



# National Health Information Collaborative for the Underserved Barriers and Solutions to Implementing Health Information Technology (HIT)

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# Introduction

- Health information technology (HIT) has been viewed as a two-tier tool to better health care
  - Has the potential to reduce health costs
  - Has the ability to reduce disparities and improve the quality of care
- Impoverished communities have long suffered inequities from the growth of HIT
- The National Health IT Collaborative for the Underserved was founded to serve as a catalyst and supporter of policy and programs aimed at improving the lives of the underserved, specifically in the realm of HIT
  - An emphasis is placed on communities of color as these are the communities where the greatest disparities lie with regard to access and utilization of health information technology.

# Methodology

- Research methods included a PubMed Search Strategy using the following MeSH terms: barriers, consumers, patients, medical Informatics, health information technology, electronic health records, mobile technology, Smartphone, attitude to computers, and policy.
- A separate search for studies examining health information technology (HIT) in the U.S., funded or analyzed by the federal government entities was also performed.
- Timeline: NHIT projects have all been completed. The White House summit was held on April 22, 2015. The business strategic plan development is an ongoing process.

# Aetna/NMF Fellow Projects

- Recommendations for ONC's Federal Health IT Strategic Plan 2015-2020.
  - The goal-oriented task was to ensure emphasis was placed on plans of action to advance and strengthen HIT over the next 5 years in underserved communities, in order to eliminate health disparities and promote health equity.
- Heckler Report
  - Changed the approach to health issues in underserved communities, particularly communities of color.
- Detailed analysis of the ONC's Health IT Nationwide Interoperability Roadmap
  - provides the steps to be taken in both the private and public sectors to create a more connected interoperable health IT ecosystem that will advance the nation over the next 10 years
- NHIT Collaborative Strategic HIT Business Plan

# Findings

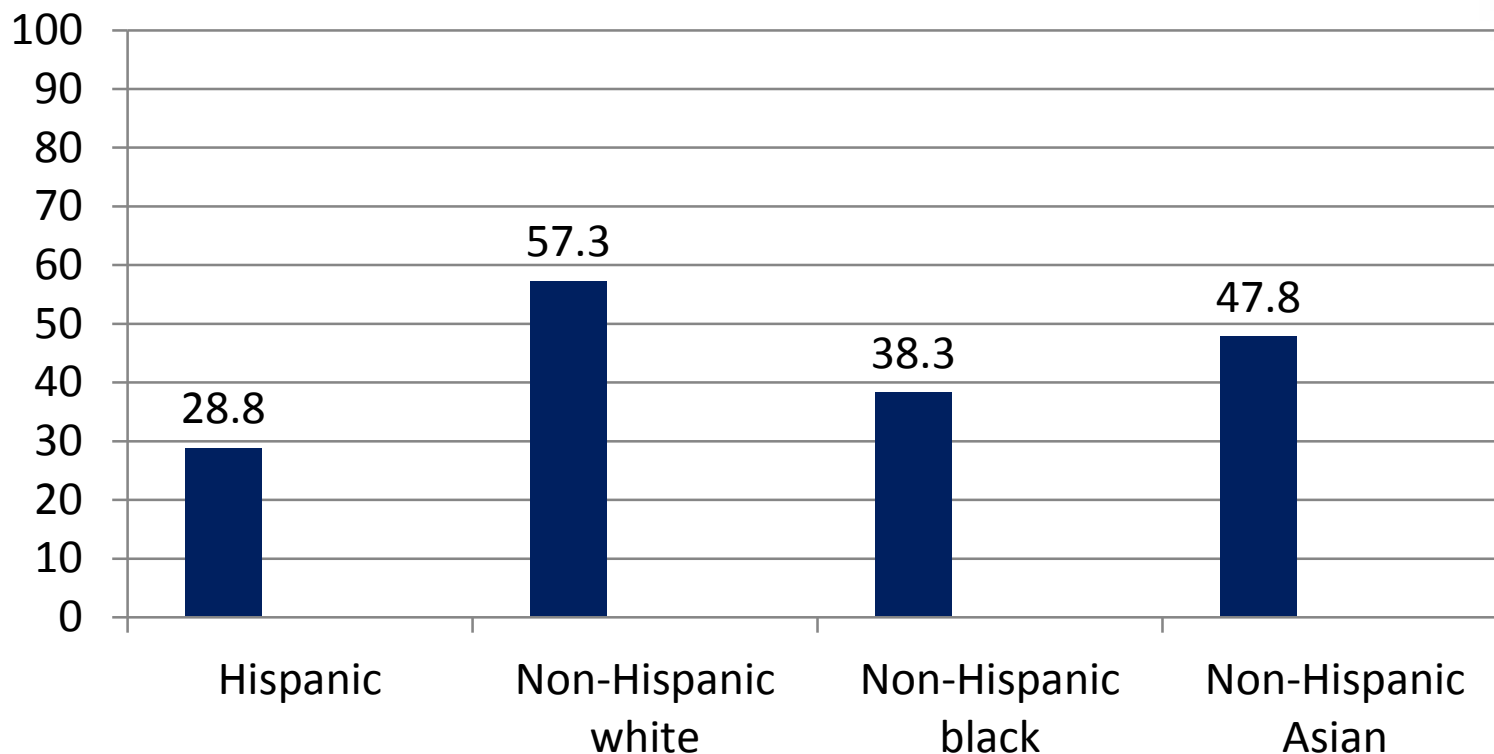
## Benefits to Health IT

- Improvement in patient outcomes
- Improvement in quality of care
- Improving population health
- Cost reduction
- Better patient experience
- Reduction in medical errors

## Barriers to Health Information

- Illiteracy
- Cost
- Language
- Distrust
- Perceived lack of benefit

# Percentage of adults aged 18-64 who in the past 12 months looked up health information on the Internet, by race and ethnicity: United States, 2009



SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2009 Sample Adult component



# Recommendations

- Eliminate the digital divide to maximize technological capabilities in underserved communities.
- Design and implement policy and HIT aimed at increasing access and capitalization on mobile devices and technologies.

## Conclusion

- There is growing evidence highlighting the effectiveness of HIT and the potential to use these new tools to reduce health disparities.
- Despite the challenges, it is feasible for patients to be empowered to play a key role in their healthcare by managing their health information.
- Promoting better communication and encouraging the utilization of user-friendly health information systems will aid in reducing HIT barriers.

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