

# Workplace Discrimination and Physician Job Turnover

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# Presenter Disclosures

**Marcella Nunez-Smith, MD, MHS**

The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

**“No relationships to disclose”**

# Racial/ethnic minority physicians have differential career experiences and outcomes



- >50% report current workplace discrimination<sup>1</sup>
- Lower rates of promotion or career satisfaction<sup>2</sup>
- Non-healthcare fields: discrimination linked to job turnover<sup>3</sup>
- Unknown whether association also exists for physicians

<sup>1</sup> Coombs AA, King RK. Workplace discrimination: experiences of practicing physicians. *J Natl Med Assoc.* Apr 2005;97(4):467-477.

<sup>2</sup> Fang D, Moy E, Colburn L, Hurley J. Racial and ethnic disparities in faculty promotion in academic medicine. *Jama.* Sep 6 2000;284(9):1085-1092.

<sup>3</sup> Mays VM, Coleman LM, Jackson JS. Perceived race-based discrimination, employment status, and job stress in a national sample of black women: implications for health outcomes. *J Occup Health Psychol.* Jul 1996;1(3):319-329.

# Physician turnover negatively affects healthcare delivery costs and quality



- Decreased patient satisfaction<sup>1</sup>
- Lowered quality of preventive care<sup>2</sup>
- Reduced morale/increased workloads<sup>3</sup>
- Public relations challenges<sup>1</sup>
- Costs of re-recruitment activities<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Misra-Hebert AD, Kay R, Stoller JK. A review of physician turnover: rates, causes, and consequences. *Am J Med Qual* 2004;19(2):56-66.

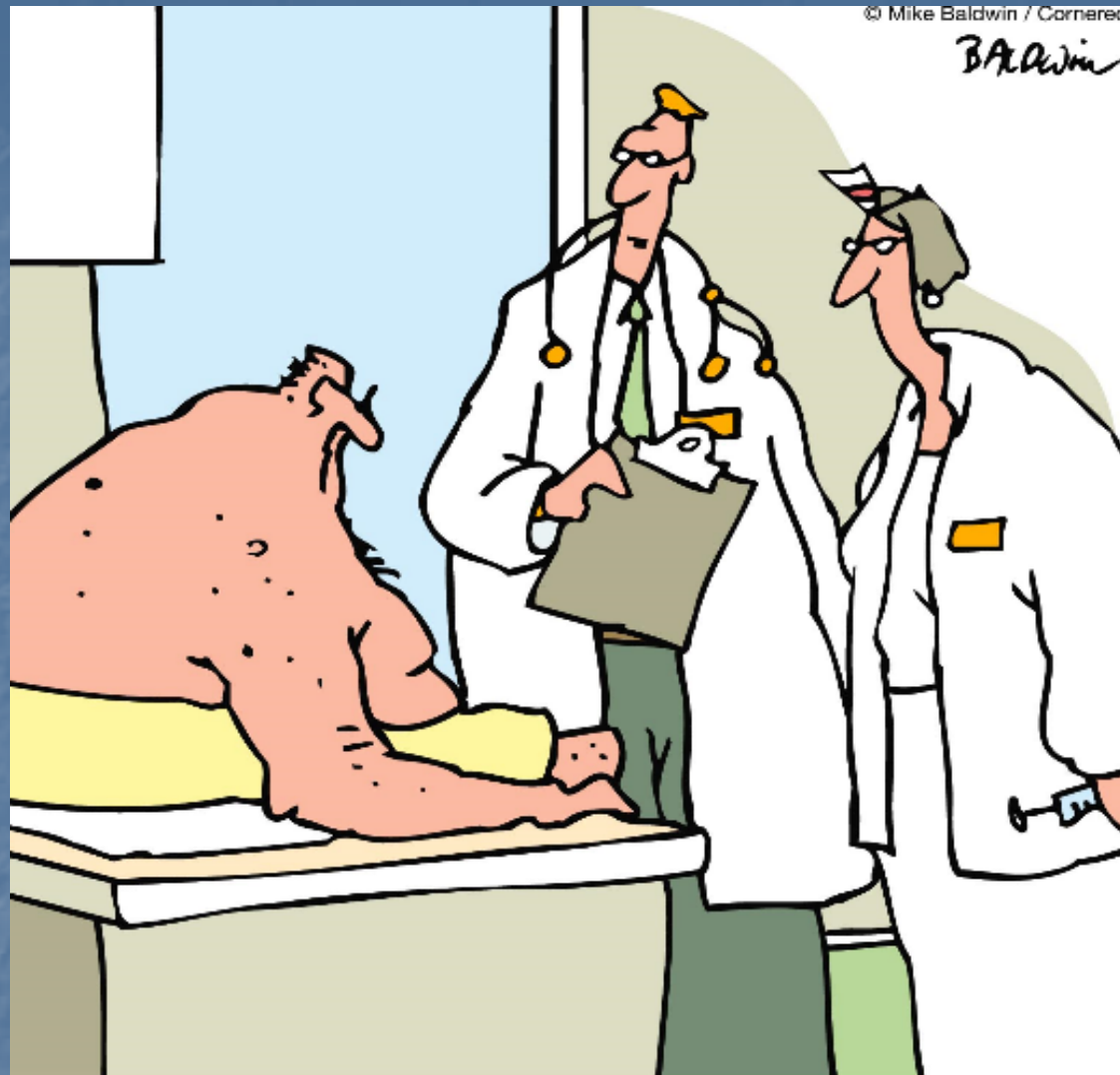
<sup>2</sup> Plomondon ME, Magid DJ, Steiner JF, et al. Primary care provider turnover and quality in managed care organizations. *Am J Manag Care* 2007;13(8):465-72.

