

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS)

Resolution HHS-22-41

OSTEOPOROSIS AND THE IMPACT ON BLACK WOMEN

WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million Americans have osteoporosis or low bone mass, placing them at increased risk for osteoporosis according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation;

WHEREAS, studies suggest that approximately 1 in 2 women and up to 1 in 4 men aged 50 and older will break a bone due to osteoporosis;

WHEREAS, bone fractures due to osteoporosis can have serious long-term physical and financial consequences;

WHEREAS, after the first bone fracture, postmenopausal women with osteoporosis are five times more likely to fracture a bone within the next year;

WHEREAS, persons who are living with osteoporosis often remain undiagnosed and untreated;

WHEREAS, black women are less likely to receive medicine to treat osteoporosis and prevent fractures with only 8.4% of black women received meds vs 13.6% of high-risk women;

WHEREAS, black women were 18% less likely to receive medicine following a fracture compared to whites and are also less likely to be screened for osteoporosis compared with white women;

WHEREAS, a woman's risk of fracturing a hip is equal to her combined risk of being diagnosed with breast, uterine, and ovarian cancer;

WHEREAS, Medicare payments for screenings for bone loss do not adequately cover the cost of the test and therefore deters these screenings; and

WHEREAS, there are lifestyle modifications (regularly engaging in weight-bearing physical activity, eating a balanced diet with the right amounts of calcium and vitamin D, not smoking, and limiting alcohol) that are important, as well as medications available that not only fight bone loss but replace lost bone mass, and screenings for osteoporosis.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) supports increase in funding and/or access to coverage for DEXA scan that tests bone density and is critical to diagnosing osteoporosis when medically appropriate;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL supports education, awareness, screening, and prevention on bone health to inform and empower women and men to take charge of their bone health; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials and agencies as appropriate.

SPONSOR(S): Representative Vivian Flowers (AR) and Representative Ajay Pittman (OK)

Committee of Jurisdiction: Health and Human Services (HHS) Policy Committee

Ratified in Plenary Session: December 2, 2021

Ratification certified by: Representative Billy Mitchell (GA), NBCSL President