

Advancing health equity for people with disabilities

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Disability



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1 in 4

American adults
has a disability
(67 million people)

People with
disabilities are
part of
all communities



“**Ableism** is rooted
in the assumption that
non-disabled people
are the ideal.”

- Amanda Morris and Chris Alcantara

Are You Ableist. Washington Post. April 12, 2023.



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Ableism:

A root cause of health
inequities

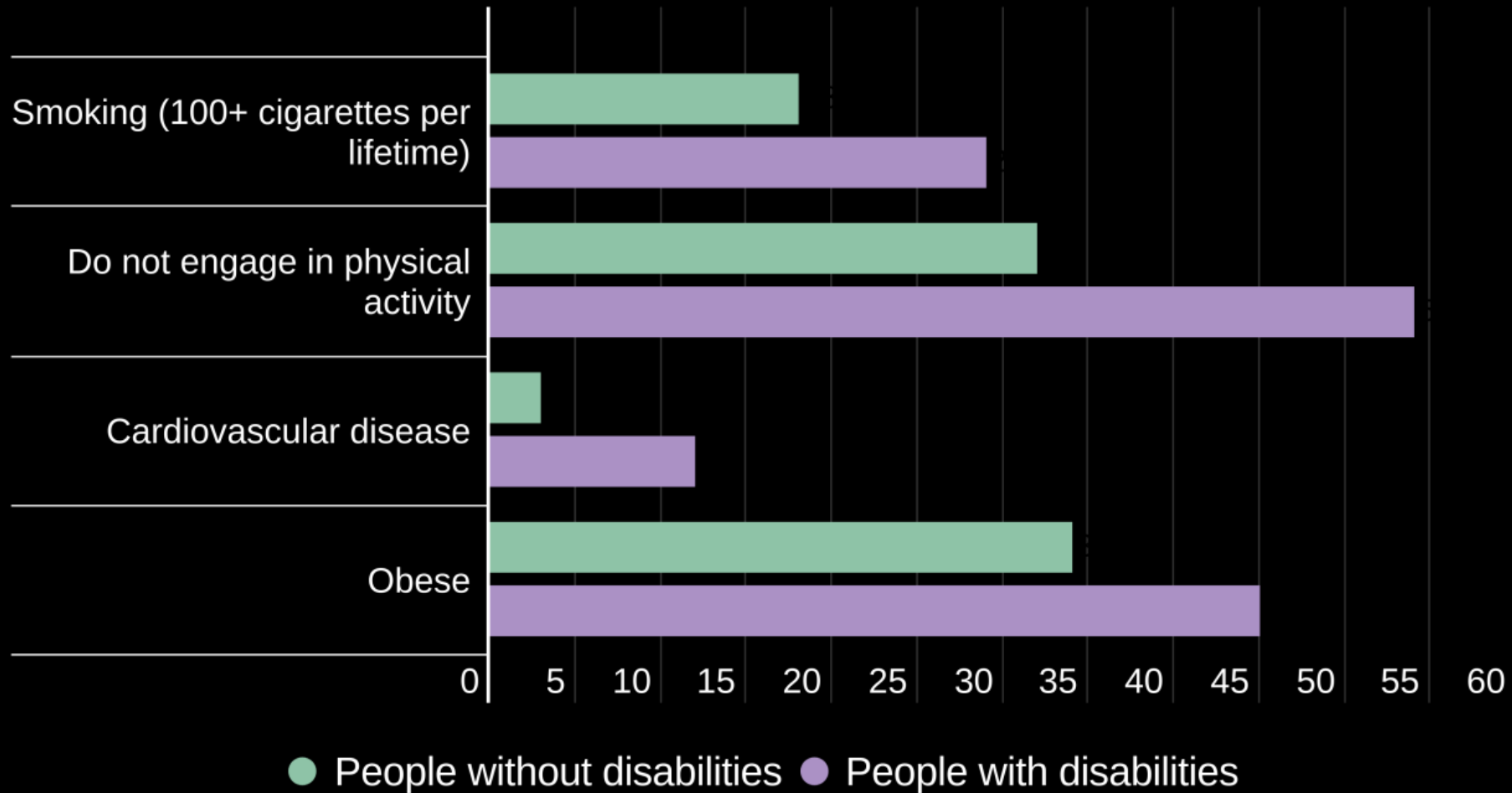


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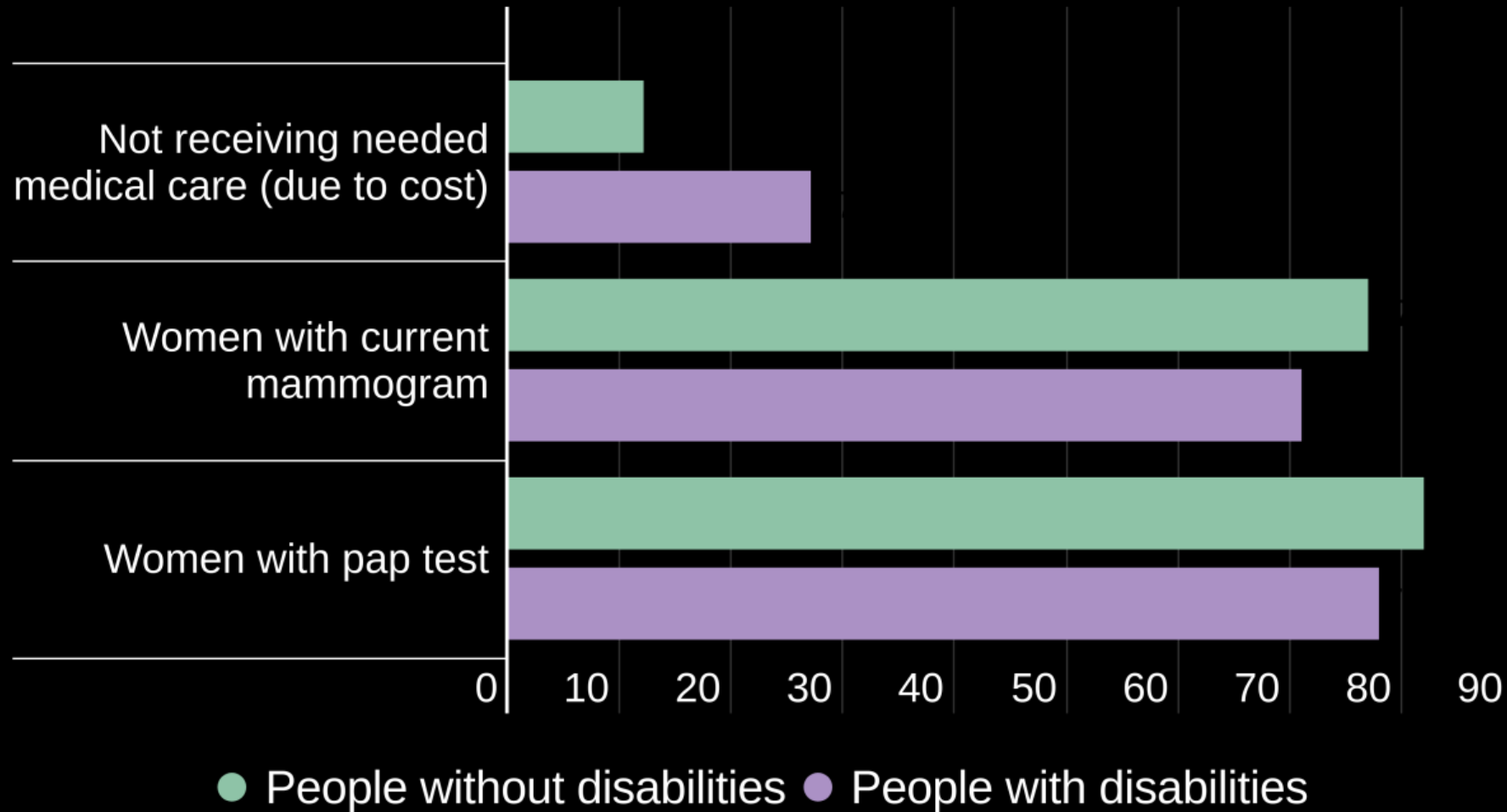
Persons With Disabilities as an Unrecognized Health Disparity Population

| Gloria L. Krahn, PhD, MPH, Deborah Klein Walker, EdD, and Rosaly Correa-De-Araujo, MD, PhD

