

# Health Care Disparities: A Call to Action

Presentation to the  
Black Nurses  
Association



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**FCMU**

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Shaping ■ Healthcare ■ Policy

# What are health disparities?

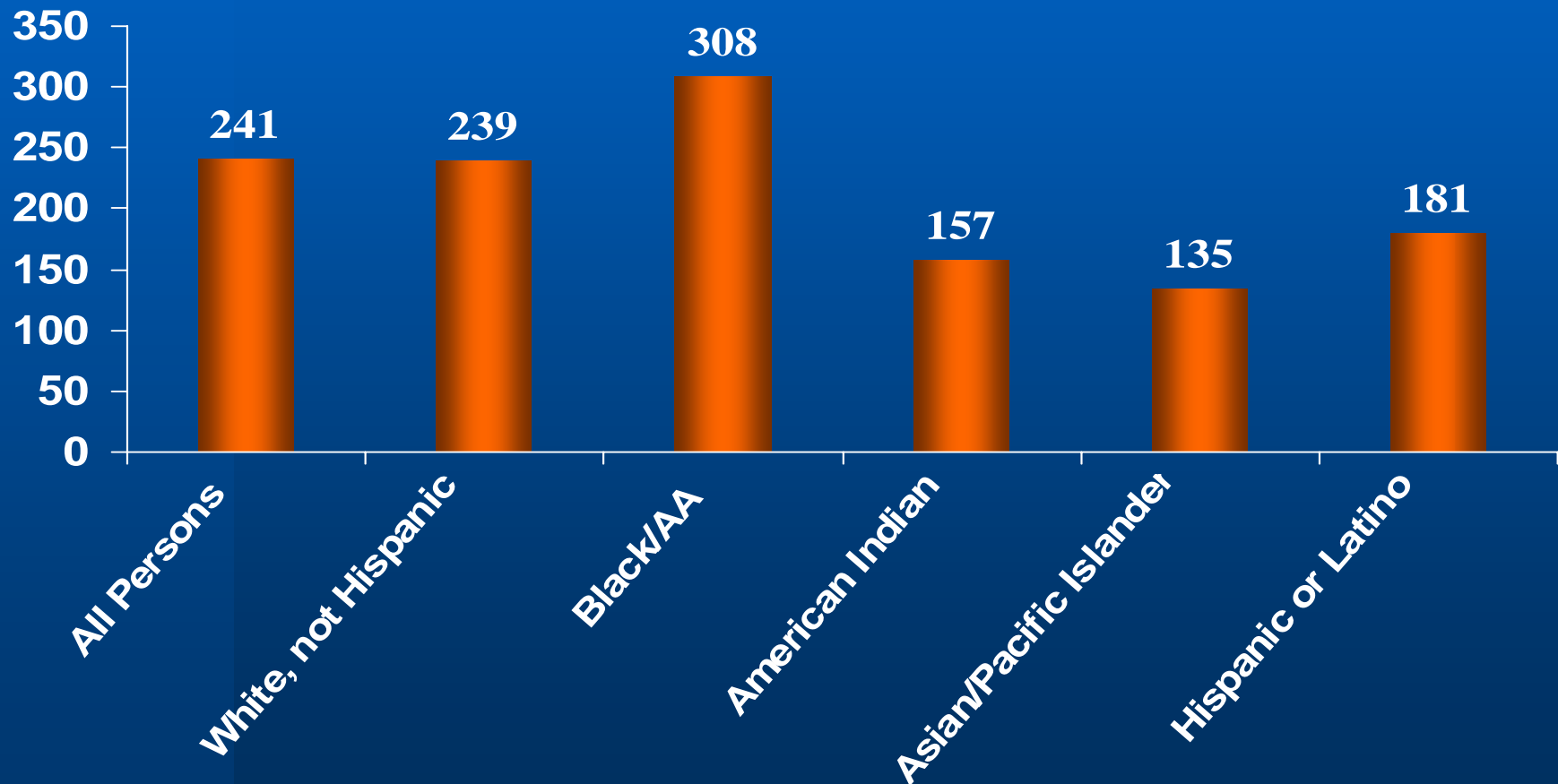
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Health disparities are differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups in the United States