<sup>3</sup> Physician Demographics Evident in Turnover Rates; "Fit and Family" are Driving Forces. 2007. (Last accessed April 4, 2009, at <http://www.cejkasearch.com/Physician-Retention-Survey/2006RetentionSurvey/default.htm>)

<sup>4</sup> Waldman JD, Kelly F, Arora S, Smith HL. The shocking cost of turnover in health care. *Health Care Manage Rev* 2004;29(1):2-7.

## Objective

To conduct a national survey to examine the association between workplace discrimination and physician turnover by physician race/ethnicity



“You’re sick of this? Just try to imagine how we feel.”

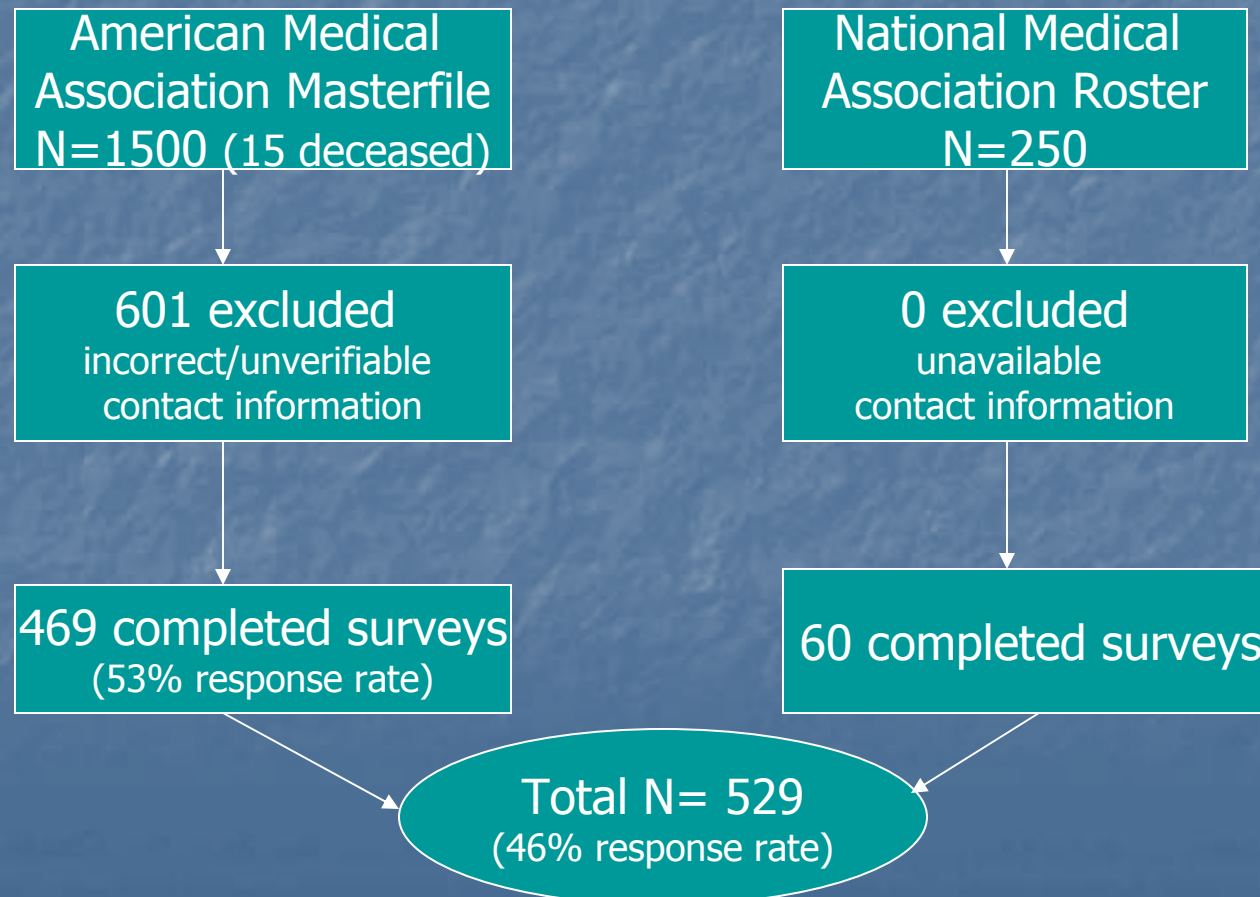
# National survey of physicians to test qualitatively-generated hypotheses

- Hypothesis 1:
  - Racial/ethnic minority physicians would report significantly higher rates of racial/ethnic discrimination at work compared with non-minorities
- Hypothesis 2:
  - Racial/ethnic minority physicians would be more likely to report job turnover because of discrimination
- Hypothesis 3:
  - The workplace experience of discrimination, and not demographics, would be associated with high job turnover

# METHODS

# Study design and sample

- Cross-sectional survey
- National sample of practicing physicians in US



# Data collection

- Mailed survey (October 2006- February 2007)
- 35 items
  - Developed from qualitative work
  - Adapted from prior physician surveys

# Terminology

- Perceived discrimination
  - Incidents in which an individual perceives mistreatment based on racial/ethnic identity in a specific social setting such as the workplace
- Job turnover
  - Separation of an employee from an establishment (voluntary, involuntary, or other)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007

Independent Variable (x):  
racial/ethnic discrimination at work over career

- *"Since completing medical training, how often have you personally experienced discrimination because of your race or ethnicity (at work)?"*
- Yes = sometimes, often, very often
- No = never, rarely

## Dependent variables (y): 2 measures of job turnover

- *"I have left a job, since completing medical training, because I was discriminated against there"*
  - Yes = agree, strongly agree
  - No = neutral, disagree, strongly disagree
- *"How many times have you unexpectedly changed jobs since you completed medical training?"* (excludes changes because of promotion/advancement)
  - High unplanned job turnover =  $\geq 3$  unexpected changes

# Additional physician characteristics

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Sex
- Nativity
- Age/Years in Practice
- Specialty
- Region
- Religious affiliation
- Sexual orientation
- Relationship status
- Medical school location
- Income
- Board certification status
- Hours worked per week

