Historical Perspectives of African Americans in Medicine and Dentistry

Presented to the Charles R. Drew, MD Saturday Academy February 15, 2014
The Impact of History

“ A people without it’s history
is like a tree
without its roots”

Marcus Garvey
How Many?

2010  AA 13.6% of the population & Hispanic 16%
2008  AA 3.5% & Hispanic 4.9% of physicians
2007  Medical Graduates 6.75% AA & Latino 6.72%
2006  1.8% of AMA members

In 2004 in greater Cleveland:
  2.5% of physicians were AA (approx)
  1.7% of dentists in the city were AA
  5.6% of dentists in Cuyahoga County were AA
The American Medical Association (1847)
The American Dental Association (1859)

- Organized medicine was born in an American society deeply divided over slavery, and accepting of racial inequity and theories supporting black inferiority.
- Reflecting the existing societal value and practice, medical schools, training programs and professional societies historically excluded Blacks leaving a continued legacy of:
  - Underrepresentation in American Medicine and Dentistry
  - Underrepresentation in organized Medicine
  - Segregation, Mistrust of Medicine & Health Disparity
Importance of Medical Society Membership

- Professional Advancement

- Provided the forum to:

  Present papers and learn the latest techniques and treatments from peers

  Call on colleagues for medical advice and assistance in surgery
The American Medical Association

- Founded in 1846 as a “National Medical Association”

- Renamed AMA in 1847

Purpose:

- Improve and standardize medical education
- Establish common code of medical ethics
- Promote profession’s interests, honor, respectability, knowledge, and usefulness

- Race not mentioned in early AMA records
Three African American Physicians Denied Admission into Medical Society of the District of Columbia (1869)

Of the five first Howard faculty members only Dr. Augusta was African-American.

Alexander T. Augusta

http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/ataugusta-01.jpg
http://dbs.ohiohistory.org/africanam/images/photo/MenMark/013/013.jpg
National Medical Society -NMS

• 1870- Augusta, Purvis, Tucker, Boyd and other DC physicians form National Medical Society

• The NMS was racially integrated

• The Medical Society of the District of Columbia requested that the AMA not seat the NMS delegation
Black doctors and the AMA: A timeline

1870
The integrated National Medical Society delegation is excluded from the AMA Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

1874
The AMA adopts a system of governance allowing state medical societies to determine which localsocieties will be recognized at AMA meetings, effectively allowing each state to decide the question of racial segregation.

1910
The AMA-requested Flexner Report, *Medical Education in the United States and Canada*, is published; the report recommends that all but two black medical schools be shut down.

1939
The AMA discontinues its policy of listing black physicians as "colored" in its *American Medical Directory*. The House of Delegates adopts policy discouraging racial discrimination in constituent society membership but allows it to continue.

1965-1968
The National Medical Assn. and the Medical Committee for Human Rights picket the AMA's meetings, protesting the Association's lack of action on state and county medical societies' racial exclusion policies.

1968
The AMA House of Delegates threatens to expel from the Association any state medical society that discriminates on the basis of race.
Black doctors and the AMA: A timeline

2004
The AMA and the NMA convene the Commission to End Health Care Disparities. The AMA has created a program on health disparities to coordinate many of the AMA's activities in science, ethics, and medical education addressing the issue.

2008

AMA also apologizes for past inequality against black doctors. Black physician leaders welcome the apology but call for more efforts to diversify the physician work force and reduce racial health disparities.
Black doctors and the AMA: A timeline

• For over 100 years many medical societies actively reinforced or passively accepted exclusion of Blacks as preferred and acceptable.

• From 1869 until the 1960s the AMA failed to take action against affiliated state and local medical associations that openly practiced racial exclusion in their memberships. These practices functionally excluded most Black physicians from membership in the AMA.

• In the early decades of the 20th century the AMA listed those doctors who were able to join as “colored” in the national physician directory.

• In the civil rights era the AMA was silent in the debate over the Civil rights act of 1964 and deferred repeated requests form the NMA to support efforts to amend the Hill Burton Act’s “separate but equal provision”, which allowed construction of segregated hospital facilities with federal funds.

