



Georgia and the Diverse Physician Problem: The Need for More Radical Change in Medical Education

Ronald M. Cornely MPH, Jeroson C. Williams MD, Randi N. Smith MD, MPH, Wendy Greene MD



Too Few Physicians, Both Past and Present

- Between 1900 and 2015 the national percentage of Black physicians increased from 1.3% to 4.9%, while the national Black population increased from 11.6% to 13%
- Since 1967, the proportion of Black surgeons has remained steady at 2%
- Though the percentage of non-surgical Black physicians has increased, there is still a discrepancy in representation

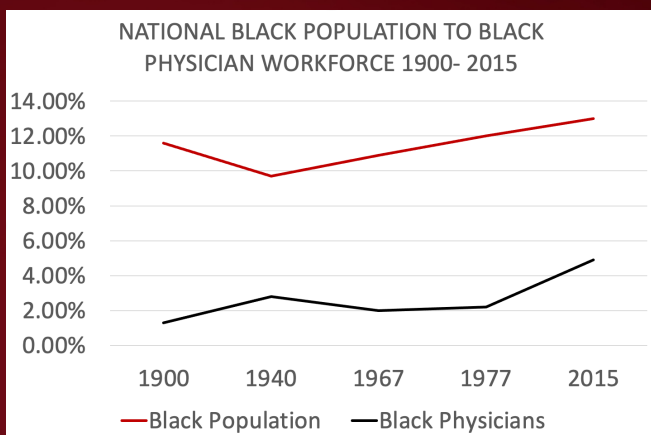


Figure 1. Demographic data of the U.S. national Black population and physician workforce from 1900 to 2015

Objective

- To evaluate the proportion of Black representation along the continuum of medical training and practice

Observational Analysis Yields a Paucity in Black Physician Representation

- We conducted an observational study utilizing available national and state data
- Peer-reviewed publications, employment databases, AAMC demographic reports, and Georgia Board of Physician Workforce data were analyzed in the context of state and national data

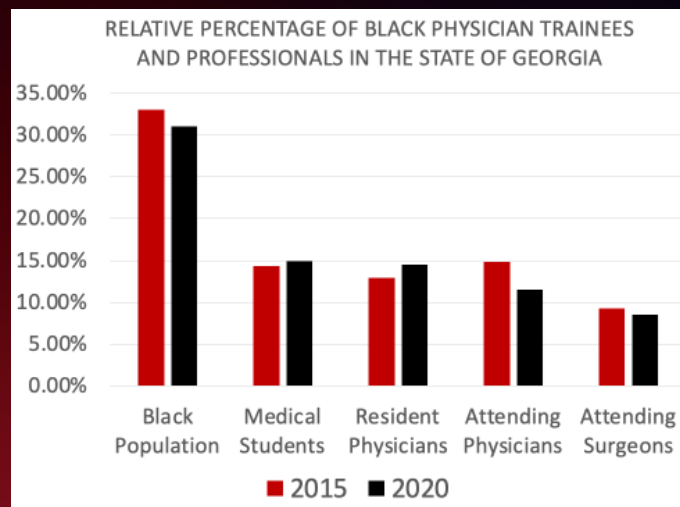


Figure 2. Proportion of Black graduating medical students, graduating residents, attending physicians, and surgeons compared GA's Black population in 2015 and 2020

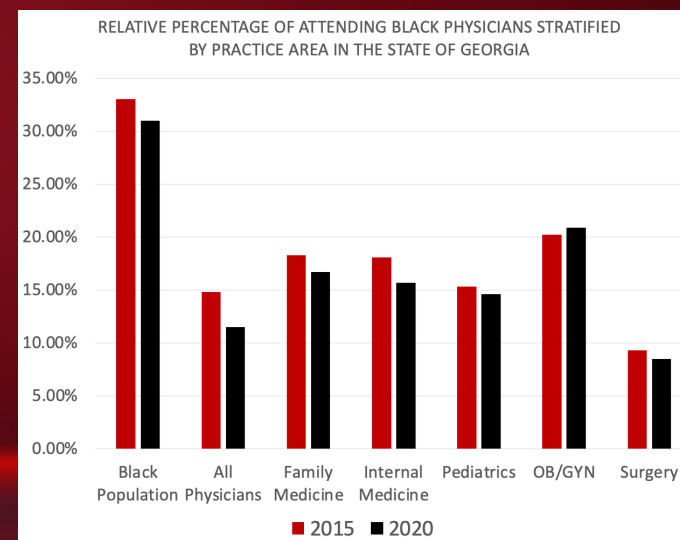


Figure 3. The relative percentage of Black attendings in primary care fields and surgery compared to GA's Black population in 2015 and 2020

Black Physician Numbers Decline Despite A Need for Black Doctors

National trends of underrepresentation:

- The AAMC reports that Black applicants have been accepted and graduate at lower rates than their peers in medical education
- Black resident physicians are significantly underrepresented when compared to other racial groups
- The proportion of Black attending physicians is significantly lower than the demographic proportion of Black people

Georgia is getting it right, and wrong

Between 2015 and 2020:

- The proportion of Black medical students and residency graduates increased slightly
- However, the number of attending physicians decreased in most primary care fields and surgery (the only exception: OBGYN)
- Given that 33% of the state's population is Black, inequity is an understatement

So, What Can We Do?



Investment



Equity



Retention