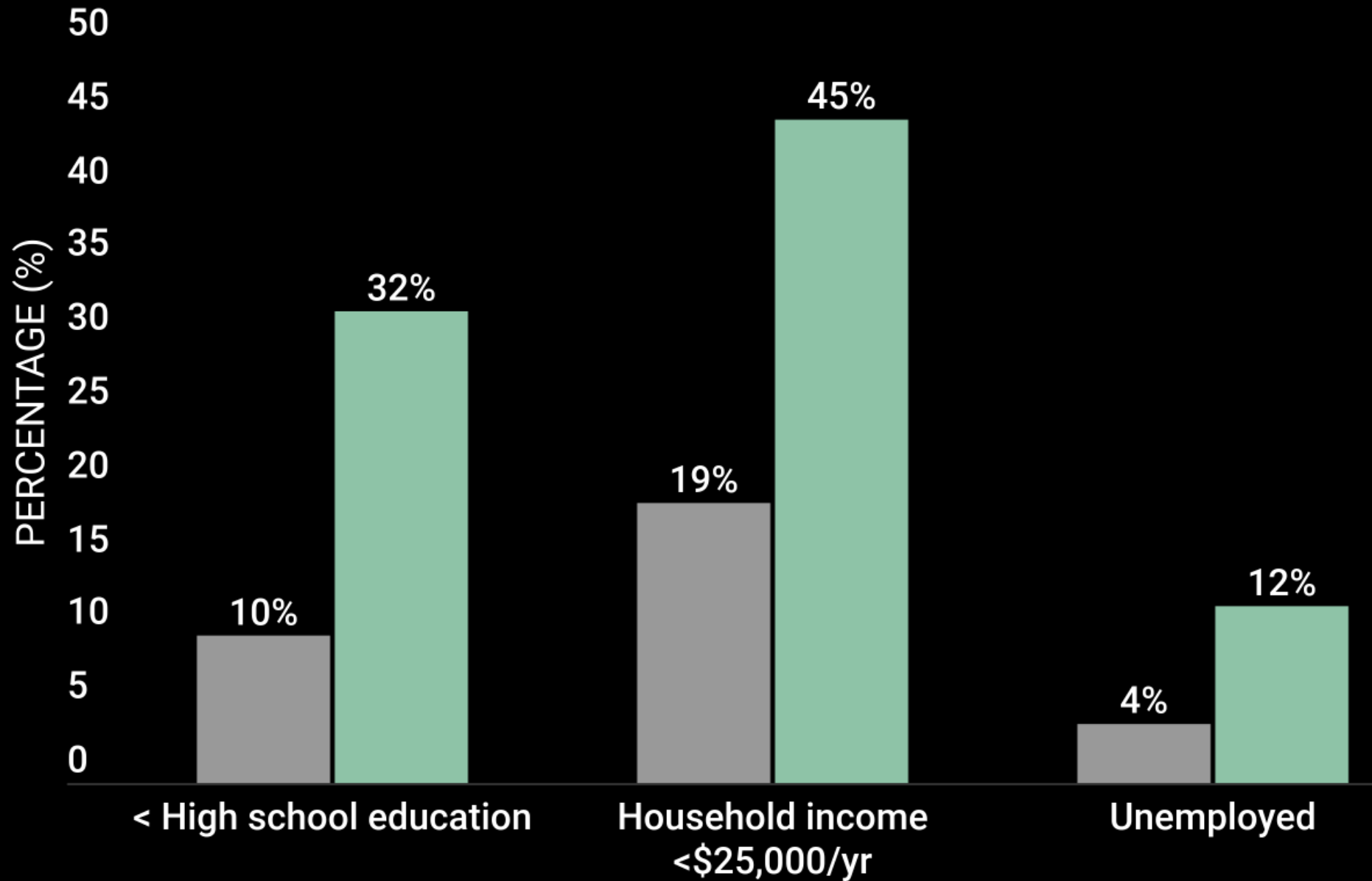


Persons With Disabilities as an Unrecognized Health Disparity Population

Gloria L. Krahn, PhD, MPH, Deborah Klein Walker, EdD, and Rosaly Correa-De-Araujo, MD, PhD



