



HEALTH

***Gender and Quality of Care for Heart
Disease and Diabetes***

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Gender Disparities in Quality of Care Persist



- **There is growing evidence of gender disparities in care for heart disease**
- **High rates of death and illness from heart disease and diabetes make improving quality a priority**
- **Gender disparities are independent of racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities**
- **Little is known about gender differences in ambulatory care for heart disease or diabetes**

Our Study Examined Quality of Ambulatory Care by Gender



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- **We looked at privately insured and Medicare patients from 19 plans**
- **We examined 7 process measures and 4 intermediate outcomes**
- **We found gender disparities on 8 of 11 measures for privately insured and 5 for Medicare patients**
- **Nearly all of the disparities disadvantaged women**

Highlights of Our Results



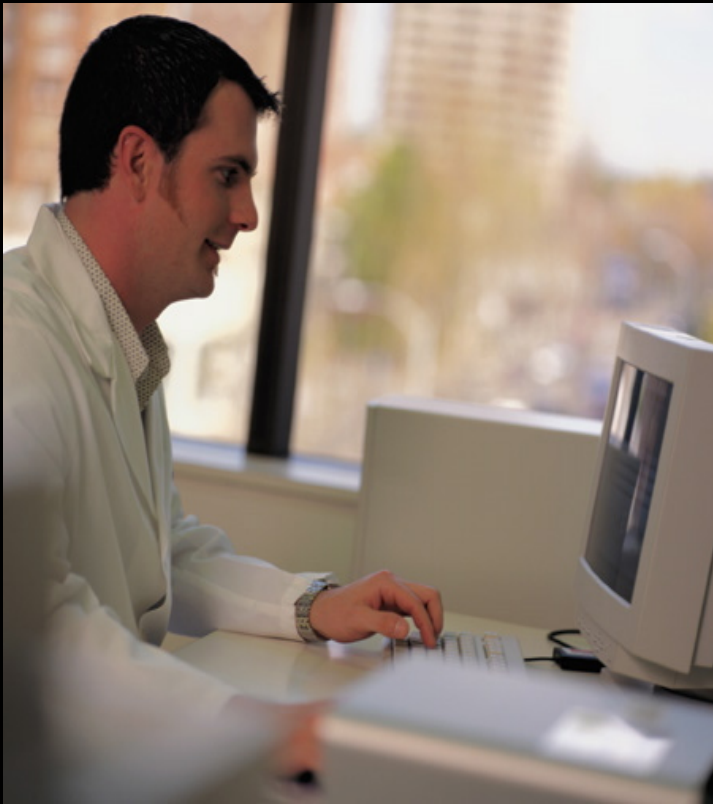
- **Women insured by Medicare were**
 - **22% less likely to achieve cholesterol control after a cardiac event**
 - **16% less likely to achieve cholesterol control among diabetics**
- **Privately insured women were**
 - **16% less likely to achieve cholesterol control among diabetics**
 - **15% less likely to receive recommended drug treatment (beta blocker) after acute cardiac event**
- **Women with diabetes in both groups were more likely to get eye exam**

Results Are Puzzling Given What We Know About Women's Health Care



- **Women seek care more often than men**
- **Patients in study had established need and access**
 - **insured**
 - **receiving ambulatory care**
 - **with relevant diagnoses and no contraindications**

Where Do We Need to Go from Here?



- We can't fix what we don't measure
- We need to understand causes of these disparities
- Different interventions may be required to improve
 - Women's vs. men's quality of care
 - Outcomes vs. processes

Why Should Congress Pay Attention?



- **Optimal care for men and women will improve outcomes**
- **Cost of poorly managed heart disease and diabetes falls heavily on Medicare and Medicaid**
- **Ethnic and racial disparities data are focus of current legislation**
- **Gender disparities remain below the radar**



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