-----National Institutes of Health

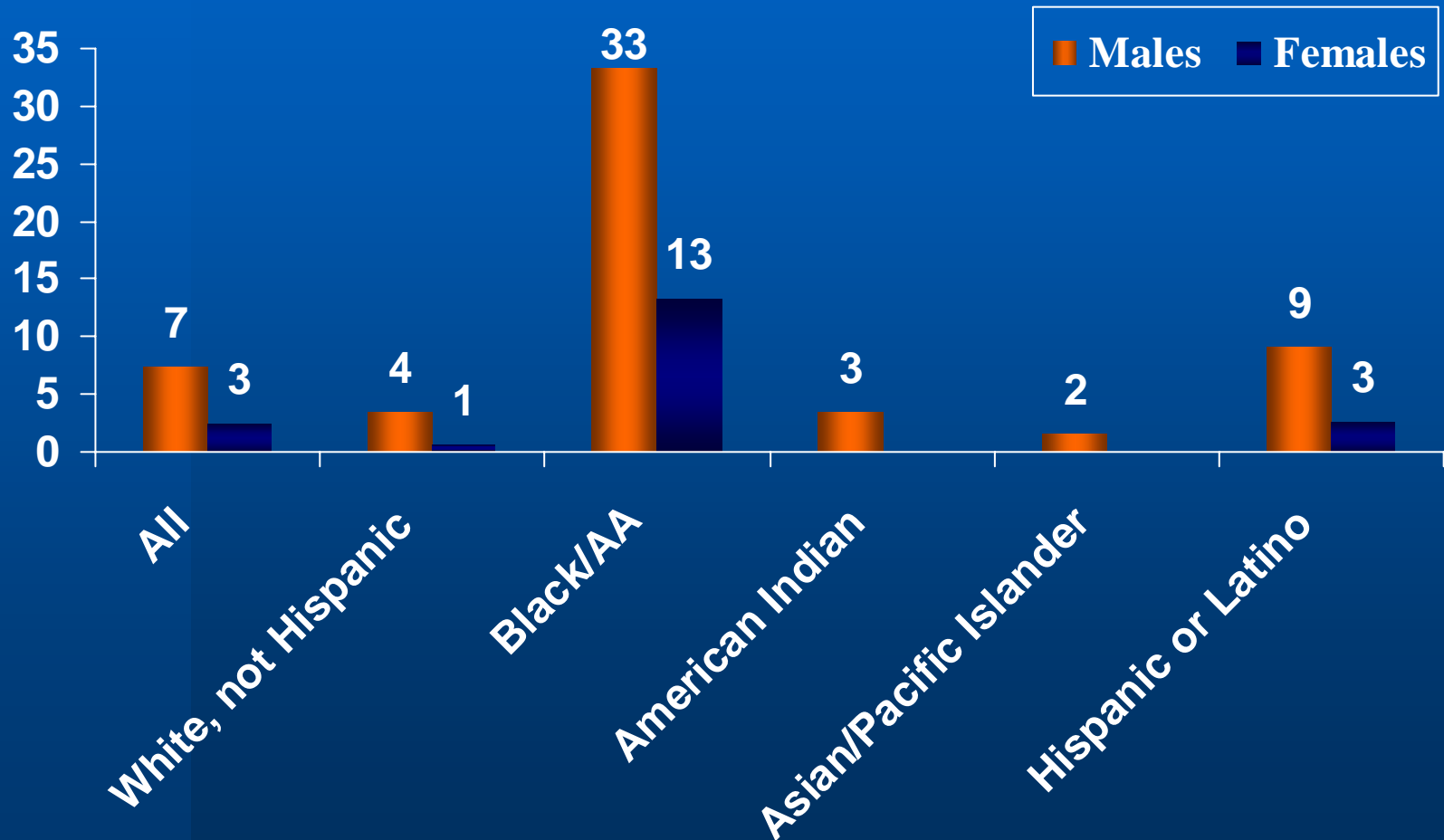
# Age-adjusted death rates from heart disease, 2002

*Per 100,000 resident population*



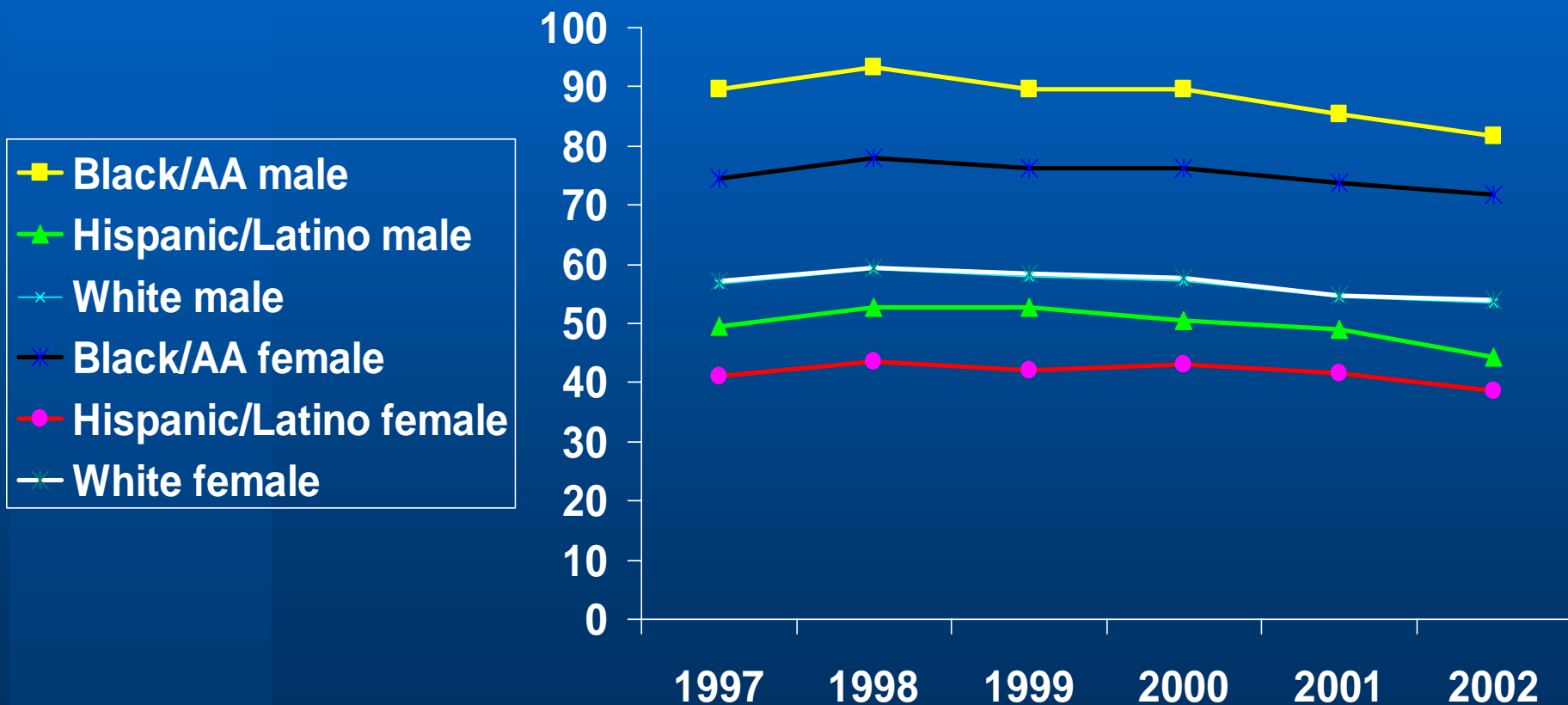
# Age-adjusted death rates from HIV, 2002

