

Meaningful Use & Race Data Capture

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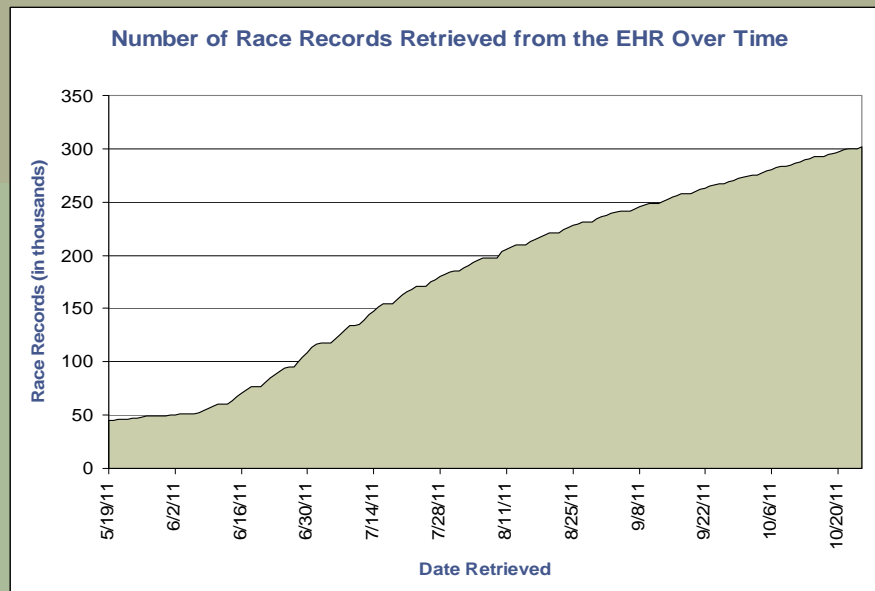
Introduction – ARRA, HITECH, and Meaningful Use

In early 2009, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Researchers were immediately and keenly aware that this act injected funding in to government sponsored research. Over time we also began to learn the increased regulation over patient privacy and security through its Health Information Technology (HIT) for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH Act). But HITECH goes well beyond increased regulation. In fact, its overarching goal was to incentivize the adoption of Electronic Health Records (EHR) by providers by increasing payments to Medicare and Medicaid providers starting in 2011. To qualify for the stimulus funding, the adopted EHR must meet specific “Meaningful Use” requirements.

Group Health’s EHR

Although Group Health (GH) implemented its EHR long before ARRA was ever considered, it is still eligible to receive these financial incentives, provided that it meets the provisions of Meaningful Use. Despite GH’s sophisticated and developed EHR system, changes were necessary to achieve the requirements of Stage 1 of Meaningful Use. Particularly, providers are required to collect demographic information include race, ethnicity, and language using the EHR, a practice that was previously rarely done.

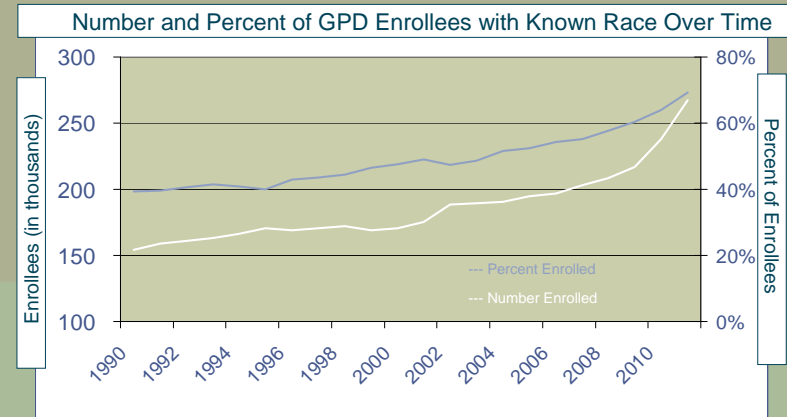
Accumulation of Race



Race Data Sources

Source	Description	People w/ Race	Notes
EPIC/Clarity/EHR	Entered at time of encounter	288,600	
State Death Files	Washington State's death certificate data	146,233	By contract, data available to GHRI but not GHC
Breast Cancer Surveillance Consortium (BCSC)	Questionnaire completed at time of mammogram	156,669	Only women over 40
Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results (SEER)	Tumors reported to the SEER in Western Washington	80,679	
Health Profile	Online health questionnaire entered by consumers	Unknown	Race data rumored to flow in to EPIC; access is currently limited but expected to grow over time
HIV Registry	GH's clinical registry for tracking HIV patients	1,901	Access is restricted

More than **541,279** distinct people with race data



The Future of Meaningful Use

To continue to receive financial incentives through ARRA over time, Group Health will need to continue to fulfill the requirements of Meaningful Use. In 2011 and 2012, GH must meet the provisions defined in Stage 1, but there are two more stages of Meaningful Use that are yet to be defined. Time will tell whether additional data elements that are particularly valuable to research will be stipulated.