

Best Practices for Patient-Clinician Communication for People with Disabilities in the Era of COVID-19

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Disability in context

- ‘Disability’ – an umbrella term
- 26% of US adults, 20% of US children
- Exist across racial, ethnic, gender and other groups
- Largest health disparities group in the US (and worldwide)
 - Marginalized & underserved
 - Poorer social determinants of health
 - Double & triple marginalization among people with disabilities from racial/ethnic minorities.

People with Disabilities in COVID-19

- Comprehensive data do not exist
- Disabilities alone do NOT generally increase risk for COVID-19
- However, adults with disabilities are 3 times more likely to have underlying conditions that increase the risk for COVID-19: heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer (CDC)
- Disproportionate impact on communities of color
- Inaccessible and inadequate patient-clinician communications before and during the pandemic jeopardize COVID-19 prevention and treatment options for all people with disabilities