Per 100,000 resident population



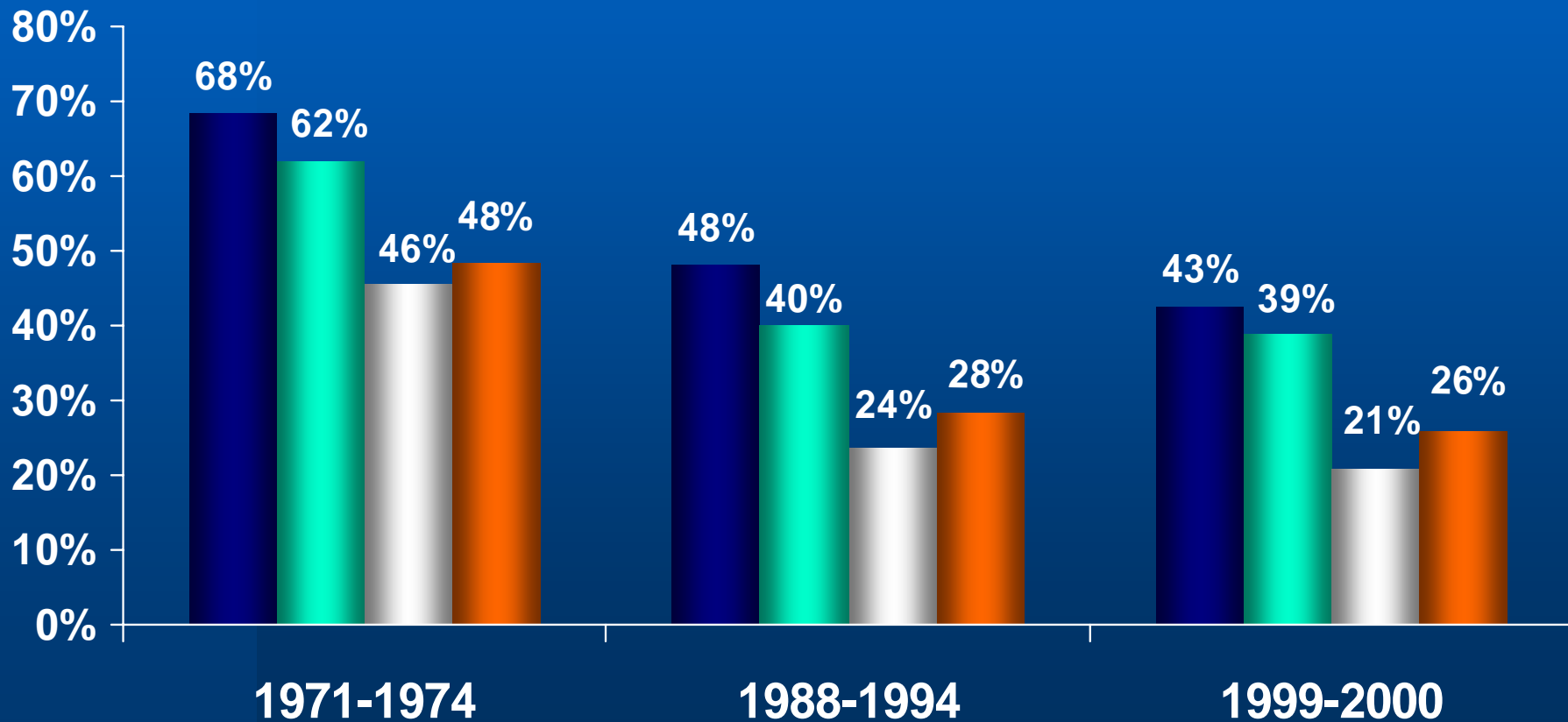
# Age-adjusted death rates from cerebrovascular disease, 1997-2002

Per 100,000 resident population



# Percent with untreated dental caries, by race/ethnicity

Black, AA   Hispanic or Latino   White, Not Hispanic   All Persons



# Examples of differential health service use across racial and ethnic groups

- Whites are 78 percent more likely to receive a revascularization procedure (Ayanian, et al 1993)
- For oral cancers, whites are more likely to receive surgery compared to blacks (Tomar et al, 2004)
- African-Americans are less likely than whites to be referred to a kidney transplant center for evaluation (Ayanian et al, 1999)

