



Repairing the Despair

Everyone Can:

- Be informed about the problem of racial and ethnic disparities in health.
- Take care of your health – choose providers you like and trust, ask questions, get second opinions, and expect quality care.
- Improve your health by making healthy choices.

Health Professionals Can:

- Stay current on best practices when caring for diverse populations.
- Champion quality standards of care for all patients regardless of how they pay for care.
- Ensure respectful care.

Community/Government Leaders Can:

- Support affordable health coverage for everyone.
- Enforce regulations that ensure equal access to health care.

Adapted from Bronx REACH



Grand Rapids African American Health Institute

Mission

To promote health care parity in the Grand Rapids African American community through advocacy, education and research to achieve positive health outcomes.

Vision

To ensure that all West Michigan residents will have optimal health care and benefit from health systems without race being an impediment.

GRAAHI is an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that is funded by numerous entities that are equally committed to its mission. GRAAHI's board membership consists of a diverse group of community-focused individuals.

GRAAHI
GVSU Cook-DeVos
Center for Health Sciences

301 Michigan NE, Suite 400
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Tel: 616.331.5831
Fax: 616.331.5839
www.graahi.org

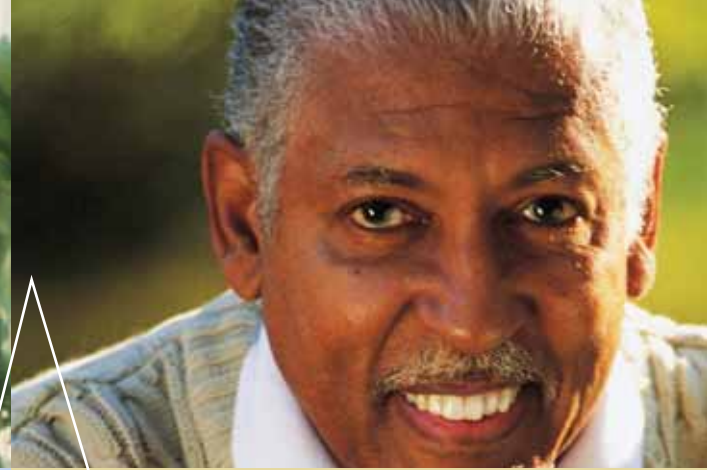


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Education

What are health disparities?

“Differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of diseases among specific population groups.” (NIH working group on Health Disparities)

Did you know?

A national study showed most Americans didn't know that racial disparities in health care existed. (Kaiser Family Foundation, 1999)

Infant Mortality

In 2003 in Kent County, African American babies died at a rate three times greater than White babies.*

Cancer and Heart Disease

In 2002 African Americans died from cancer and heart disease at higher rates than Whites.*

*Statistics provided by MI Dept of Community Health

In an effort to identify effective strategies that promote health equity, GRAAHI will work to increase the availability of data on local health disparities and to educate the community about existing disparities.

Research

Why do disparities exist?

There are many factors that contribute to health disparities including: lack of health insurance, inadequate access to health care, poor health status, poverty, lack of health care literacy and discrimination in care.

Did you know?

Even when differences such as insurance coverage, access to care, age, gender, health status, and education are eliminated, there is still a gap in health outcomes between people of color and Whites.

GRAAHI will work to advance understanding of the development and the progression of disease as they contribute to health disparities.

Advocacy

What can be done?

GRAAHI will establish forums for effective dialogue with stakeholders in an effort to identify strategies to promote health equality.

GRAAHI will establish relationships with third party payers in Grand Rapids to influence delivery of health care.

Did you know?

We all can take part in repairing the despair. Whether you are a neighborhood resident, health professional, community leader or government official, you can help.

GRAAHI will expand the reach and effectiveness of its advocacy efforts in order to influence the delivery of health care.