• Today the AMA and most other organized Medical Societies recognize and advocate for solutions to underrepresentation and improvement in health care disparity.
The National Medical Association (NMA) is the nation’s oldest and largest organization representing African American physicians and health professionals in the United States. Established in 1895, the NMA is the collective voice of more than 30,000 African American physicians and the patients they serve.

The NMA was founded in 1895, during an era in US history when the majority of African Americans were disenfranchised. The segregated policy of “separate but equal” dictated virtually every aspect of society. Racially exclusive “Jim Crow” laws dominated employment, housing, transportation, recreation, education, and medicine. Black Americans were subjected to all of the injustices inherent in a dual medical care system.

Robert F. Boyd, M.D., of Nashville, TN, served as its first president. The other officers were: Daniel Hale Williams, M.D., from Chicago, vice president; Daniel L. Martin, M.D., of Nashville, TN, secretary; David H. C. Scott, M.D., Montgomery, AL, treasurer; and H. R. Butler, M.D., Atlanta, GA, chairman of the executive committee. Miles V. Lynk, M.D., of Memphis, TN, and Robert F. Boyd, M.D. were the prime moving spirits of the formation of the organization.

Journal National Medical Association has Published since 1909
The National Dental Association (NDA) had its earliest beginnings in 1900, when approximately 200 practitioners felt they needed a professional organization, but became a sustainable organization with a permanent name in 1932. For 86 years, the NDA has been a national forum for minority dentists and a leader in advancing their rights within the dental profession, the armed services, the government, and the private sector. Through scholarships and support programs, the NDA promotes dentistry as a viable profession.

The mission of the National Dental Association is to represent the concerns of ethnic minorities in dentistry, to elevate the global oral health concerns of underserved communities, to enhance educational and financial opportunities, and public policy awareness, for its members, and to recruit underrepresented minorities into the profession through advocacy and mentorship.
Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care, Updated 2010

African American Physicians and Organized Medicine, 1846-1968: Origins of a Racial Divide

Achieving Racial Harmony for the Benefit of Patients and Communities: Contraction, Reconciliation, and Collaboration

Addressing Racial Disparities in Health Care: A Targeted Action Plan for Academic Medical Centers
African American Medical Schools

Few African Americans were accepted into U.S. medical schools and Historically Black Medical Schools were started, some by missionary societies.

- 1868 - Howard University College of Medicine (Washington DC)
- 1870 - Lincoln University Medical Department (PA)
- 1876 - Meharry Medical College (TN)
- 1882 - Leonard Medical School (NC)

There were 7 Black Medical Schools by 1923.
Howard University Medical College

Howard University Medical College, Washington, DC (circa 1867)

Source: Howard University Archives
Meharry Medical College, Nashville, TN (ca. 1895)

Meharry Medical College was founded in 1876 as the Medical Department of Central Tennessee College of Nashville, under the auspices of the Freedman's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1900, Central Tennessee College became Walden University.

By 1915 the College gained a separate corporate existence from the university.

Source: UNC Chapel Hill Library Collections
Shaw Hall at Shaw University, Raleigh, NC (ca. 1908)

Source: UNC Chapel Hill Library Collections
Faculty of Leonard Medical School at Shaw University, Raleigh, NC (1886)

Source: Shaw University Archives
AMA Approaches Carnegie Foundation

• AMA’s rating system was seen by many as not objective

• AMA asks Carnegie Foundation to sponsor a survey of medical schools in US and Canada

• Survey was meant to promote work of the Council on Medical Education
Abraham Flexner

- Educator from Louisville
- Carnegie Foundation hired Flexner to head study
- The CME Secretary accompanied Flexner on site visits
- Flexner wrote most of his report at AMA headquarters

Source: Rockefeller Archive Center
http://www.hbci.com/~wenonah/history/img/flexner.jpg
African American Medical Schools and the CME Rating System

- African American schools lacked the financial resources to comply with rising educational standards
- AMA rated all African American schools in bottom third of US schools
- Licensure failure rates for graduates of African American schools were over 20%
MEDICAL EDUCATION
IN THE
UNITED STATES AND CANADA
A REPORT TO
THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING
BY
ABRAHAM FLEXNER
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
HENRY S. PRITCHETT
PRESIDENT OF THE FOUNDATION
Flexner Report: Principle Findings