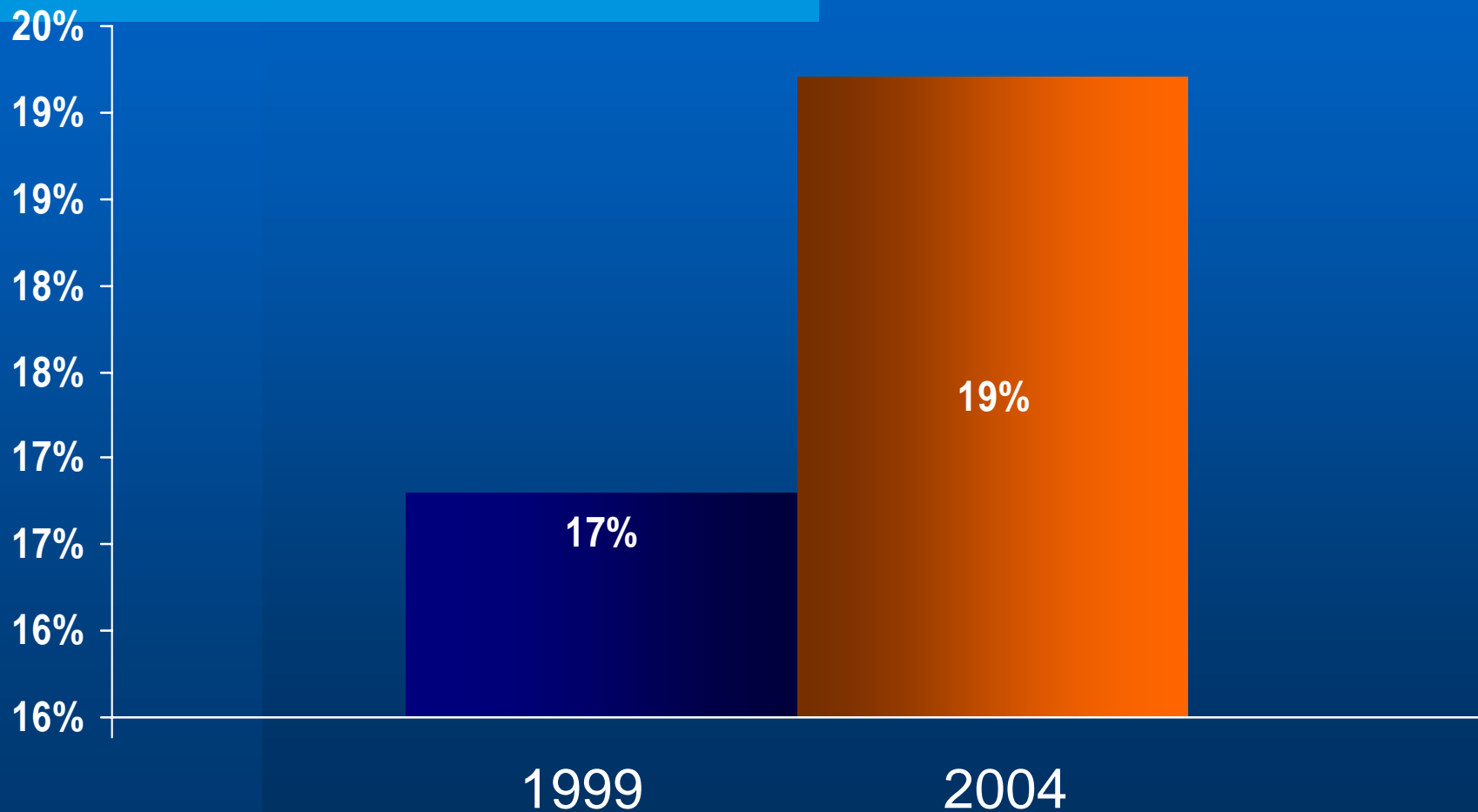
# Reasons for differential use

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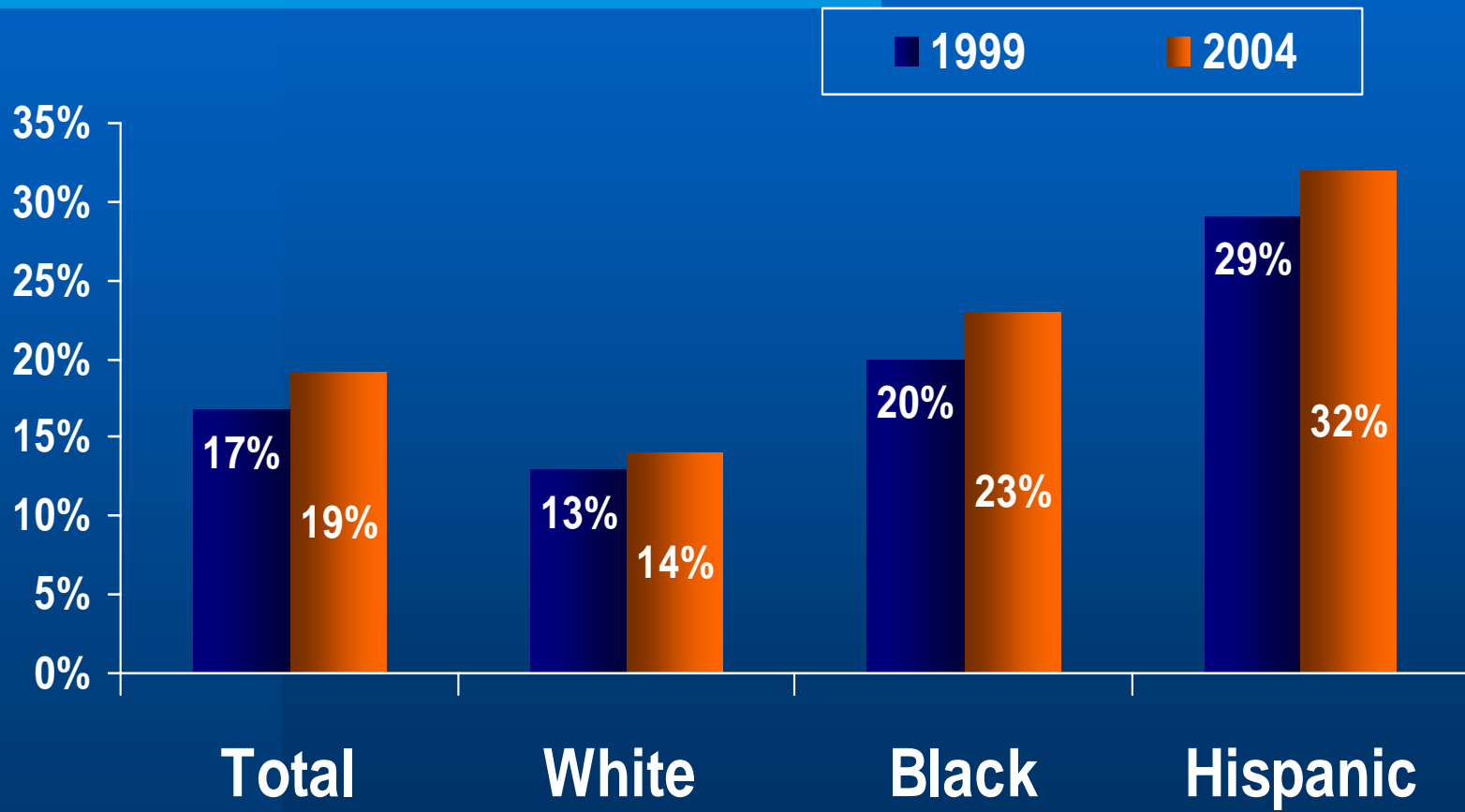
- Limited availability of providers
- Provider bias/racism
- Patient preferences
- Lack of health insurance