Disability Inequities



2019 BRFSS Data

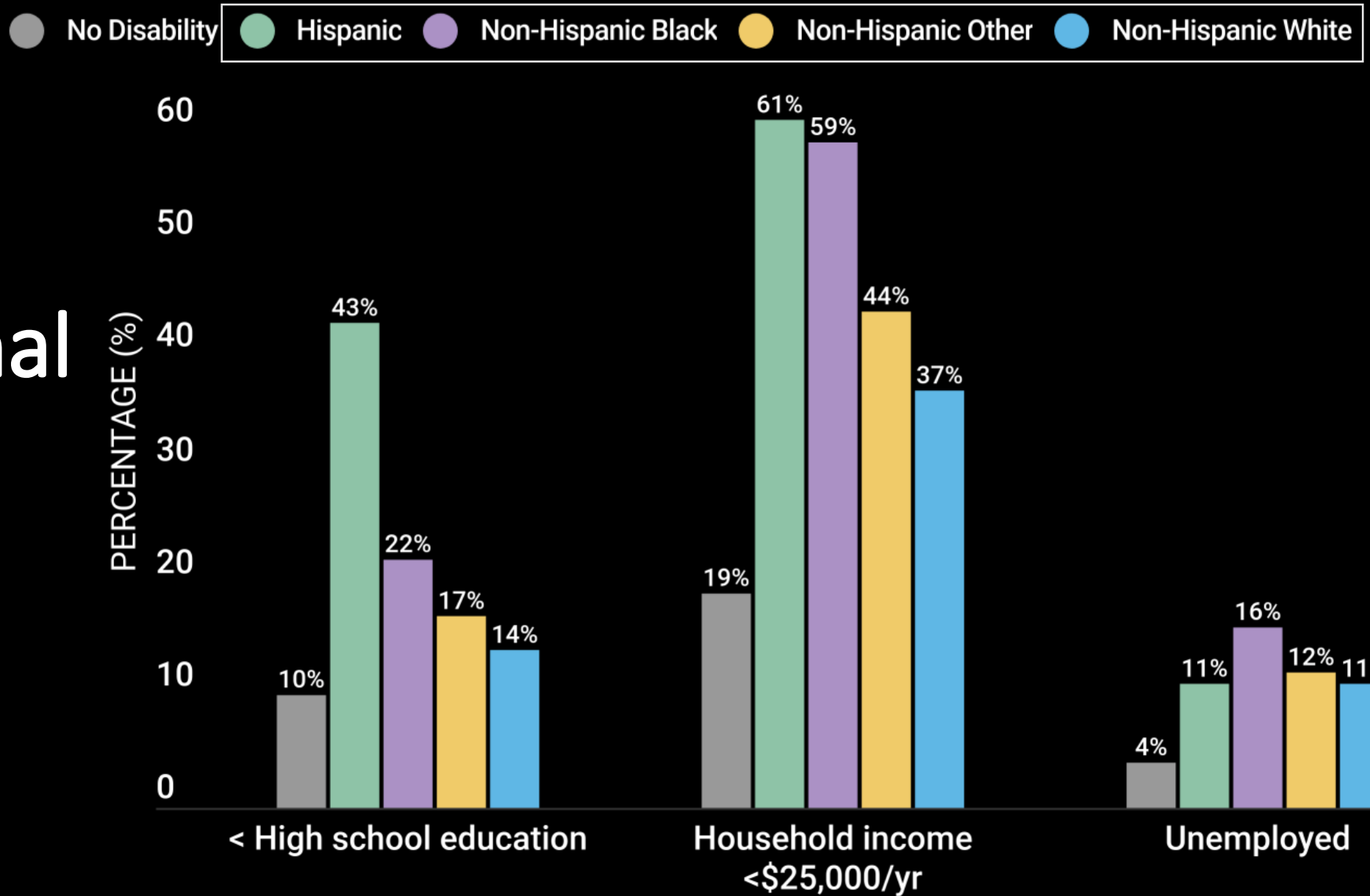


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Varadaraj et al. JAMA Netw Open. 2021.

