

# Assessment and Training of Cultural Competency Among Telehealth Physicians for COVID-19 Response

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## Introduction

This abstract examines cultural competency and the need for additional training for a group of telehealth physicians in the context of a national program for COVID-19 response. Specifically, the objective was to assess previous training in, and perception of, healthcare disparities. This review focused on physicians who were involved in the largest community-based expanded telehealth model in the country, supporting over 17 million COVID-19 tests through alternative venues such as drive-thru sites. With over 36% of all testing occurring in Health Professional Shortage Areas, the link to knowledge and outlook were both highly relevant and critical to program success and patient outcomes.

## Methods

To conduct this evaluation, we sent a survey to a randomized subset of physicians. The response rate of this group was 87%, or 52 total physicians.

## Results

Survey results demonstrated that:

44%

Had never received training on treating underserved populations

71%

felt that physicians do not receive adequate training on how to provide quality care to minority patients



## Conclusion

By understanding physician cultural competency and perception of healthcare disparities, baseline results allowed the implementation of effective training that would be relevant to treating diverse patient populations. This ultimately contributes to the broader mission of instilling cultural humility in the healthcare provider workforce and improving quality of care for underserved patients while simultaneously combating healthcare disparities in all modalities of health delivery.

The survey revealed a gap in training for physicians who consistently work with underserved populations. Through continuous implementation of training and interventions, we strive to close this gap, ensuring quality care and improving health outcomes among marginalized groups.