# Percent of Floridians under age 65 who are uninsured, 1999 and 2004



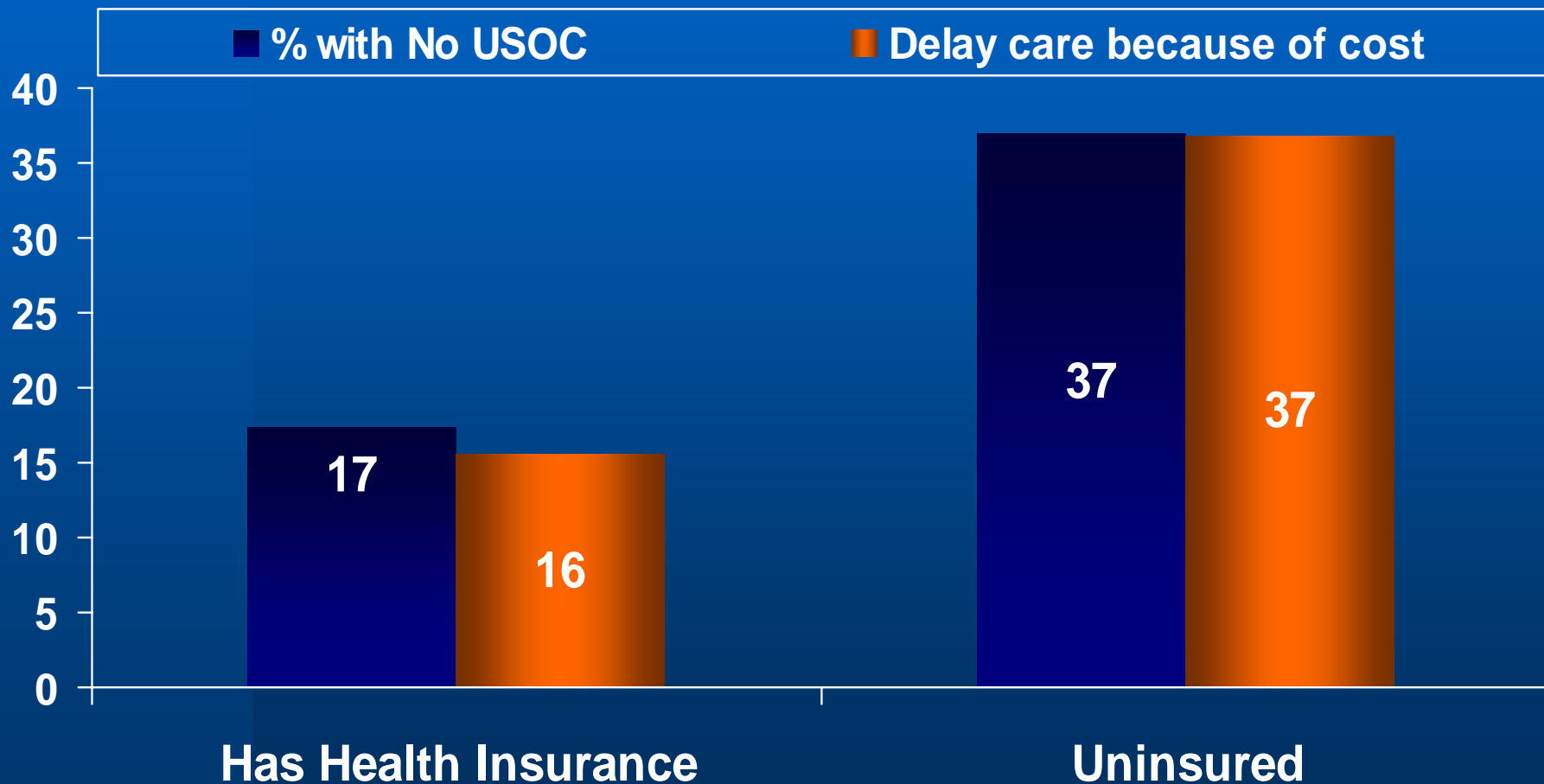
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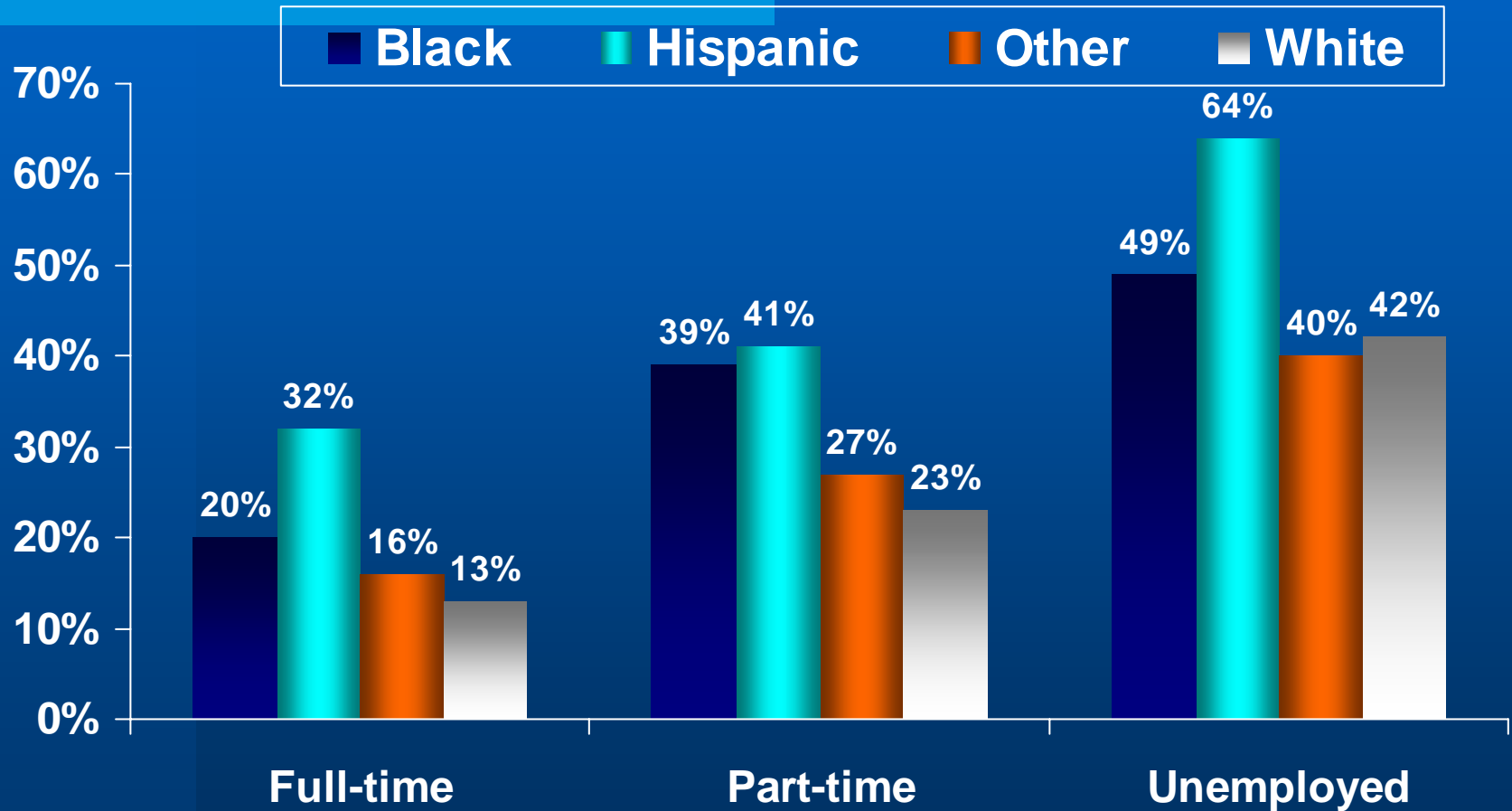
# Why is health insurance important?

