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RACIAL DISPARITIES IN INVOLUNTARY DISCHARGES FROM DIALYSIS FACILITIES AND RELATED PATIENT-REPORTED GRIEVANCES THROUGHOUT THE NATION: DATA FROM 24,718 AFFECTED DIALYSIS PATIENTS DURING 2017-2020:

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An involuntary discharge (IVD) or intention to do so occurs when a dialysis facility plans to stop therapy to a patient. We examined existence and extent of racial disparities in IVD and related grievances in the nation.

We identified 24,718 dialysis patients who were subjected to one or more intended or implemented IVDs during 4 years (1/1/2017-12/1/2020) and examined the association of race with IVD and its patient reported grievances across race using multivariate logistic regression adjusted for gender and age.

Mean (\pm SD) age was 54.4 \pm 13.9; males were 63%; Black and White patients were 43% and 51%, respectively. Across 3 age groups of <45 (Blacks: 47%), 45-<65 (45%), and \geq 65 years (33%), Black Americans were overrepresented within the <65 year groups. Compared to Whites, Black Americans were more likely to report a staff professionalism grievance (odds ratio 1.26, 95% CI 1.13-1.40), an infestation grievance (1.40, 1.08-1.80), a patient-to-patient conflict grievance (1.23, 1.11-1.36), and a scheduling issue grievance (1.21, 1.06-1.39); and less likely to report a patient safety grievance (0.83, 0.73-0.93) or a general treatment grievance (0.88, 0.77-0.99).

Whereas Black Americans comprise a third of the national dialysis cohort, 43% of all related cases involved a Black American.

Among those <65 years, nearly half of all IVD related cases were Black American men and women. The detected racial disparities in the IVD process in the nation warrant additional investigations including root cause analyses, and if verified, interventions to resolve these disparities should be tested.

Table 1. Race distribution of 24,718 dialysis patients with intended or implemented involuntary discharges during 1/2017-12/2020

| | African American | White | Other Races |
|------------------|------------------|------------|-------------|
| Total | n=10,787 | n=12,564 | n=1,671 |
| Age group | | | |
| MALE | n= 6,474 | n= 8,233 | n= 862 |
| < 45 | 1,598 (46) | 1,681 (49) | 172 (5) |
| 45-65 | 3,816 (44) | 4,385 (51) | 458 (5) |
| \geq 65 | 1,060 (31) | 2,167 (62) | 232 (7) |
| FEMALE | n= 4,313 | n= 4,331 | n= 807 |
| < 45 | 1,155 (49) | 1,096 (46) | 117 (5) |
| 45-65 | 2,274 (48) | 1,995 (42) | 458 (10) |
| \geq 65 | 884 (38) | 1,240 (53) | 232 (9) |