

# Health Disparities in the Medi-Cal Population

## Schizophrenia Medication Adherence

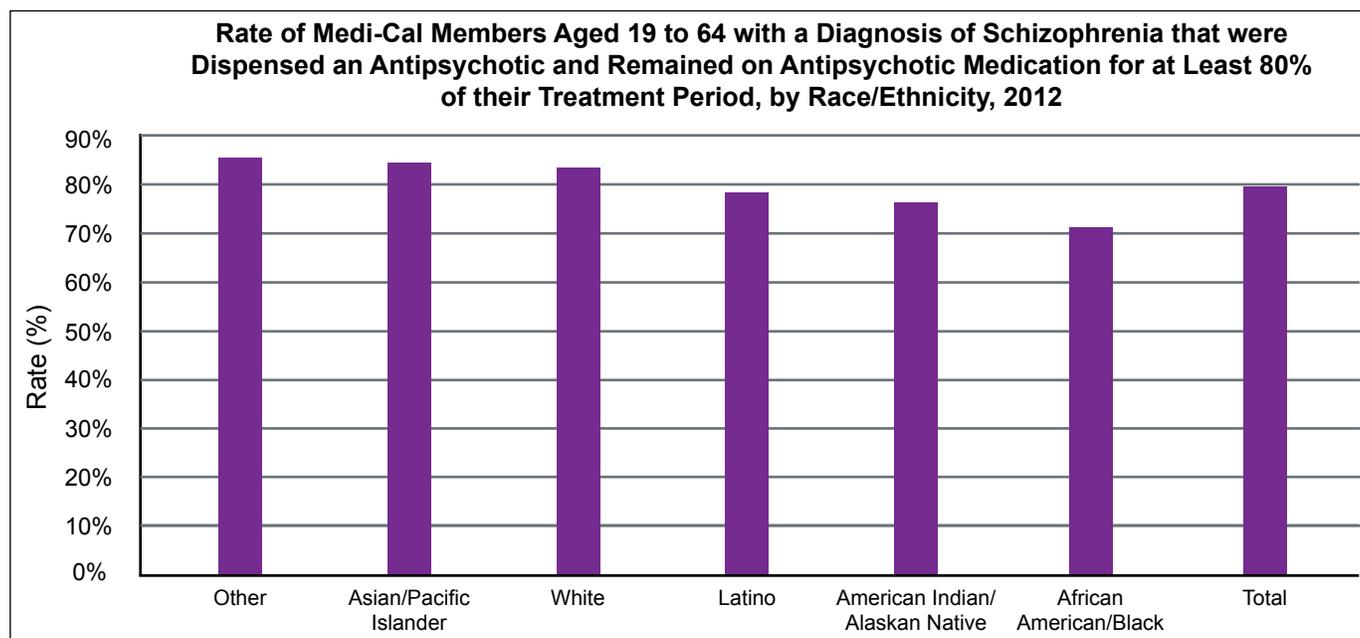


Survey research has found that approximately 1.1% of the adult American population has schizophrenia.<sup>1</sup> National claims data in 2002 estimated a prevalence of diagnosed schizophrenia of 5.1 per 1,000 lives.<sup>2</sup> People with schizophrenia have health care utilization rates above 60%.<sup>1</sup> The national overall cost of schizophrenia has been estimated at \$62.7 billion annually, of which \$22.7 billion were direct health care costs.<sup>2</sup> Antipsychotic medications have proven to be effective in treating this disorder and adherence to schizophrenia medication<sup>3</sup> keeps symptoms under control and prevents relapse.<sup>4</sup>



In the California Medi-Cal population, nearly 80% of patients, aged 19 to 64, diagnosed with schizophrenia remained on their antipsychotic medication for at least 80% of their treatment period (see Figure). African American/Black patients were least likely to remain on their antipsychotic medication (71%), followed by American Indians/Alaskan Natives (76%), Latinos (78%), Whites (83%), Asians/Pacific Islanders (84%), and Others (85%).

Figure



Source: Medi-Cal Management Information System/Decision Support System (MIS/DSS), 2012

Note: Members eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid were excluded

[Click to link to more detailed graph by race/ethnicity](#)

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3. Velligan DL, Lam F, Ereshefsky L, et al. Psychopharmacy: Perspectives on medication adherence and atypical antipsychotic medications. Psychiatr Serv. 2003;54:665-667.
4. National Institute of Mental Health. What is schizophrenia? Published 2009. <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/schizophrenia/index.shtml>. Accessed June 14, 2013.

### Link to Data Sources and Methods