



EIGHTY-SIX PERCENT OF PRIMARY CARE PATIENTS BELIEVE RACISM IS IMPACTING THEIR HEALTH

PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON, June 10, 2020 – The Larry A. Green Center, in collaboration with the Primary Care Collaborative (PCC) and 3rd Conversation, today released new data showing that a staggering 86 percent of Americans believe racism is impacting their physical, psychological and/or emotional health. The survey, which reached a nationally representative sample of more than 1,100 primary care patients, along with a companion survey of close to 600 clinicians, revealed both patients and care providers view racism as a public health issue.

These findings come at a time when the national conversation is focused heavily on racial injustice in the United States and shed light on a new setting where conversations about racism’s impact can and should be held: the doctor’s office. In fact, one in five primary care clinicians says that the death of George Floyd has been a topic of conversation with patients when it comes to their health, and more than 40 percent of clinicians say it has been raised as a topic of concern across patients of all demographics. What’s more – it is impacting provider wellbeing. More than 30 percent of clinicians report feeling distressed about George Floyd’s death.

“The data from this week’s survey are at once startling and heartening – shedding light on the incredible impact racism may be playing on our health, while presenting a potential prescription to help guide the conversation and support those in need,” said Rebecca Etz, PhD, co-director of The Larry A. Green Center and associate professor of Family Medicine and Population Health at Virginia Commonwealth University. “As patients are turning to their primary care providers for support, we must ensure that clinicians receive the same level of support from the U.S. healthcare system to allow them to continue this critical work in providing patient care.”

The survey was conducted by The Larry A. Green Center as part of an ongoing series looking at the attitudes of primary care clinicians and patients over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. This week’s data also showed that more than two months into the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly half of practices are still without PPE, and nearly 40 percent have had to lay off staff members.

“Both public and private policymakers must take immediate steps to stabilize primary care,” said Ann Greiner, President and CEO of the Primary Care Collaborative. “This financial support is necessary but not sufficient. Instead, we need wholesale reform of payment in order to achieve the kind of high-performing primary care that truly meets patient needs.”

“The fact that so many patients and clinicians agree that racism is a driver of health points to the incredible role primary care plays in creating safe spaces to process deep societal and personal issues,” said Christine Bechtel, patient advocate and co-founder of 3rd Conversation, a community of patients and providers. “Primary care clinicians can be the cornerstone of physical, mental and emotional health for so many Americans -- not in spite of, but especially during, these difficult times. Our leadership must ensure this priceless resource is available to all Americans - now more than ever - through effective policies that ensure the long-term viability of primary care.”

The survey of clinicians was fielded June 5-8, 2020, and received 586 responses from clinicians in 48 states and Washington, D.C. 68 percent of respondents identified their practice as family medicine, 17 percent as internal medicine, 10 percent as pediatrics, 2 percent as geriatrics, and 3 percent as other.

The patient survey was conducted online on June 8, 2020, and was open to people 18 or older. The survey results reflect input from 1,100 respondents from a range of education levels (37 percent high school degree, 29 percent four-year college degree, 18 percent graduate degree or higher and 16 percent classified as other); income levels (43 percent less than \$50,000 household income, 7 percent greater than \$150,000 household income); and geographies (29 percent

urban, 53 percent suburban and 18 percent rural). One-third of respondents consider themselves part of a minority group.

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About the Primary Care Collaborative:

Founded in 2006, the [Primary Care Collaborative](#) (PCC) is a nonprofit multi-stakeholder membership organization dedicated to advancing an effective and efficient health system built on a strong foundation of primary care and the patient-centered medical home. Representing a broad group of public and private organizations, PCC's mission is to unify and engage diverse stakeholders in promoting policies and sharing best practices that support growth of high-performing primary care and achieve the "Quadruple Aim": better care, better health, lower costs, and greater joy for clinicians and staff in delivery of care.

About The Green Center:

The Larry A. Green Center for the Advancement of Primary Health Care for the Public Good is a research group founded by Rebecca Etz, PhD at Virginia Commonwealth University and Kurt Stange, MD, PhD at Case Western Reserve University. The Green Center works to reclaim and reconstitute the intellectual foundations of primary care, to advance the science of medicine learned and practiced within layered and competing social frameworks of meaning, and to deliver on a now 50 year old promise: better health and improved health care through a synergistic focus on both humanism and healing. We are nimble, inquisitive, curious, and open. We make personal doctoring and innovation visible.

About 3rd Conversation:

[3rd Conversation](#) is a national initiative reimagining the future of health care by reinventing the clinician-patient relationship for the modern era. Powered by X4 Health, 3rd Conversation works at both the local and national levels to address health professional burnout, improve patient experience and realize the promise of humanity and connection in our health care system. Funding support is provided by the Morris-Singer Foundation and the New York State Health Foundation.