

Closing Gaps: Improving Healthcare for NICU Black Infants

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Research Question

What factors contribute to disparities in healthcare experiences among infants of color in the NICU, and how do these disparities impact overall health outcomes?

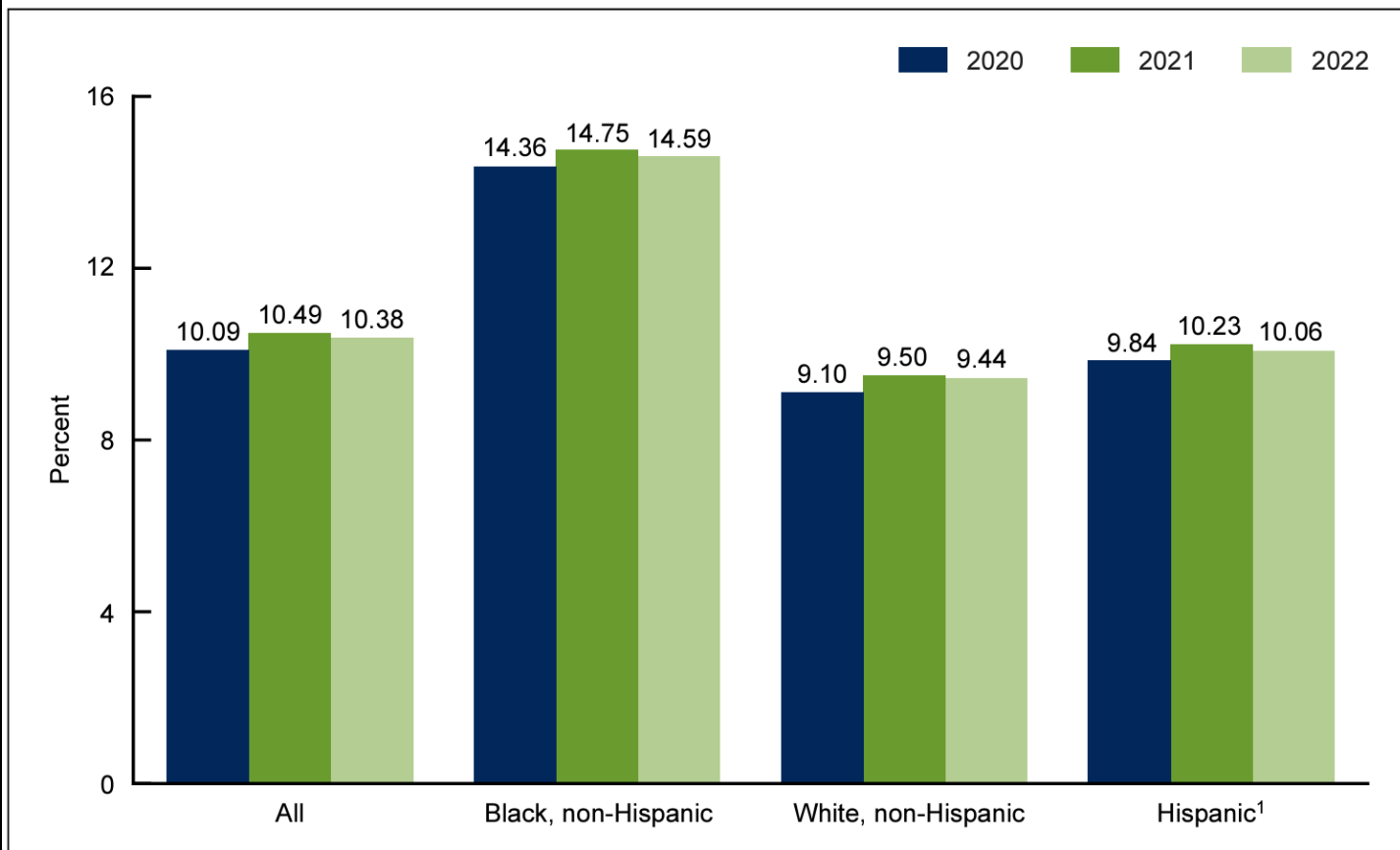
Introduction- CT Wonder- Infant Death Records, 2017-2021

Census Region ↓	Mother's Single Race 6	→ Deaths ↑↓	↔ Births ↑↓	← Death Rate Per 1,000 ↑↓
Census Region 1: Northeast (CENS-R1)	Black or African American	50	5,581	8.96
	White	109	26,879	4.06
	Total	166	35,670	4.65
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Connecticut Infant Mortality rate= 4.65

Introduction

Figure 4. Preterm birth rates, by race and Hispanic origin of mother: United States, 2020–2022



Introduction

- Disparities in Quality of Care (Sigurdson, 2019)
- Disparities in Access to Perinatal Care (Lorch et al., 2021)
- Limited Access to Breastfeeding Education and Support (Sigurdson, 2019)

Introduction (Continued)

- Racism (Witt, 2022)
- Segregation in NICU Care (Ravi, 2021)

Methodology

- Literature Review
- Exploratory Review
- CT Wonder

Results

Census Region ↓	Mother's Single Race 6	Number of Prenatal Visits	WIC	→ Deaths ↑↓	↔ Births ↑↓	← Death Rate Per 1,000 ↑↓
Census Region 1: Northeast (CENS-R1)	Black or African American	2 prenatal visits	No	14	167	83.83 (Unreliable)
Census Region 1: Northeast (CENS-R1)	White	2 prenatal visits	No	15	283	53.00 (Unreliable)
Census Region 2: Midwest (CENS-R2)	Black or African American	2 prenatal visits	No	10	204	49.02 (Unreliable)
Census Region 2: Midwest (CENS-R2)	White	2 prenatal visits	No	27	488	55.33
Census Region 3: South (CENS-R3)	Black or African American	2 prenatal visits	Yes	32	394	81.22
Census Region 3: South (CENS-R3)	Black or African American	2 prenatal visits	No	42	594	70.71
Census Region 3: South (CENS-R3)	White	2 prenatal visits	Yes	31	578	53.63
Census Region 3: South (CENS-R3)	White	2 prenatal visits	No	62	1,060	58.49
Census Region 4: West (CENS-R4)	White	2 prenatal visits	Yes	10	163	61.35 (Unreliable)
Census Region 4: West (CENS-R4)	White	2 prenatal visits	No	18	427	42.15 (Unreliable)

Results- Contributing Factors

- Racism
 - Structural racism (resulting from societal inequalities)
 - Institutional racism (unfair policies followed in hospitals)
 - Interpersonal racism (biases between individuals, particularly with NICU staff)

Results- Contributing Factors

- Quality of Care
 - Minority-serving hospitals are often under-resourced
 - Need more quality improvement infrastructure
 - Site of care explains differences in outcomes

Results- Impact of Health Outcomes

- Faster decline: mortality, hypothermia, necrotizing enterocolitis, and late-onset sepsis
- Negative experiences create reluctance to seek medical care
- Negative Parental Mental Health

Discussion

- Disparities exist within NICUs
 - Long Lasting Effects → Children With Disabilities
- Catalyze actionable changes in NICU practices and policies

References

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