

Health Disparities in the Medi-Cal Population

Childhood Immunizations

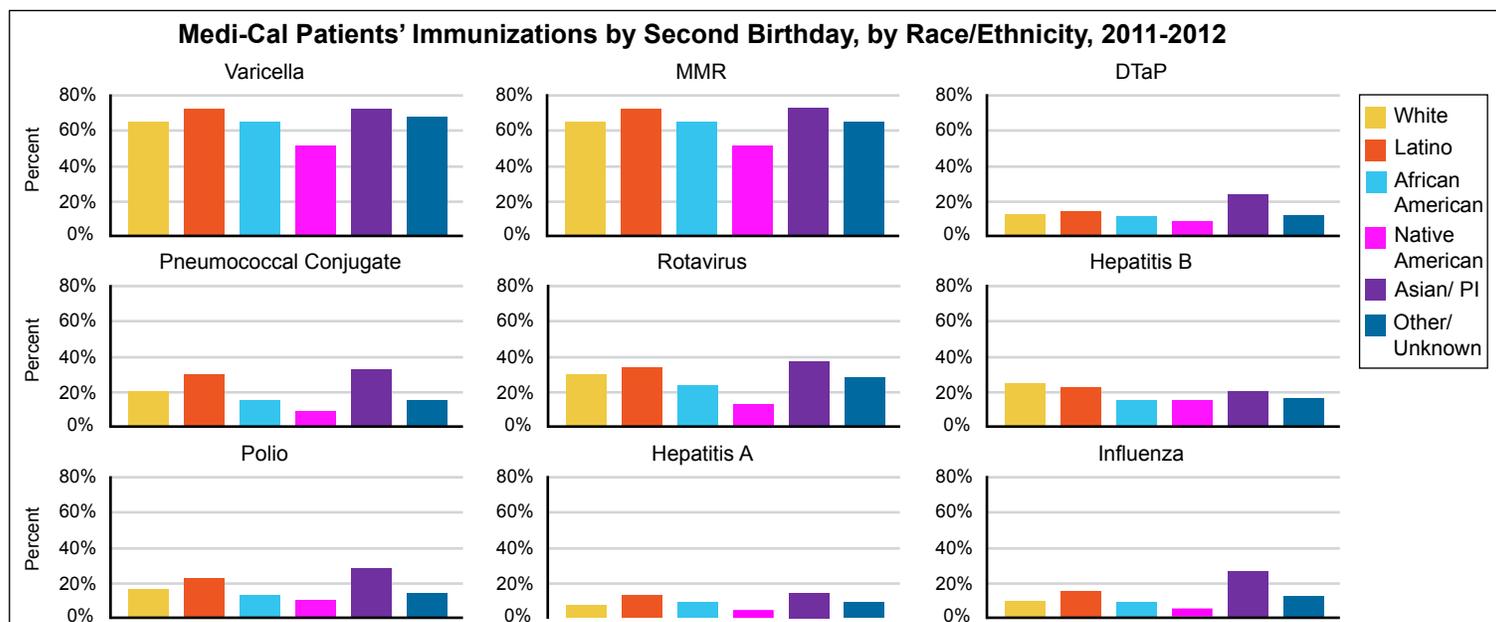


The field of public health can be proud of its successes with vaccines—smallpox has been eradicated and other serious diseases are now much less of a threat. Indeed, vaccines may be our best defense against infectious diseases.¹ The success story of vaccines also has some unintended side effects. With many infectious diseases becoming rare, many people see these as less of a threat and decide not to vaccinate their children.¹ In addition, fears about side effects of vaccines have resulted in public protests about the dangers of vaccination, resulting in a growing number of parents not vaccinating their children.²⁻³

The *Let's Get Healthy California Task Force Final Report* showed that vaccination rates for all doses of recommended vaccines among California children aged 19 to 35 months was about 68%, slightly lower than the national rate of 70%.⁴ Medi-Cal claims and encounter data could not provide a directly comparable measure to the overall California rate, but it was possible to evaluate if racial/ethnic disparities might exist. The Figure shows that Asians/Pacific Islanders and Latinos were slightly more likely to be vaccinated as compared to African Americans and Whites. Although Medi-Cal quality reports have shown relatively low immunization rates among Medi-Cal members,⁵ it is likely that some of the low immunization rates shown in the Figure are at least partially related to incomplete claims and encounter data within this domain.



Figure



Source: Medi-Cal MIS/DSS and Symmetry EBM Groupers, Version 8.0; July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012.

Note: Members eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid were excluded; Patients 2 years old at the end of the report; PI= Pacific Islander; MMR = Measles, Mumps, and Rubella; DTaP = Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis.

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- Let's Get Healthy California Task Force Final Report. <http://www.chhs.ca.gov/Documents/Let%27s%20Get%20Healthy%20California%20Task%20Force%20Final%20Report.pdf>. Published December 19, 2013. Accessed February 25, 2013.
- Medi-Cal Managed Care – Quality Improvement and Performance Measurement Reports. <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/reports/Pages/MMCDQualPerfMsrRpts.aspx>. Accessed June 2013.

Link to Data Sources and Methods