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## **Addressing Health Disparities In Minority Populations**

Medicine, technology and the attentiveness to preventive medicine has caused dramatic improvements in the life expectancy and overall health of the population. However, not all Americans have benefited from these developments.

Racial and ethnic minorities in the United States still lack the availability to medical advancements causing a gap in the quality of health and health care across racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. Health disparities in minority populations demonstrate the health care system's inability to provide equal and accessible quality health care in spite of their economic status.

In 2007, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that an estimated 10.8% white Americans, 20.5 % African Americans, 15.5 % Asian American and 34.1% Hispanics were uninsured in 2006. As the population changes, the number of uninsured will increase. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expects that in a few years "there will be an additional need to address these disproportionate health issues as the demographics for racial and ethnic minorities are rapidly growing. Therefore, the time to act is now.

**The second annual Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival presented by UnitedHealth Group will focus on promoting a healthy lifestyle for the entire family in an effort to enhance the quality of health among minorities. The June 21 festival will provide free health screenings, fitness demonstrations and child immunizations. The Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival will open from noon to 6 p.m. at Discovery Green Park.**

**Admission is free and open to the public. The theme for the Houston Juneteenth Multicultural Health Festival is "Remembering Our Past for a Healthier Future."**

**About 15,000 are expected to attend this event which will also offer goods, services and products from more than 150 vendors. The festival will provide valuable health information to place participants on the road to wellness.**

According to Stephen L. Williams, Director of Houston Health and Human Services Department, "health differences in minority communities can be eliminated with the support of health care partnerships, community-based organizations, state and local governments, as well as the cooperation of ethnic and racial communities and leaders. Overcoming health inequalities require the immediate attention of our society to become aware of the origins of diseases, causes of health disparities, and effectively planning interventions for preventive and treatment services. Moreover, reshaping public health policies to address these health care challenges will assist with providing better care for communities that are uninsured and underserved."



The health of Americans relative to the future will be heavily influenced on the health care system's ability to improve the resources accessible to address the health care needs of racial and ethnic minorities. A health nation is possible to achieve. However, if we as a society cannot offer better assistance to communities whose burden of death and illness are caused by health disparities, then our efforts to attain a healthier nation becomes almost impossible.

For additional information and media downloads regarding the event visit <http://www.houstonhealthfestival.org/press.html>