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PRESS RELEASE

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MHN Participates in National Minority Health Month – April 2014 *Prevention is Power: Taking Action for Health Equity*

(Washington, DC) – Men's Health Network (MHN), in observation of [National Minority Health Month](#) this April, is encouraging everyone to come together and talk about prevention in the health care system and communities, and about what they can do individually to keep themselves and their families healthy. National Minority Health Month is an awareness period about the health disparities that disproportionately impact racial and ethnic minorities, and it highlights prevention as a key strategy for achieving health equity.

"Failure to address the health challenges facing minorities diminishes the health of the nation as a whole," said Jean J. E. Bonhomme, MD, MPH, member of MHN Board of Directors and National Black Men's Health Network founder. **"The U.S. has one of the most expensive health care systems in the world, yet our life expectancies, infant mortality rates and other health care outcomes are often middle of the road at best. This situation exists in large measure because many of our advanced and effective health care interventions are not reaching minorities. Equally importantly, studying minorities who suffer the highest known rates of many life limiting conditions provides unique opportunities to identify real causes and effective prevention of disease. Increased attention to minority health could benefit us all significantly."**

Throughout the month of April, the Office of Minority Health will join its federal, state, tribal and local partners across the country in calling for a renewed commitment to eliminate health disparities and achieve health equity. Across the country and in the U.S. territories, they are spreading the word that "prevention is power," to inspire everyone to talk about focusing on keeping our families and communities healthy.

"Seven of the top 10 causes of death in the U.S. are from chronic diseases and men of color are disproportionately affected by many of these conditions, including heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes, which can be preventable," said J. Nadine Gracia, MD, MSCE, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health and Director of the Office of Minority Health. **"At this time in history, we have unprecedented opportunities—such as those created by the Affordable Care Act and [HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities](#)—to**

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implement prevention measures to move the needle on health disparities and achieve health equity for all Americans.”

A recent position paper published by MHN, ['A Framework for Advancing the Overall Health and Wellness Of America's Boys and Men'](#)

(<http://www.menshealthnetwork.org/library/Dialogue1.pdf>) defines needs and issues a call to action with emphasis on minority, low-income, and underserved males.

The paper points out a few of the challenges of minorities by unveiling the following data:

- African American males have the lowest life expectancy in Washington D.C.;
- Native American males have the lowest life expectancy in South Dakota;
- Asian/Pacific Islanders and Hispanics have the lowest life expectancy in Hawaii.

Some other staggering statistics when referring to minority health from the Framework:

- African American males are twice as likely to die from prostate cancer as white males;
- Native American males ages 15-24 are three times as likely to commit suicide as Native American females and white males of the same age group;
- Among Native Americans ages 45-54, males suffer alcohol-related deaths eight times greater than whites and twice as often as Native American females, and die from diabetes at a rate four times greater than white males and 40% higher than Native American females of the same age;
- Hispanic males have almost three times the rate of HIV/AIDS as white males and are 2.5 times more likely to die from HIV/AIDS as white men;
- Hispanic males are six times more likely to have never seen a primary health care provider and eight times less likely to have never seen a dentist than white males;
- Native Americans are the only racial group in which males score higher in psychological distress than females, based on the CDC National Health Interview Survey.

[Men's Health Network](#) (MHN) is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to reach men, boys, and their families where they live, work, play, and pray with health prevention messages and tools, screening programs, educational materials, advocacy opportunities, and patient navigation. Learn more about MHN at www.menshealthnetwork.org and follow us on Twitter @MensHlthNetwork and [facebook.com/menshealthnetwork](https://www.facebook.com/menshealthnetwork)

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