- Less likely to have a usual source of care
- Fewer office visits
- Delay in getting care
- Delay in getting needed prescription drugs
- Links to overall health

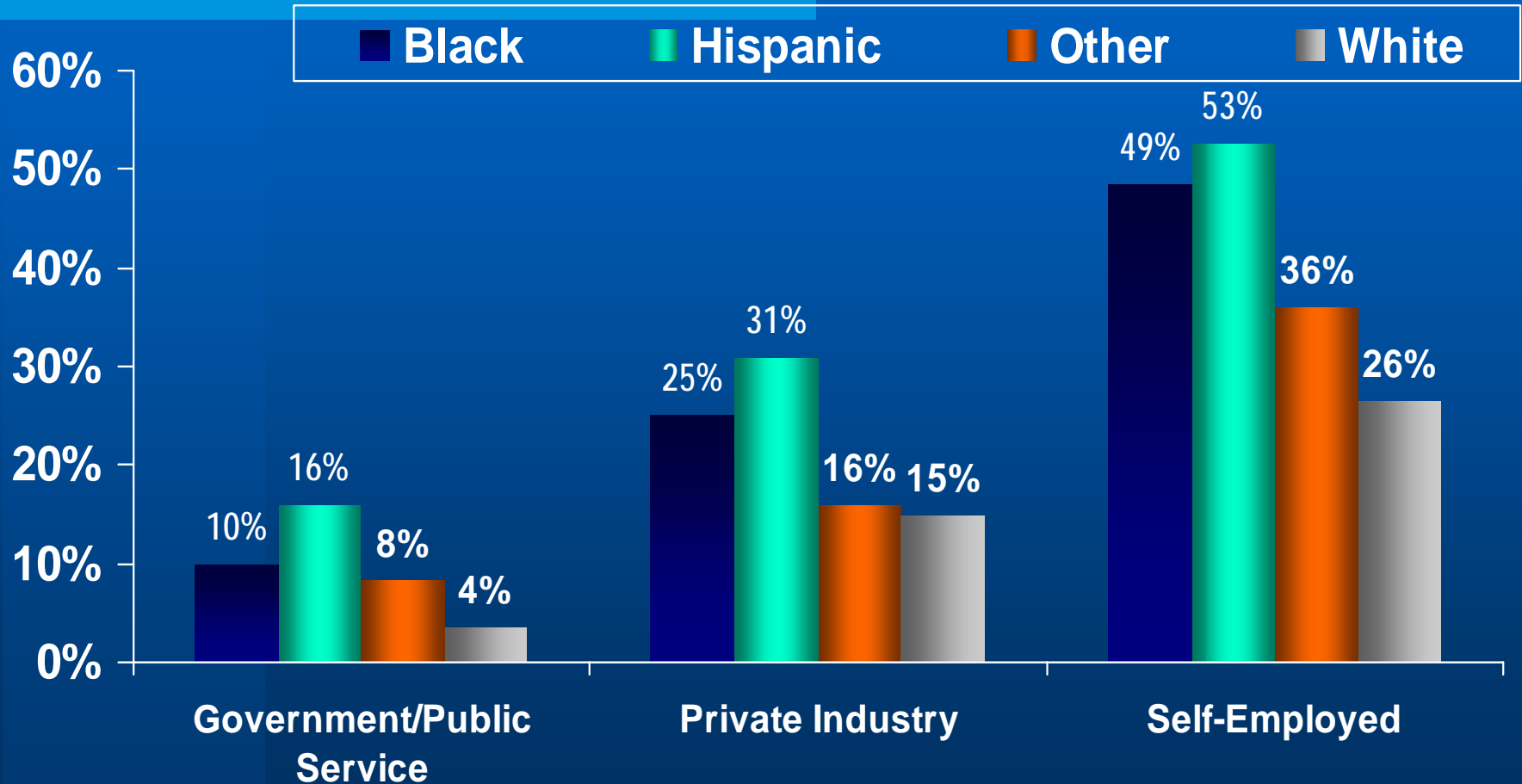