Intersectional Disability Inequities



Varadaraj et al. JAMA Netw Open. 2021.



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Ableism:

Undergirds the hierarchy of
human health

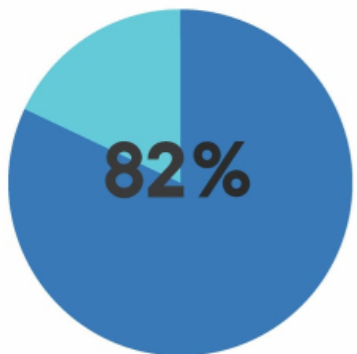


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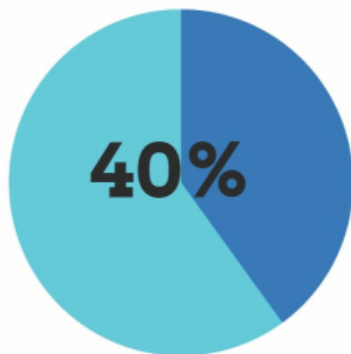
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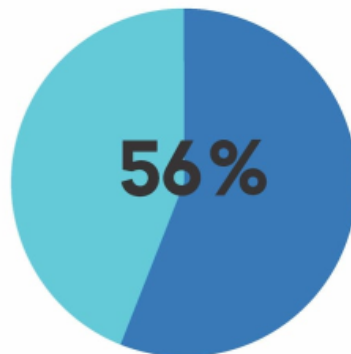
Physicians Perceptions of People with Disabilities and Their Healthcare



82% of Physicians reported they believed that people with significant disabilities have worse quality of life than non-disabled people



Only 40% of Physicians were very confident about their ability to provide the same quality of care to patients with disabilities



Just 56.5% strongly agreed that they welcomed patients with a disability into their practices

“Our study underscores that many physicians perceived worse quality of life for people with disability.”

Lezzoni, et al. "Physicians' Perceptions of People with Disability and Their Health Care."
<https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.01452>



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“Some doctors said their office scales could not accommodate wheelchairs, so they had told patients to go to a supermarket, a grain elevator, a cattle processing plant or a zoo to be weighed...”

The New York Times

These Doctors Admit They Don't Want Patients With Disabilities

When granted anonymity in focus groups, physicians let their guards down and shared opinions consistent with experiences of many people with disabilities.

Give this article



1.2K



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Ableism:

