Where Do We Go From Here?

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Minority Challenges in Emergency Care

In contrast to whites, blacks are more likely to...

• Be uninsured
• Use the ED for primary care
• Wait longer at the ED
• Not receive pain medication in the ED
Minority Challenges in Disaster Preparedness: Sept 11, 2001

In contrast to whites, blacks were more likely to...

- Suffer severe and preexisting health problems
- Be uninsured
- Not have a primary care provider
- Distrust the "government" and "healthcare system"
- Work in jobs involving close public contact
Minority Challenges in Disaster Preparedness: Katrina

- 32% were unemployed
- 42% graduated from high school
- 32% earned < $10,000 a year
- 70% had no bank account or credit card
- 52% had no health insurance
- 32% did not have their medications
- 40% were physically unable to leave (NOLA) or had to care for someone unable to leave
Realities of Minority Health and Disaster Management

- Blacks are more vulnerable during "good times"—and inordinately more vulnerable during a medical disaster.

- We must specifically address this reality if we are to advance emergency care and disaster preparedness for all citizens.
NMA and EHBTF Recommendations (1-2)

1. Provide specialized disaster training for health care providers.

2. Include minorities at all levels of disaster planning and emergency management.
NMA and EHBTF Recommendations (3-4)

3. Ensure that emergency plans specifically address minorities and other vulnerable populations.

4. Perform disaster needs assessments of minority and other vulnerable populations.
5. Ensure that medical distribution plans can overcome identified access barriers for minorities and other vulnerable populations.

6. Provide culturally-relevant disaster education materials and resources.
New Research Directions

- Racial impact studies of emergency care and disaster management
- Population density of primary care providers in urban settings
- Model for “medical homes” for the uninsured
- Role of community organizations as “first responders”
The Future

- Rising tide will **not** lift all boats.
- We are only as strong as our weakest link.