# Analytic Plan

- Descriptive statistics
- Bivariate analyses
  - Odds-ratios and chi-square statistics
- Multivariable logistic regression
  - *a priori* hypothesized association (e.g. sex)
  - Statistically significant on bivariate analyses
  - Tests for co-linearity
  - No significant interactions between race/ethnicity and other covariates
  - SAS v9.2

# RESULTS

# Participant Characteristics

(N=529)

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>N (%)</u>
■ Sex	
■ Male	346 (71.3)
■ Race	
■ Non-Hispanic White	310 (58.6)
■ Non-Hispanic Black	87 (16.4)
■ Non-Hispanic Asian	74 (14.8)
■ Non-Hispanic Other	24 (4.5)
■ Ethnicity	
■ Hispanic/Latino	30 (5.7)
■ Age	
■ ≤ 49 years old	242 (46.1)
■ US Born	
■ Yes	401 (76.4)
■ Medical School	
■ US	430 (81.6)
■ Health status	
■ Very good/Excellent	443 (84.7)

# Physician race/ethnicity and “yes” career workplace racial/ethnic discrimination

Physician race/ethnicity	n/N (%)
Non-Hispanic White	22/301 (7)
Non-Hispanic Black	61/86 (71)
Non-Hispanic Asian	32/73 (45)
Non-Hispanic Other	15/24 (63)
Hispanic-Latino(a)	8/30 (27)

# Association of physician race/ethnicity with career discrimination remained significant in adjusted analyses

Physician race/ethnicity	Adjusted OR (95% CI)
Non-Hispanic White	reference
Non-Hispanic Black	28.74 (13.4, 61.6)
Non-Hispanic Asian	6.0 (2.5, 14.7)
Non-Hispanic Other	19.1 (5.7, 64.2)
Hispanic-Latino(a)	3.47 (1.2, 10.2)

- Findings supported H1: Racial/ethnic minority physicians reported significantly higher rates of racial/ethnic discrimination at work compared with non-minorities

# Physician race/ethnicity and “yes” to having left at least one job because of discrimination

Physician race/ethnicity	n/N (%)
Non-Hispanic White	29/309 (9)
Non-Hispanic Black	25/85 (29)
Non-Hispanic Asian	17/72 (24)
Non-Hispanic Other	5/24 (21)
Hispanic-Latino(a)	6/30 (20)

## Black and Asian physicians remained significantly more likely to have left a job because of discrimination in adjusted model

Physician race/ethnicity	Adjusted OR (95% CI)
Non-Hispanic White	reference
Non-Hispanic Black	3.94 (2.1, 7.5)
Non-Hispanic Asian	2.90 (1.4, 5.9)
Non-Hispanic Other	2.21 (0.7, 7.2)
Hispanic-Latino(a)	2.57 (0.95, 7.0)

- Findings supported H2: Racial/ethnic minority physicians were more likely to cite workplace discrimination as the reason for job turnover compared with non-minorities

Physician race/ethnicity was NOT associated with high unplanned job turnover ( $\geq 3$  events)

Physician race/ethnicity	n/N (%)
Non-Hispanic White	72/306 (24)
Non-Hispanic Black	22/86 (26)
Non-Hispanic Asian	14/74 (19)
Non-Hispanic Other	6/24 (25)
Hispanic-Latino(a)	8/30 (27)

## Physician reports of career workplace discrimination and “yes” high unplanned job turnover

Racial/ethnic discrimination at work over career	n/N (%)	Adjusted OR (95% CI)
No	72/371 (19)	reference
Yes	47/143 (33)	2.7 (1.4, 4.9)

- Findings supported H3: Reports of career workplace racial/ethnic discrimination, and not physician race/ethnicity, were associated with high unplanned job turnover

# Summary

- Most racial/ethnic minority physicians reported having experienced workplace discrimination.
- Racial/ethnic minority physicians were more likely to change jobs because of workplace discrimination.
- Experiencing discrimination at work, not physician race/ethnicity, was significantly associated with high physician job turnover.