• In the US, “physicians are four or five times too numerous”

• Many poor quality schools
  -- 90% have inadequate admission standards
  -- Many lacked adequately trained faculty
  -- Most had inadequate course offerings
  -- Many lacked adequate laboratory facilities

• Close weak schools, focus resources on stronger schools
Flexner Report: Women’s Medical Education

- 80% of women attend “coeducational institutions”
- Close all medical schools for women
- Integrate women into predominantly male medical schools
Flexner Report: “Negro” Medical Education

• **Separate**
  - “the practice of the negro physician will be limited to his own race”

• **Different** education
  - “negro doctors” should become sanitarians

• Close 5 of the 7 historically African American medical schools

• Support only Howard University Medical School and Meharry Medical College
  - Though they will be “unequal to the need” - “the medical care of the negro race will never be left wholly to negro physicians”
Aftermath of Flexner Report

• *Part of much larger picture of the lack of evolution of medical education (esp. integration of labs, hospitals, universities, etc)*

• With specific regard to AA medical education
  - White medical schools were funded first
  - Flexner did not immediately recommend adequate funding for Howard or Meharry
  - African American schools struggled financially
  - CME kept up pressure for educational reform through their annual evaluations
  - CME continued to give African American medical schools low ratings
By 1923

Among the US medical schools operating in 1910...

51 of the 131 (40%) total schools closed

5 of the 7 (71%) African American schools closed
Outcome for Howard and Meharry

- Howard University Medical School and Meharry Medical College survived
- But both schools struggled financially
- As late as the 1970s, Howard and Meharry educated over 2/3 of all African American medical students admitted per year in the US.
In 1931, out of 25,000 specialists in US, 2 were African American

William Harry Barnes
(American Board of Otolaryngology, 1927)

Daniel Hale Williams
(American College of Surgeons, 1913)

Source: http://www.africanamericans.com/images2/DanielHaleWilliams.jpg
Hospitals and Professional Advancement

- The importance of hospital staff integration, and relationship to integration in organized medicine
  - Board certification important for pursuing medical specialties and honing skills
  - Specialty training took place in hospitals
  - Hospitals often required their staff to be members of a medical society and/or AMA
  - Thus, racial bars to society membership were barriers to specialty training and professional advancement

Source: IR Clark Collection (right)
http://www.american.edu/bgriff/H207web/civrights/coloredwaitingroom.jpg (left)
The Civil Rights Era 1955-1968
Imhotep Conferences on Hospital Integration

• 1957 - First conference organized by JNMA editor, W. Montague Cobb, NMA, NAACP, et al.

• AMA was invited and sent representatives

• At future Imhotep meetings, AMA refused to “participate fully and actively”
Medicine and the Civil Rights Movement

- Medicine played a major role in civil rights movement, but largely outside of AMA
- Physicians organized and participated in civil rights marches
- Physicians played a role in picket lines and patient advocacy
- Physicians filed lawsuits that sought to end hospital segregation
- JNMA published “Integration Battlefront”

Picketing the AMA

• NMA found AMA inaction to be “totally inadequate”
• NMA, Medical Committee for Human Rights, and others picketed AMA meetings in 1963, 1965, 1966, and 1968
• AMA responded in 1963:
  - “[The Picketing serves only] to obscure the achievements in medical science being reported at the meeting”

Photos- Members of the NMA, MCHR, and others picket AMA meetings in 1965 (above) and 1966 (below). John L. S. Holloman, Jr. (1919-2002) (above left)
African American Physicians &
Organized Medicine:
Acknowledging our Painful Legacy
Legal Remedies to Hospital Desegregation

- **Eaton v. James Walker Memorial Hospital**
  - (1961) Court finds that Hubert A. Eaton and other African Americans were wrongfully denied staff privileges. Eaton won his appeal after a decade of litigation.

- **Simkins v. Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital**
  - (1963) Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals finds it unconstitutional to discriminate against black physicians in hospitals built with federal funds under the Hill-Burton program.