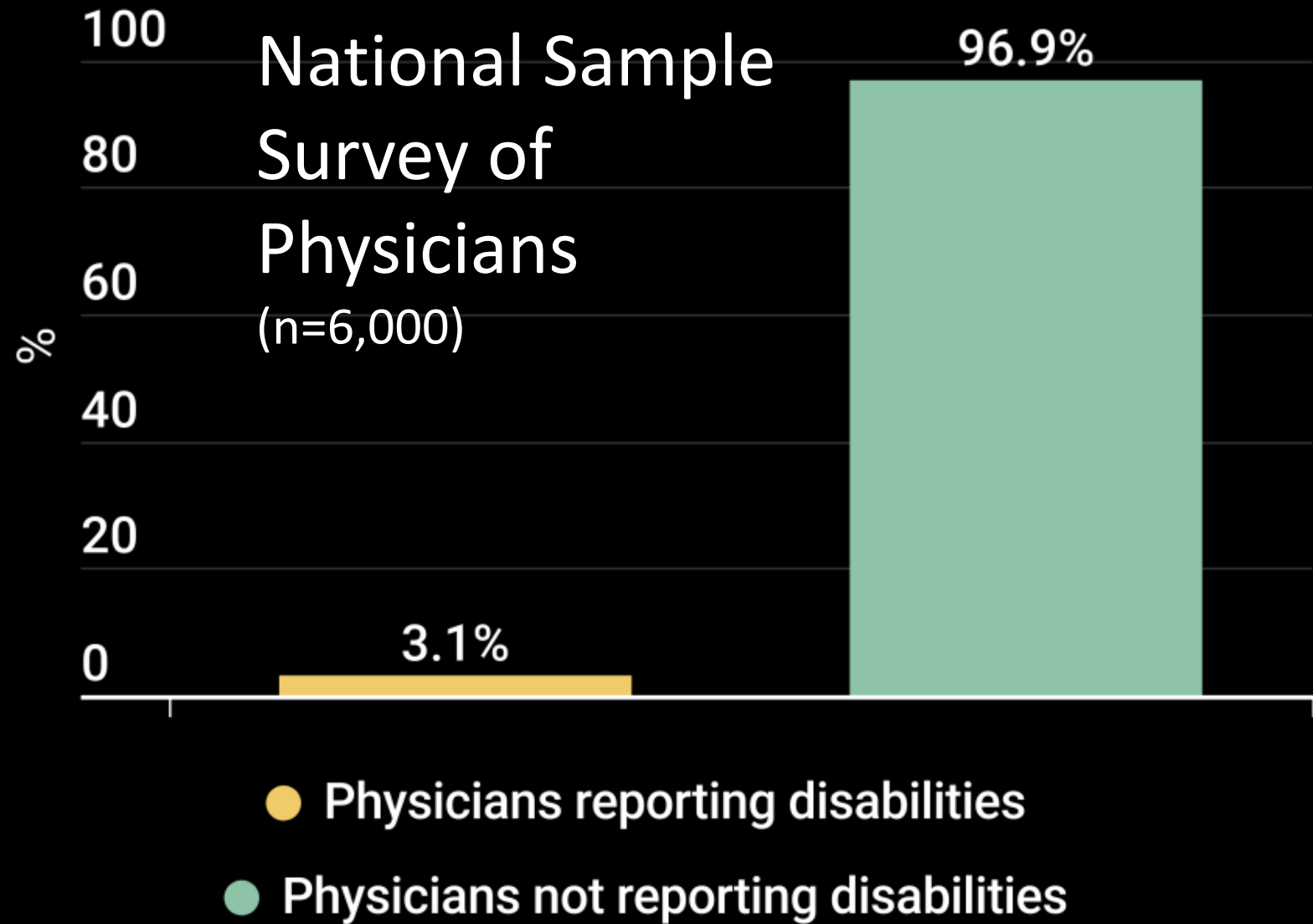
A critical barrier to
workforce diversity