# Limitations

- Cross-sectional associations
- Response bias potential
  - No differences between respondents and non-respondents on observable characteristics
  - No evidence that incorporating NMA roster into sampling frame introduced reporting bias
- Response rate
  - Consistent with other recent national physician surveys on potentially sensitive topics

# Implications

- Climate of discrimination and diversity of the organizations where physicians work influences ability to support and retain a diverse workforce.
- Discrimination likely plays a role in the differential career outcomes of racial/ethnic minority physicians.
- Importance of capturing physician experiences of discrimination at work when opportunities for intervention and retention still exist.

# Acknowledgements

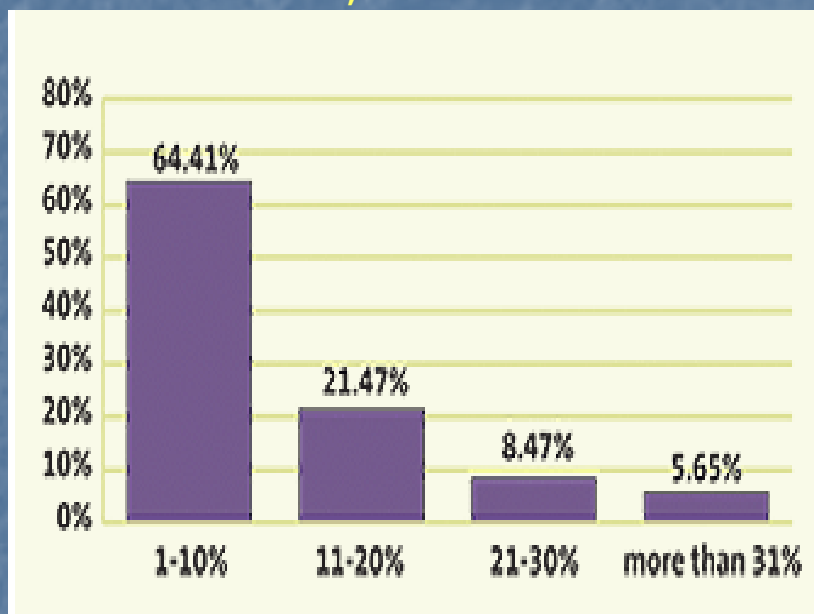
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# Additional Slides

Thank you!

# Workplace experiences, not demographics, determine physician turnover

## National Survey of Practice Annual Turnover Rate, 2006



MGMA's Perspectives on Career Paths, 2006

- Median primary care physician turnover rate: 7.1% (0-53%)<sup>1</sup>
- Associated factors:
  - Low job satisfaction
  - Lack of decision-making autonomy
  - ? Workplace discrimination
- Non-majority physicians:
  - Differential career outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, advancement)

<sup>1</sup> Plomondon ME, Magid DJ, Steiner JF, et al. Primary care provider turnover and quality in managed care organizations. Am J Manag Care 2007;13(8):465-72.

*" I have left a job because I felt discriminated against there"*

Physician race/ethnicity	<u>Women</u> (n=139)	<u>Men</u> (n= 346)
	n/N (%) OR (95% CI)	n/N (%) OR (95% CI)
Non-Hispanic White	12/74 (16.2) --	14/211 (6.6) --
Non-Hispanic Black	11/29 (37.9) 3.2 (1.2,8.3)	12/48 (25.0) 4.7 (2.0, 11.0)
Non-Hispanic Asian	3/18 (16.7) 1.1 (0.3, 4.1)	12/48 (25.0) 4.7 (2.0, 11.0)
Non-Hispanic Other	2/7 (28.6) 2.1 (0.4, 11.9)	2/15 (13.3) 2.2 (0.4, 10.6)
Hispanic-Latino(a)	2/9 (22.2) 1.5 (0.3, 8.0)	4/21 (19.1) 3.3 (0.9, 11.2)