Latinos and Those on Medicaid Less Likely to Get Hepatitis C Treatment

This is according to an analysis of hep C treatment rates at four large urban hospital systems.

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People with hepatitis C virus (HCV) are less likely to receive treatment if they are Latino or on public health insurance and more likely get treated if they are Asian, Healio reports.

Publishing their finding in the American Journal of Gastroenterology, researchers analyzed data on 29,544 adults with hep C who were admitted to one of four large U.S. urban hospital systems between January 2011 and February 2017.

A total of 17.8 percent of the study cohort received HCV treatment. Of the cohort as a whole, 55.9 percent were white, 38.4 percent were Black and 8.8 percent were Latino. A total of 25.9 percent had Medicare, 22.5 percent had private insurance, 21.7 percent had indigent care (meaning they had a low income but not low enough to qualify for Medicaid) and 18.7 percent had Medicaid.

Those who received treatment, compared with those who did not, were more likely to be age 65 or older (15.5 percent of this group was treated versus 9.7 percent of those younger than 65), have Medicare (39.8 percent versus 22.8 percent) and to have private insurance (39.7 percent versus 18.8 percent). Individuals who went untreated for HCV were more likely to have HIV, psychiatric or behavioral disorders and non-liver cancer.

After adjusting the data to account for various demographic and other differences among the study cohort members, the researchers found that Latinos were 52 percent likely than whites to receive HCV treatment, and Asian and Native Americans were 43 percent more likely to be treated than whites. Compared with those who had private insurance, those with Medicare, those with Medicaid or state insurance, and those with indigent care or who were uninsured were 21 percent, 79 percent and 81 percent less likely to receive treatment, respectively.

To read the Healio article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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