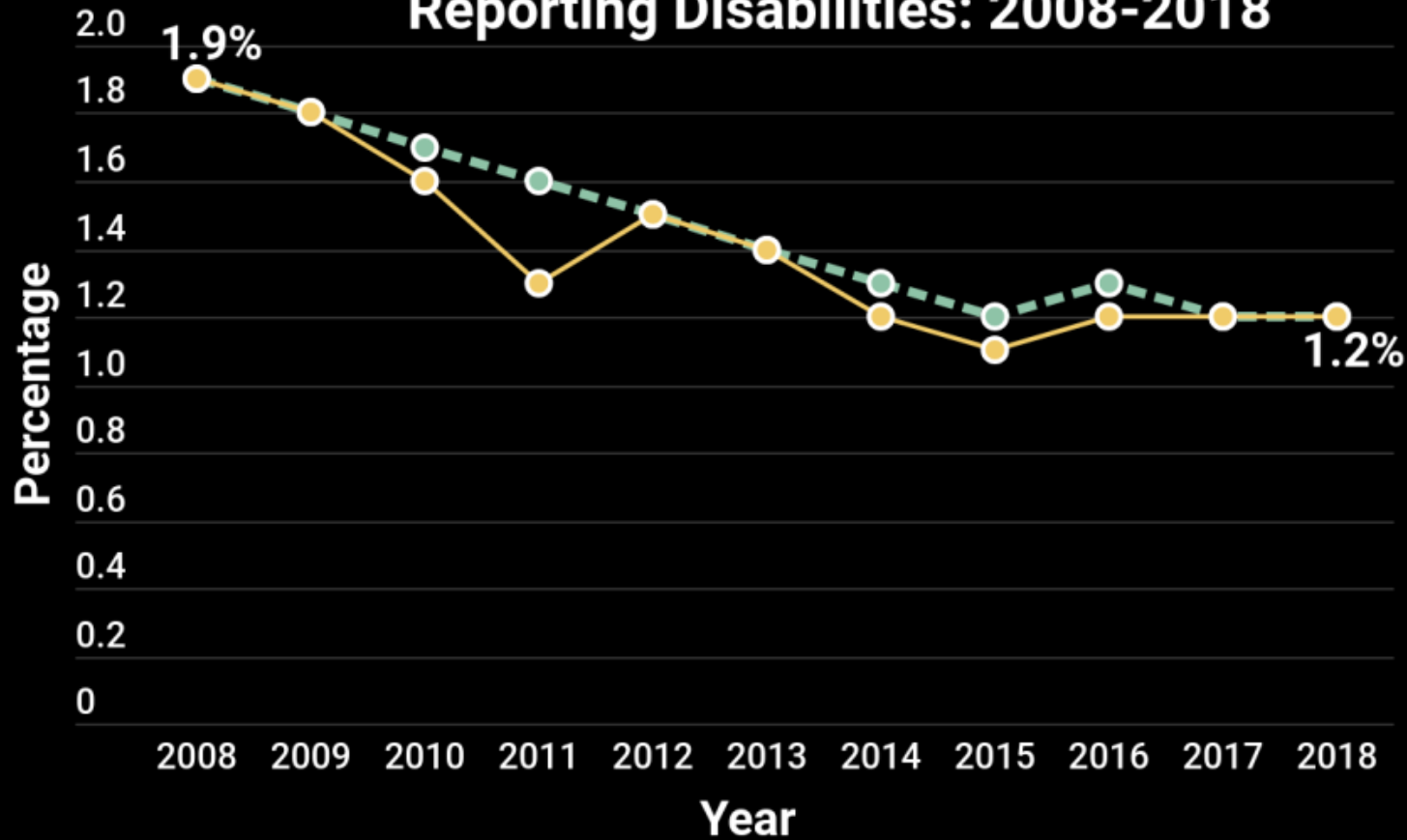
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Only 3% of practicing physicians report having a disability



% of NIH Grant Applications & Awards from PIs Reporting Disabilities: 2008-2018



● % NIH applications with PIs reporting disability

● % NIH awards with PIs reporting disability

<2% of NIH Principal Investigators (PI) reported having a disability over the past decade

Swenor et al. Plos One. 2020.



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ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE DIRECTOR

Active Groups

ACD Working Group on
Diversity, Subgroup on
Individuals with
Disabilities

ACD Working Group on Diversity, Subgroup on Individuals with Disabilities



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Disability groups win fight to be included in health equity research

The designation of disabled people as a 'health disparity population' allows for more funding and research into the health equity barriers disabled people face



By [Amanda Morris](#)

September 26, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. EDT

NEWS RELEASES

The NIH logo, consisting of the letters "NIH" in white on a dark blue background with a white arrow pointing to the right.

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

NIH designates people with disabilities as a population with health disparities

Designation, new research program and update to NIH mission are actions to ensure inclusion of people with disabilities.



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A call to action

- **Be anti-ableist**: Ableism is a formidable threat to health equity.
- **Prioritize accessibility**: We all have a role and responsibility in promoting accessibility.
- **Include disabled people**: All issues are disability issues, and therefore disabled people should be part of all teams.
- **Don't wait to take action**: Success comes from approaching this work with humility, a growth mindset, & understanding it is a journey



Learn more



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