Hubert A. Eaton (1916-1991)
President Johnson Signing Civil Rights Act of 1964 Martin Luther King, Jr. (behind)

http://www.american.edu/bgriff/H207web/civrights/LBJcivrights1964.jpg
The AMA Judicial Council

After desegregation became the law of the land, the AMA voted to amend the Constitution and Bylaws, giving the Judicial Council the authority to

- (1966) Investigate allegations of discrimination in state/local societies
- (1968) Expel state/local societies found guilty of racial discrimination
Key Events Since 1968

1968
AMA first expressed need to increase number of African American physicians

1989
First AMA report on “Black-White Disparities in Health Care”

1992
AMA’s Minority Affairs Consortium created

1994
Lonnie Bristow becomes first African American AMA President

2004
Commission to End Health Care Disparities created, with NMA and NHMA
- Doctors Back to School
- Minority Scholar Awards - Cultural Competence work, etc...
What Are The Effects Of This Lack Of Diversity?

African Americans were 2.2% of physicians (2006)

• As compared to 2.5% in 1910, at the time of the Flexner Report

When a group of health professionals is underrepresented due to ongoing segregation, the health provider community becomes less like all of the people that they serve, and cultural competency becomes an underrepresented quality which can impact health outcomes. This underrepresentation becomes a key driver of health care disparities.
AGAINST ALL ODDS

African American
Stand outs
in
Medicine and Dentistry
Past and Present
Dental Pioneers

1847:
Tanner Jackson, DDS- First black dental graduate in the U.S., Harvard University

1890:
Ida Ward, DDS: First black female graduate

1907
John Sommerville, DDS: Graduated first in his class at the University of Southern California. Founded the LA Chapter of the NAACP in 1900

Jefferson Jones, DDS- Endodontic Professor Case Western Dental
## Medical Pioneers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>David Peck, MD</td>
<td>First U.S. medical graduate, Rush Medical</td>
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<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>R. B. Leach, MD</td>
<td>First black medical graduate in Cleveland at the Cleveland Homeopathic School of Medicine</td>
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<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Rebecca Crumpler, MD</td>
<td>First African American female MD in the United States</td>
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<td>1867</td>
<td>Rebecca J. Cole, MD</td>
<td>Second black female to earn a MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Charles Reason, MD</td>
<td>First black medical graduate from Western Reserve University</td>
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<tr>
<td>1894-1913</td>
<td>Women medical graduates- May Brown(1894)</td>
<td>Jessie Dickerson(1898), Edwardina Grant(1902) and Zelda Green(1913)</td>
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James McCune Smith, MD

• First African-American to earn MD degree
• Born 1813, New York
• Attended Episcopal school
• Rejected by American colleges because of race
• Recommended to University of Glasgow by Rev. James Williams

• Graduated at top of class at U. of Glasgow
• Earned master’s degree
• Earned medical degree
• Internship in Paris
• Returned to New York
• Served as only physician on staff of Free Negro Orphan Asylum
• Opened first black owned pharmacy in NYC
Milestones Of Black Medical Pioneer
James McCune Smith, M.D.

1813 Born in New York City to former slaves.
1822 Enrolls in African Free School 2 on Mulberry Street in New York.
1832 Travels to Glasgow, Scotland, to pursue postsecondary studies due to racist admissions policies at U.S. colleges.
1835-37 Earns bachelor's, master's and medical degrees from the University of Glasgow. Completes a medical internship in Paris.
1837 Opens general medical and surgical practice in New York City treating black and white patients.
1840 Becomes first black American physician to write a case report, which is presented to the New York Medical and Surgical Society. A white colleague presents the report because the society fears that allowing Dr. Smith to do so would "interfere with the 'harmony' of the young institution."
1846 Appointed physician for the Colored Orphan Asylum at Fifth Avenue and 44th Street. Paid $100 a year. Publishes statistical research disputing the findings of the 1840 U.S. Census, which contended that enslaved blacks lived longer and healthier lives than free blacks.
1853 Becomes first black doctor to publish a scientific paper -- a description of five women whose opium use led to cessation of menses. It ran in the New York Journal of Medicine.
1855 Writes introduction to Frederick Douglass' autobiography, My Bondage and My Freedom. Douglass cited Dr. Smith as the single most important influence in his life.
1859 Publishes essay disputing the racial theories laid out in Thomas Jefferson's Notes on the State of Virginia.
1865 Dies of congestive heart failure on Long Island, N.Y., shortly before passage of the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery. His five children go on to pass and live as white people.
2004: Great-great-great-granddaughter Greta Blau finds Dr. Smith's name inscribed in family Bible.
2010: Blau and other white descendants unveil new headstone for Dr. Smith at Brooklyn's Cypress Hills Cemetery.

