

TITLE: Disparities in Organ Allocation Among Patients of Varying Socioeconomic Status in the United States

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: Yes

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Organ allocation for transplantationHealthcare disparitiesSocial determinants of health

ABSTRACT: Background:The shortage of organs in the U.S. prompts allocative decisions regarding who will and who will not receive these scarce resources.Purpose:Determine if disparities in the allocation of lifesaving organs exist between low and high socioeconomic status (SES) groups in the in the US.Methods:Using rigorous search criteria, a literature review was conducted to evaluate the disparity. Causes of disparity and solutions to diminish disparity were proposed based on literature review findings. 96 articles were assessed.Results:Low SES patients have lower rates of waitlisting and transplantation, experience increased severity of organ failure at time of transplantation, and suffer worse post-transplant outcomes compared to high SES patients. The causes of disparity are present throughout the allocative process, and relate to the increased financial and health literacy barriers that low SES patients experience and their inability to participate in multiple-waitlisting. Solutions include increasing governmental financial assistance, implementing the patient-centered care model, and reducing geographic disparity.Implications:The causes of disparity in each step of the allocation process and the proposed solutions guide interventions and further research on the topic, and prompt understanding of the ability and responsibility to reduce disparity in organ allocation.

OBJECTIVE(S): Describe disparities in the allocation of kidneys and livers among low and high socioeconomic status (SES) groups in the U.S.Describe the causes of SES disparity in each step of organ allocation.Describe solutions to diminish SES disparity in organ allocation.