

Office of Health Equity

Veterans Health Administration

Department of Veterans Affairs



INCREASING ACCESS TO CARE IN NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER VETERANS INFORMATION BRIEF

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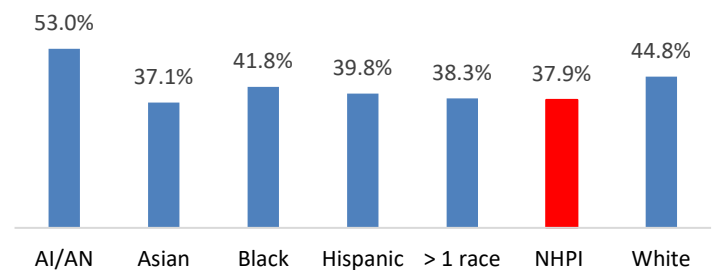
INTRODUCTION

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) serves an increasingly racially and ethnically diverse Veteran population. Equitable access to high-quality care for all Veterans is a major tenet of the VA healthcare mission. The Office of Health Equity (OHE) champions the elimination of health disparities and achieving health equity for all Veterans, including Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (NHPI) Veterans.

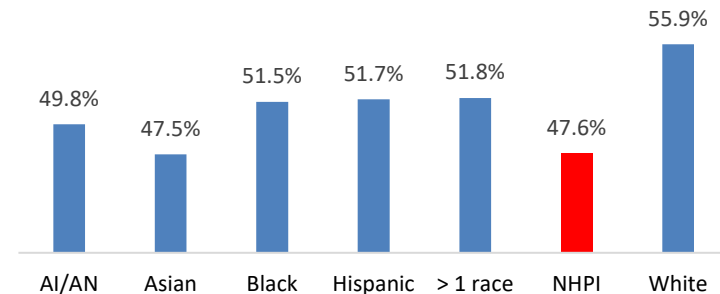
AGE DISPARITIES IN ACCESS TO CARE

OHE's National Veteran Health Equity Report found that NHPI Veterans indicated in the last 6 months, that when they made an appointment with their provider for a check-up or routine care, they were less likely to receive an appointment as soon as needed compared to White Veterans in all age groups and often less frequently than other racial and ethnic Veteran groups as well. Timeliness of care is a key aspect of quality care and delays in healthcare access contribute to poorer physical and mental health, given that untimely access can exacerbate these conditions.

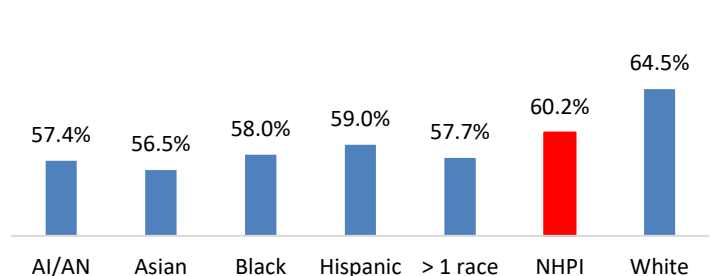
Access to Care: Check Up Received, Age 18-44 years



Access to Care: Check Up Received, Age 45-64 years



Access to Care: Check Up Received, Age 65+ years



From the [National Veteran Health Equity Report](#)



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QUALITY IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS TO REDUCE DISPARITIES AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO CARE

The VHA provides care in the Pacific Islands across 2.6 million square miles of ocean—nearly the size of the continental United States. OHE supports efforts across VHA to reduce health disparities among NHPI communities, including by providing culturally appropriate care when cultural differences may jeopardize Veterans' engagement in care. In Fiscal Year 2023 (FY) OHE funded 5 pilot project proposals and 9 pilot project proposals in FY2024, focused on identifying and addressing health disparities the NHPI Veteran population. The pilot projects encompass a broad range of approaches ranging from health data analytics to psychiatry, pharmacy and primary care, specialty care, and medical nutrition therapy. OHE and the VHA NHPI Veterans Center continue working to improve access to care and health outcomes of NHPI Veterans in the United States and United States-Affiliated Pacific Islands.

ADDRESSING DISPARITIES IN PREVENTATIVE CARE FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER VETERANS

The [VA Pacific Islands Health Care System](#) covers a geographically large area in the Pacific. It provides health care services for an estimated 50,000 Veterans throughout Hawaii and other Pacific islands, including Guam and American Samoa. Veterans residing in the Pacific Islands can experience challenges accessing VA health care services because of geographically dispersed VA health care locations. To address these challenges, OHE funded a pilot intervention where a pharmacist-led clinical prevention health team traveled to rural locations of the Pacific Island communities where Veterans reside. This team focused on population health management aimed to bring preventative health screenings usually done in VA clinics out to the communities where Veterans live.

OHE funded efforts for the team to travel to approximately 12 rural locations. The clinical preventative travel team targeted key locations throughout the health system and partnered with Pacific Islander communities to host preventative health outreach events that offered:

- Blood pressure checks
- Diabetic foot exams
- Clinical reminder screenings, including screenings for suicide, alcohol and tobacco use, and pregnancy
- Vaccinations
- Health Education
- Hepatitis C point of care screenings
- HIV point of care screenings

For more information about the Office of Health Equity visit: <https://www.va.gov/healthequity/>.