New recognition for first black U.S. doctor with medical degree

Dr. James McCune Smith's descendants unveiled a new headstone in a ceremony to commemorate his achievements as a physician, essayist and abolitionist.

Greta Blau, Dr. Smith's great-great-great-granddaughter, learned that she was descended from the doctor after finding his name inscribed in a family Bible. She recognized the name from a history paper she had written years earlier in college.

After confirming the family connection through genealogical research, Blau learned that Dr. Smith's five surviving children passed, lived and identified as white in society after he died in 1865.

Dr. Smith treated both black and white patients in New York City. He was the first black doctor to write a medical case report -- presented to the New York Medical and Surgical Society in 1840.

He also was the first black physician to have a medical scientific paper published, in the New York Journal of Medicine in 1844, and was a prominent essayist who attacked slavery and racial theories positing blacks' inferiority. He was a friend of Frederick Douglass and wrote the introduction to his 1855 autobiography.

The new tombstone of Dr. James McCune Smith, the nation's first black medical degree holder, is unveiled during a ceremony at Cypress Hills Cemetery in Brooklyn, N.Y. Dr. Smith's great-granddaughter Antoinette Martignoni, left, and great-great-granddaughter Judy Gerlitz share a moment during the event. Antoinette Martignoni, left, and her granddaughter Greta Blau with a family Bible that contains the name of their ancestor, Dr. James McCune Smith.

"I thought, 'I can't believe this,' " Blau said. "He was good, good friends with Frederick Douglass. He was the first black doctor with a medical degree. I just thought it was really sad that people didn't know about him, except for academics. I felt really compelled to put a new headstone there."
Had aspirations of becoming physician but not accepted to med schools initially
Earned dental degree
Later admitted to the Philadelphia Medical College, where earned a degree in 1948

Related to poor health, ceased practice of medicine and earned law degree
Was admitted to floor of House of Representatives to argue a case
Was first African-American to argue before the U.S. Supreme Court
CHARLES R. DREW, M.D.  
(1904-1950)

- Born 1904
- Excelled in academics and sports
- Amherst College on athletic scholarship
  - (1 of 16 graduates from 1920 to 1929)
- Captain of track team
- Enormously popular
- First AA physician to receive a Doctor of Science degree in Medicine, Columbia University 1940
  
  Researched blood preservation at Columbia University

  Demonstrated plasma much easier to preserve than whole blood (WWII)

  Diplomat of American Board of Surgery
  First African American surgeon to serve as examiner on the board

  Asked to be medical supervisor for “Blood for Britain” campaign in answer to Nazi bombings
  Developed refrigerated trucks called “bloodmobiles”

  In 1941 became director of American Red Cross Blood Bank in New York
CHARLES R. DREW, M.D.
(1904-1950)

Research Focus: having appropriate blood type readily available.
(Storage limit = 7 days at time.)

Accepted Rockefeller fellowship in 1938 and cooperated with 2 others on the problem of blood storage and using plasma as a substitute for whole blood.

Developed method of processing and preserving plasma for storing and shipping great distances.

Founded 2 of world’s largest with saving the lives of hundreds of British during World War II.

Asked to be medical supervisor for “Blood for Britain” campaign in answer to Nazi bombings.

Developed refrigerated trucks called bloodmobiles.

In 1941 became director of American Red Cross Blood Bank in New York.

