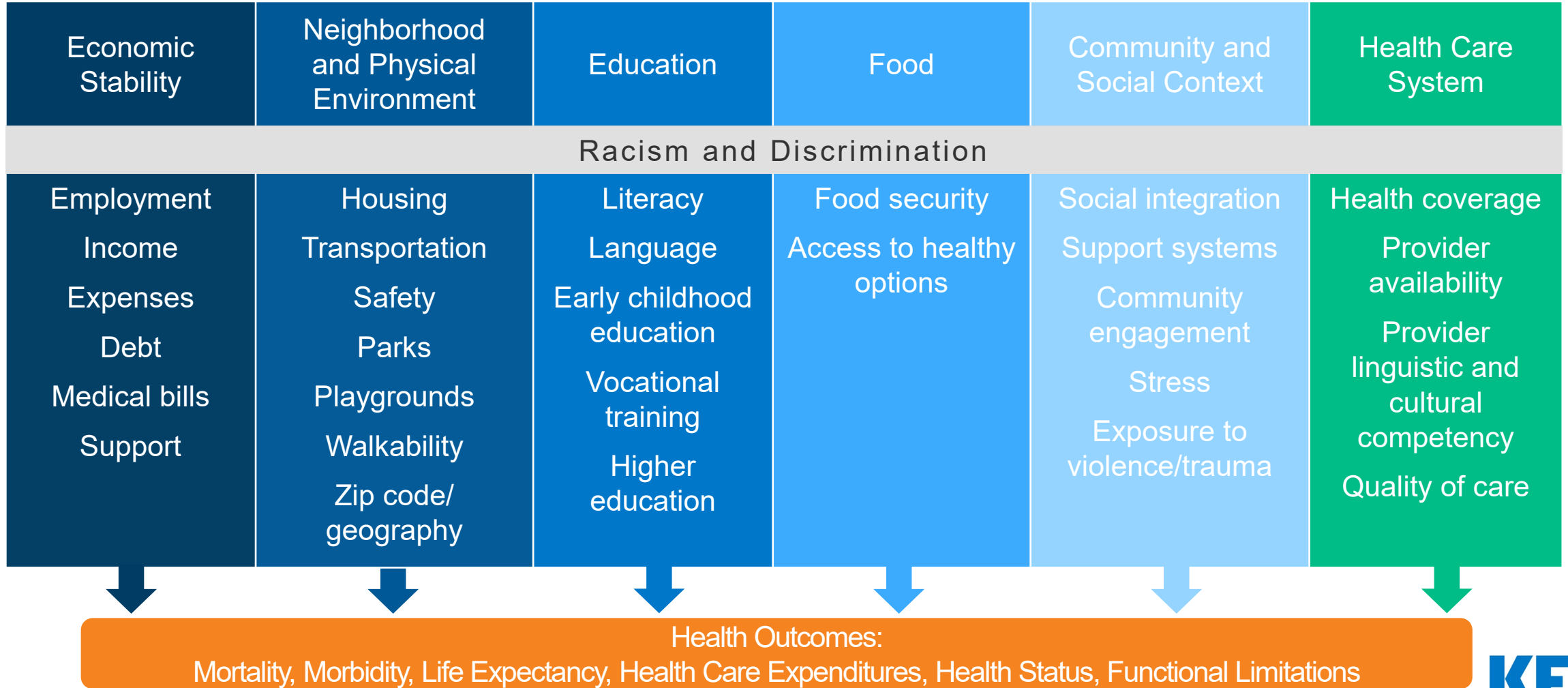
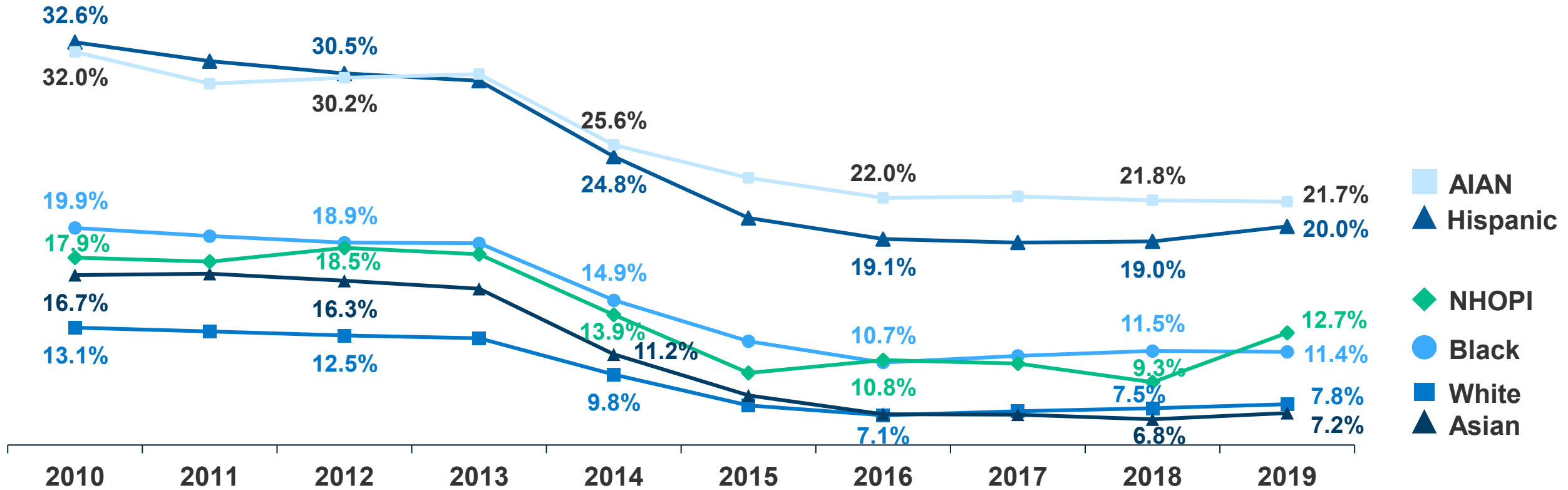


