

UNDERSTANDING HEALTHCARE DISPARITIES IN PENNSYLVANIA: **WE NEED YOUR HELP**

By Patient Safety Authority

Patient Ethnicity

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Not Asked

Patient Race

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Not Asked

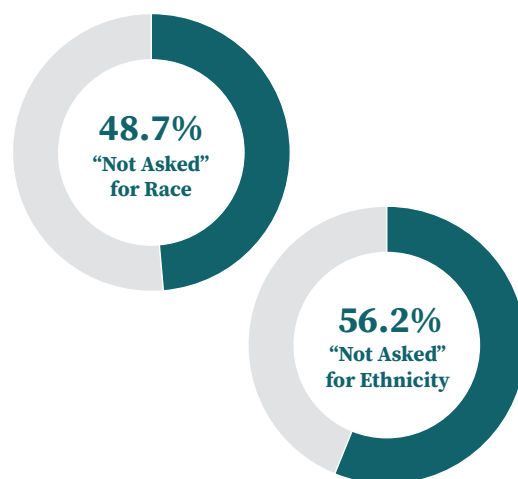


Disparities in healthcare pose a significant patient safety threat.¹ In 2021, The Joint Commission issued a Sentinel Event Alert titled “Addressing Health Care Disparities by Improving Quality and Safety”.

Because population-specific data can reduce harm and improve patient care, the Patient Safety Authority (PSA) updated the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Reporting System (PA-PSRS) to capture patient demographics, including race, ethnicity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ZIP code.

During 2022, the first year of data collection, reporters selected “Not Asked” for patient Race in 48.7% of event reports and “Not Asked” for patient Ethnicity in 56.2% of event reports.

“Not Asked” should only be selected if facilities do not have this patient information. Choosing this option as a default affects our ability to accurately track and analyze disparities occurring throughout Pennsylvania, which could further perpetuate healthcare disparities.




Keywords: Pennsylvania, healthcare disparities, patient demographics, patient safety

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Reference

1. The Joint Commission. Sentinel Event Alert Addressing Health Care Disparities by Improving Quality and Safety. [online]. Accessed 2/1/2023. <https://www.jointcommission.org/-/media/tjc/documents/resources/patient-safety-topics/sentinel-event/sea-64-addressing-hc-disparities-final.pdf>

About the Author

Patient Safety Authority (patientsafety.pa.gov) is an independent state agency that oversees the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Reporting System (PA-PSRS), the largest database of its kind in the United States.