Died in car crash in Alabama, age 45.
Cleveland’s African American Physician and Dentists in Organized Medicine

1898 - Cleveland Colored Nursing School
   Founded by Dr. Latrobe Motley, one of the earliest African-American physicians

1954 - 1978 Founding of Forest City Hospital By African American physicians
   as the city’s only hospital with a truly integrated staff- opened 1957 with 103 beds
   Founding of Cleveland Medical Association (local NMA) is thought to be around this time

1957 Founding of Forest City Dental Society- Black Dentist Association (NDA Local)

1962 - Forest City Hospital Scholarship Foundation
   Provided scholarship funds for African American medical and dental students who commit to practice in the greater Cleveland area. In 2007 the remaining funds were donated to Health Legacy of Cleveland, Inc. for scholarships

1983 - 1998 Founding of the first African American Owned and managed HMO
   Personal Physician Care of Ohio
   (Oscar B. Saffold, MD also founder of Personal Physician Care of Ohio, Inc. previous name of Health Legacy of Cleveland, Inc.)
FOUNDED
1993
MISSION
Increase the pool of African American physicians and dentists in the Cleveland area
VISION
A singular, unwavering commitment to eliminate health care disparities by partnering with the greater Cleveland Community
VALUES
STRATEGIES
• Scholarships awarded to medical/dental students and high school students pursuing health professions
• Recruitment of Youth to inspire, steer and facilitate their entry into health professions
• Practice Opportunities through strong partnerships with area medical and dental organizations
• Volunteerism is the force we bring to bear by our personal involvement to achieve the mission
Health Legacy of Cleveland’s contribution in this overall initiative is:

To increase the local African-American physician and dental workforce in order to improve the access of all to quality care with a specific focus on the African-American population.
Edgar B. Jackson, Jr., MD

Former Co-Chief of Staff at UH Case Medical Center

Edgar B. Jackson, Jr., M.D.
Timothy Stephens, MD

Established 1st African American Orthopedic Practice in Ohio. Former Chief of Staff St. Luke’s Hospital. Daughters are Cleveland Physicians:

Dr. Susan Stephens Orthopedics
Dr. Amy Stephens OB-Gyn
Oscar E. Saffold, M.D.

Renowned Dermatologist & Business man. Founder of Personal Physician Care of Ohio, and African American Owned and Managed HMO. Founder of Health Legacy of Cleveland
Roderick Adams, Sr., DDS

One of the Early Private Practicing Dentists in Ohio. Former President Forest City Dental Society. Sons are: Dr. Roderick H. Adams, Jr. Dentist Dr. David Adams Ophthalmologist
Jefferson J. Jones, DMD

Former Professor of Endodontics at Case Western Reserve College of Dentistry and Former President of the Forest City Dental Society.
1st Black Graduate Case Dental School
Eugene J. Jordan, DDS

Former President
Forest City Dental Society and National Dental Association
Joy Jordan, DDS

Former President
Forest City Dental Society and National Dental Association.
Daughter of Dr. Eugene Jordan.
Past HLC Honorees: Drs. Jones, Stephens, Adams
Other Cleveland African Americans to Note in Health Care

- Donald Brittenaum, MD - Thoracic Surgeon
- Leon Brown, MD - Pathologist and Entrepreneur
- Grant Franklin, MD - Surgeon and early breaker of Color Barrier in Cleveland
- Frank Williams, DDS, Former President Ohio State Dental Board (OSDB) & Cleveland Dental Society
- Edward Hills, DDS, Former Pres OSDB and Former Chief Operating Officer at MetroHealth Hospital, Chair of MH Dental Department
- Roderick H. Adams, Jr., Former President Cleveland Dental Society and long standing Cleveland Dental Practice
- James G. Greene, DDS and James E. Greene DDS - Dental practice for 56 years in the City Of Cleveland spanning two generations
- Giesele Robinson Greene, M.D. - Chief Medical Officer, Sisters of Charity Health System and St. Vincent Charity Medical Center, Former President, Health Legacy of Cleveland and current board member
Keep Health Care Culturally Competent and impact health care disparity.

This is why Health Legacy of Cleveland is here for you.
David Satcher, MD, PhD
16th Surgeon General United States
Graduate of CWRU School of Medicine

“To improve quality of life and eliminate health disparities demands the understanding, compassion, and will of the American people. These are opportunities for all health professions, individuals, and communities to work together to improve health”. 2000