# Percent under 65 with problems getting medical care, by health insurance status, Florida 2004



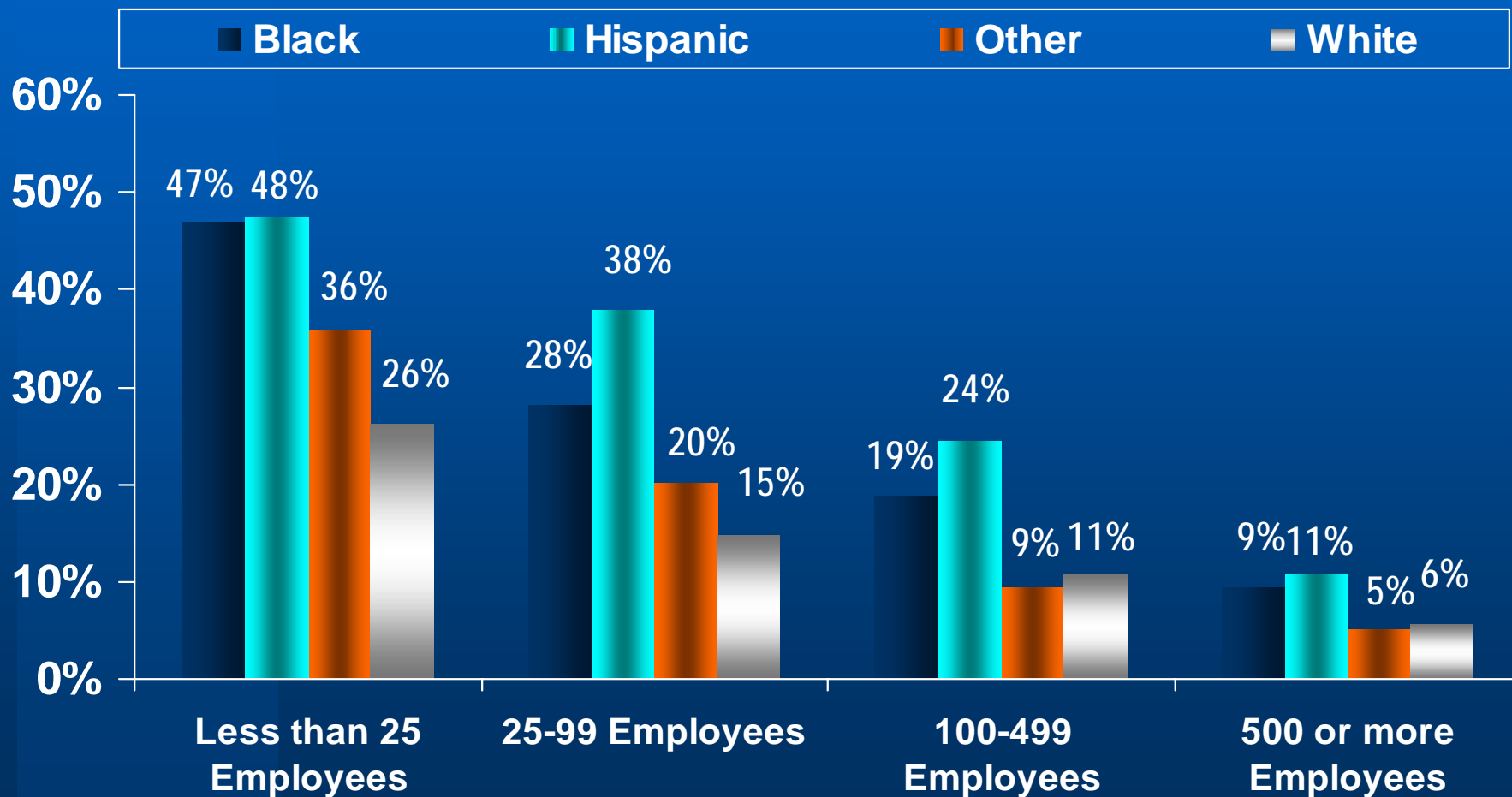
# Percent of uninsured adults by race/ethnicity and employment status, 2004