Figure 4

People of color face longstanding disparities in health coverage.

Uninsured Rates for the Nonelderly Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2010-2019



NOTE: Includes individuals ages 0 to 64. AIAN refers to American Indians and Alaska Natives, NHOPI refers to Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders.

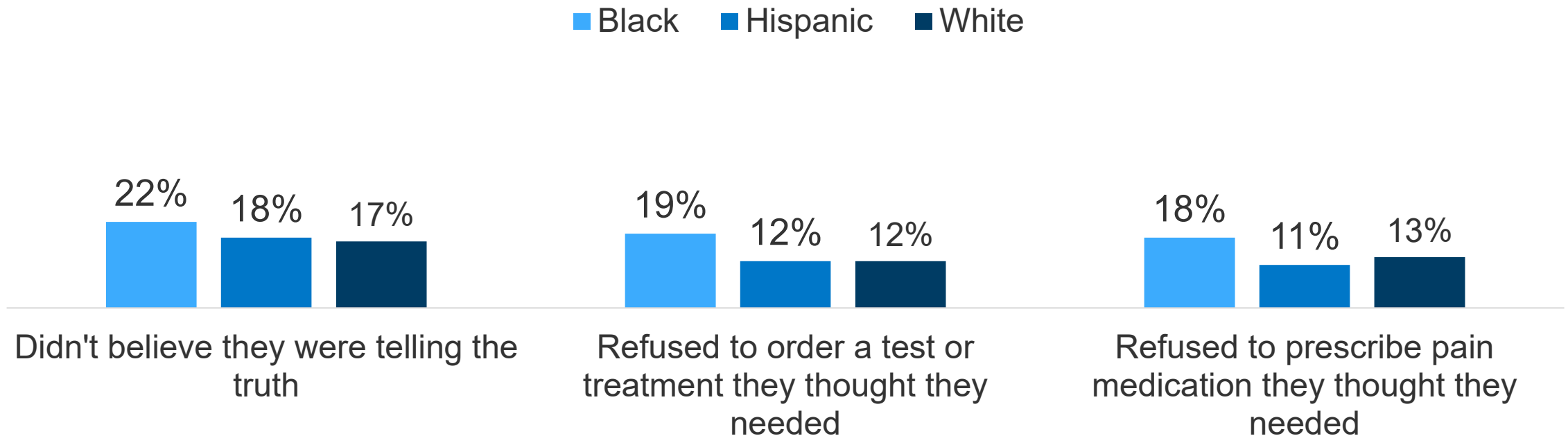
SOURCE: KFF analysis of the 2010-2019 American Community Survey.



