

EDITORIALS

Committed to equity: New collection aims to understand disparities in sleep research

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Health disparities exist in the United States health care system, with race and ethnicity remaining significant predictors of the quality of health care received, even after correction of other factors such as socioeconomic status.¹ Other barriers to health care access that have been identified include financial insecurity, lack of transportation,² lack of cultural competence by providers,³ geographic location,⁴ and shortage of medical providers,⁵ among many other social determinants of health.

Although it is of the utmost importance that we assess potential sources of disparities in sleep medicine at the general, systemic, and individual levels, it is well known that clinical research will often exclude portions of the population, not necessarily intentionally, but because of inability to recruit or a lack of emphasis to study a diverse population. Fortunately, with the increased attention to racial, socioeconomic, gender, and other disparities, the emphasis to improve and promote inclusive strategies is coming to the forefront.⁶ Sleep medicine is no different than other medical specialties and sleep health disparities are getting more attention.⁷ In 2021, we at the journal embarked on a mission to do our part in targeting efforts to emphasize and promote manuscripts published herein that are related to “sleep health disparities.” We include both “sleep health” and “sleep disorders” within that term.

As leaders in the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, we are responsible for bringing awareness to our sleep community about current influences, biases, and roles among our profession that can contribute to health care disparities as well as understanding and addressing the gap between the diagnosis and treatment of sleep disorders between minority and nonminority patients. For this reason, the authors of this editorial, along with staff, collected keywords to help identify articles with sleep health disparities content. The keywords included the following: disparities, disparity, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, socioeconomic, identity, orientation, minority, disability, rural, urban, Black, White, African, Asian, Latino, Hispanic, Latinx, inequity, inequities, inequality, discrimination, access, indigenous, native, intersectionality, neighborhood, low income, and sexual minority. Of the 762 articles based on 2 different queries, the number of papers was narrowed down to 148. We then reviewed all the articles and selected 25 articles that we all

thought were a good basis to start our Sleep Health Disparities collection (<https://jcsm.aasm.org/Disparities>). As you review this new collection, you will note that we have papers addressing a range of disparities including race and ethnic groups—Black, Hispanic, and Native populations; gender; socioeconomic; and age. The editorial board of the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine* will identify new papers that will be valuable additions to the collection. This will be an ever-burgeoning collection with hopefully new and diverse additions over time.

The knowledge of the current status of health disparities will help establish strategies and interventions including education of sleep medicine professionals, patient education and empowerment, involvement of medical societies in strategies and policies, and federal legal and regulatory interventions. Our goal with this collection is to increase awareness and examine the determinants for these disparities. Knowing what the disparities are and addressing potential causes will help narrow sleep inequities. Please peruse the collection and do not hesitate to send us new manuscripts that would provide new material addressing important sleep health disparities.

CITATION

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SUBMISSION & CORRESPONDENCE INFORMATION

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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Dr. Collop is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*. Drs. DelRosso and Johnson serve on the editorial board of the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*.