# Percent uninsured adult workers by race/ethnicity, and employment sector, 2004



# Percent uninsured adult workers by race/ethnicity and firm size, 2004



# Health insurance matters to people

You either have to go homeless or go hungry to pay a hospital bill or pay for some medicine.

*Uninsured Person from Tampa*



# Importance of public coverage

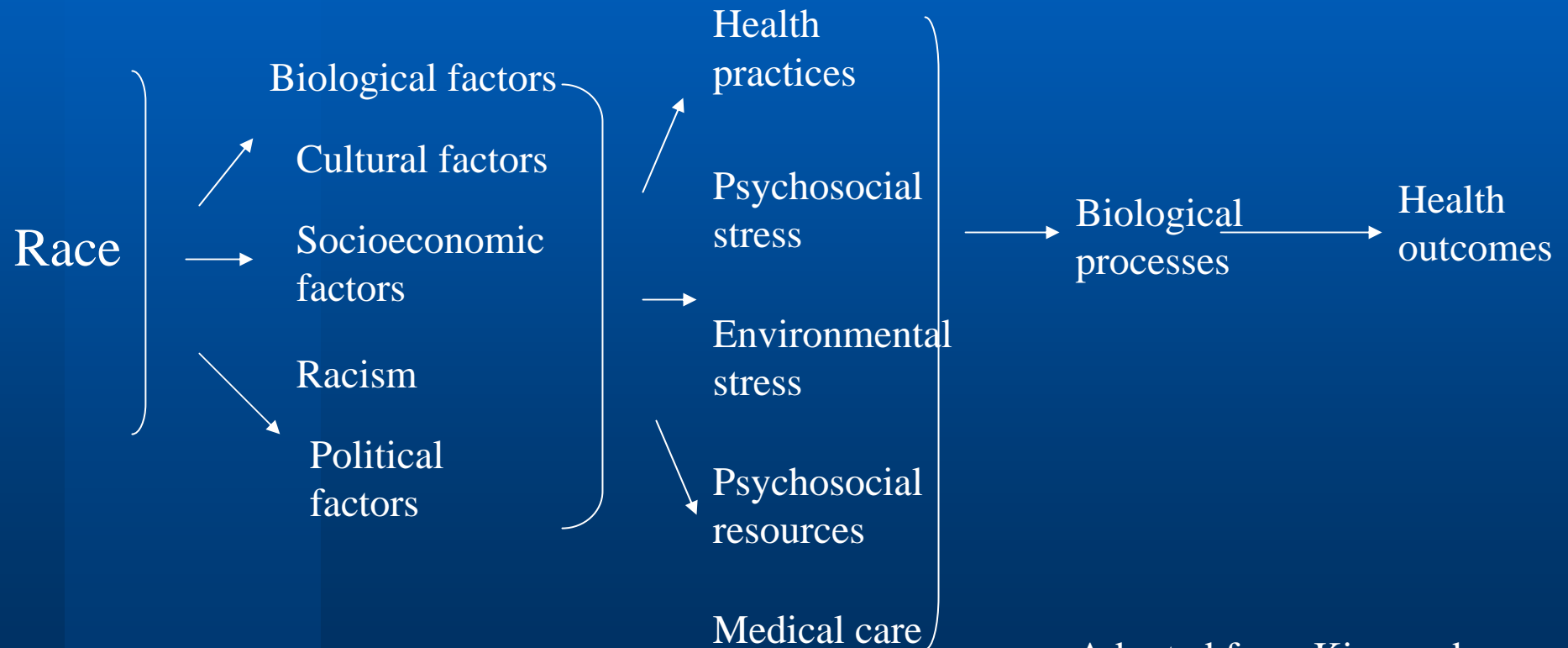
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- Current enrollment in Medicaid 2.2 million people
- In 2002 Medicaid financed 44 percent of all births in Florida
- 10 percent of whites, 25 percent of blacks, 17 percent of Hispanics enrolled in Florida Medicaid 2002-2003



**KATRINA!!!!**

# A framework for understanding the relationship between race and health



Adopted from King and Williams

# Why do these disparities exist?

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- Poverty
- Education
- Occupational Conditions
- Living Conditions
- Individual Health Behaviors
- Differential Use of Health Care Services



# ROSA PARKS



# Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

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- **Bars discrimination in health care and other services by entities that receive federal funds**
- **But some argue, the law doesn't go far enough**
  - **Lack of detailed compliance instruction**
  - **Federal funds does not apply to individual physicians**

# A Call to Action

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- **Advocacy**
- **Inventive and creative solutions**
  - Focus on the downstream causes of disparities
- **Focus on access issues**
  - Health insurance
  - Training of minority health professionals
  - Strengthening safety net institutions
  - Cultural competency

# Final thoughts

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Before the grace of God, it could be us and believe me child, I am one paycheck away from disaster. And people need to be treated with the respect they deserve regardless of whether they have insurance or a dime in their pocket or more money than God.

*Uninsured Person from Panama City*