Figure 5

Black adults are more likely than White adults to report certain negative health care experiences.

Share of the Adults who Reported that a Doctor/Health Care Provider did the Following in the Last Three Years:



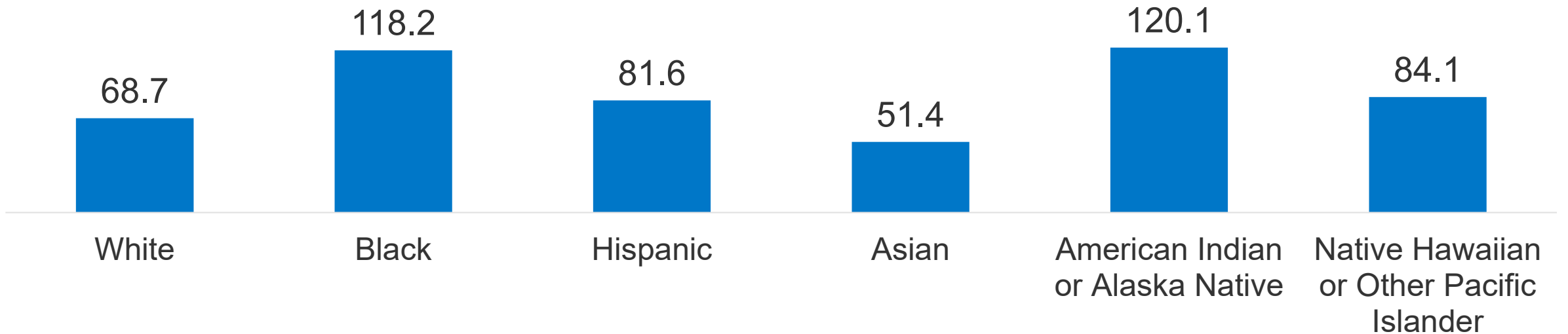
SOURCE: KFF/The Undeclared Survey on Race and Health (conducted Aug. 20-Sept. 14, 2020). See topline for full question wording.

Figure 6

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated underlying health and economic disparities.

COVID-19 mortality rates by race/ethnicity per 100,000 people as of November 25, 2020:

Total: 240,213 deaths



NOTE: Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race but are categorized as Hispanic; other groups are non-Hispanic.

SOURCE: CDC, Provisional Death Counts for Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Distribution of Deaths by Race and Hispanic Origin, <https://data.cdc.gov/NCHS/Provisional-Death-Counts-for-Coronavirus-Disease-C/pj7m-y5uh> as of November 25, 2020 and KFF analysis of the 2008-2019 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates.

Prioritizing and working to advance equity will be key to preventing widening disparities going forward.

- Addressing COVID-19 disparities is important for preventing widening disparities going forward
- A broad range of efforts within and beyond the health care system will be important
 - Expanding access to and enrollment in health coverage
 - Increasing availability of data
 - Prioritizing health equity and building in accountability and oversight for equity
 - Employing cross-sector approaches and strategies
 - Looking beyond individual social needs to community-level social and economic conditions
 - Addressing individual and institutional discrimination as root causes of disparities
- Addressing disparities is not only important from a social justice standpoint but for improving the nation's overall health and economic stability