

# End-of-Life Care in California: *Racial and Ethnic Disparities*



*AHCJ Briefing*  
*March 15, 2007*

- Introduction
- New Program Area: Better Chronic Disease Care
- CHCF End-of-Life Focus
- Lake report
- Crawley report
- Wrap-Up



# California HealthCare Foundation: At-A-Glance

*CHCF works to improve health care in California by promoting innovation in care and access to information so that people can get the care they need, when they need it, at a price they can afford.*

- Founded: 1996, independent, nonpartisan philanthropy
- Location: Oakland, California
- Assets: Approx. \$850 million
- Staff: 52
- Web site: [www.chcf.org](http://www.chcf.org)

# CHCF New Program Areas

## *Better Chronic Disease Care*

Improving the quality of chronic disease care;  
promoting appropriate care toward the end of life

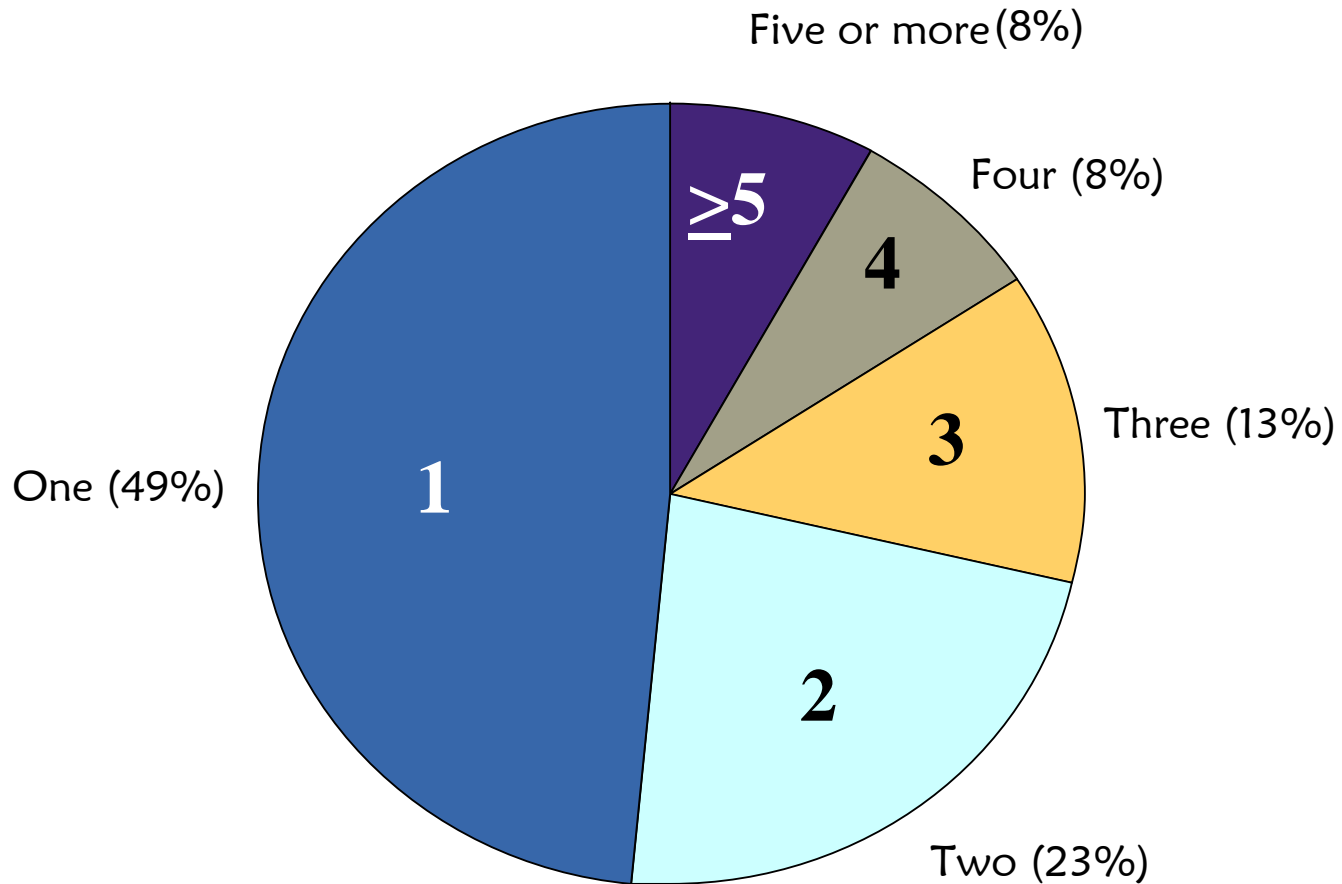
## *Innovations for the Underserved*

Lowering the cost of care for those in need

## *Market & Policy Monitor*

Promoting transparency and accountability among  
policymakers and providers

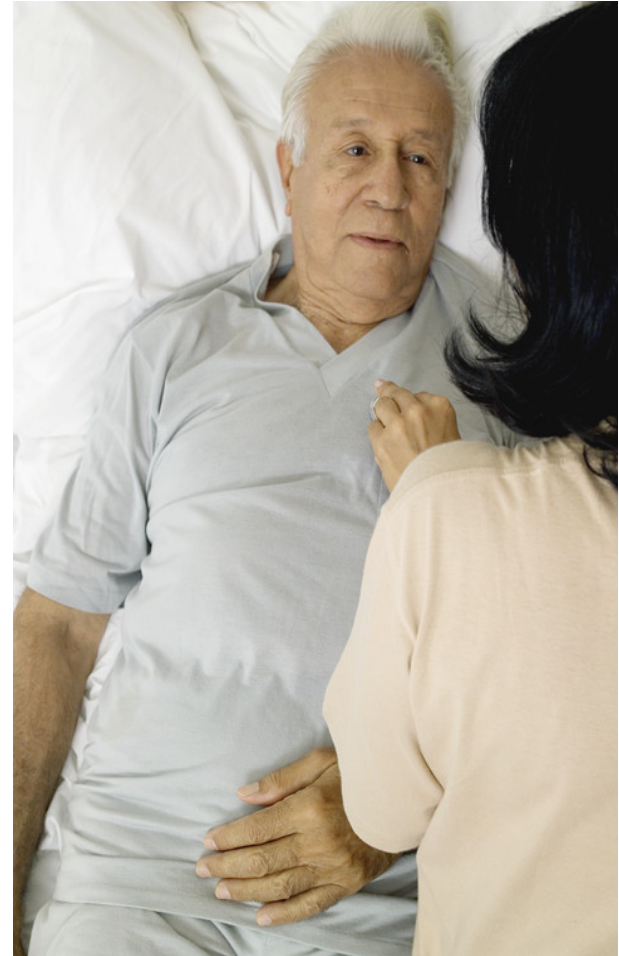
# Californians with One or More Chronic Conditions



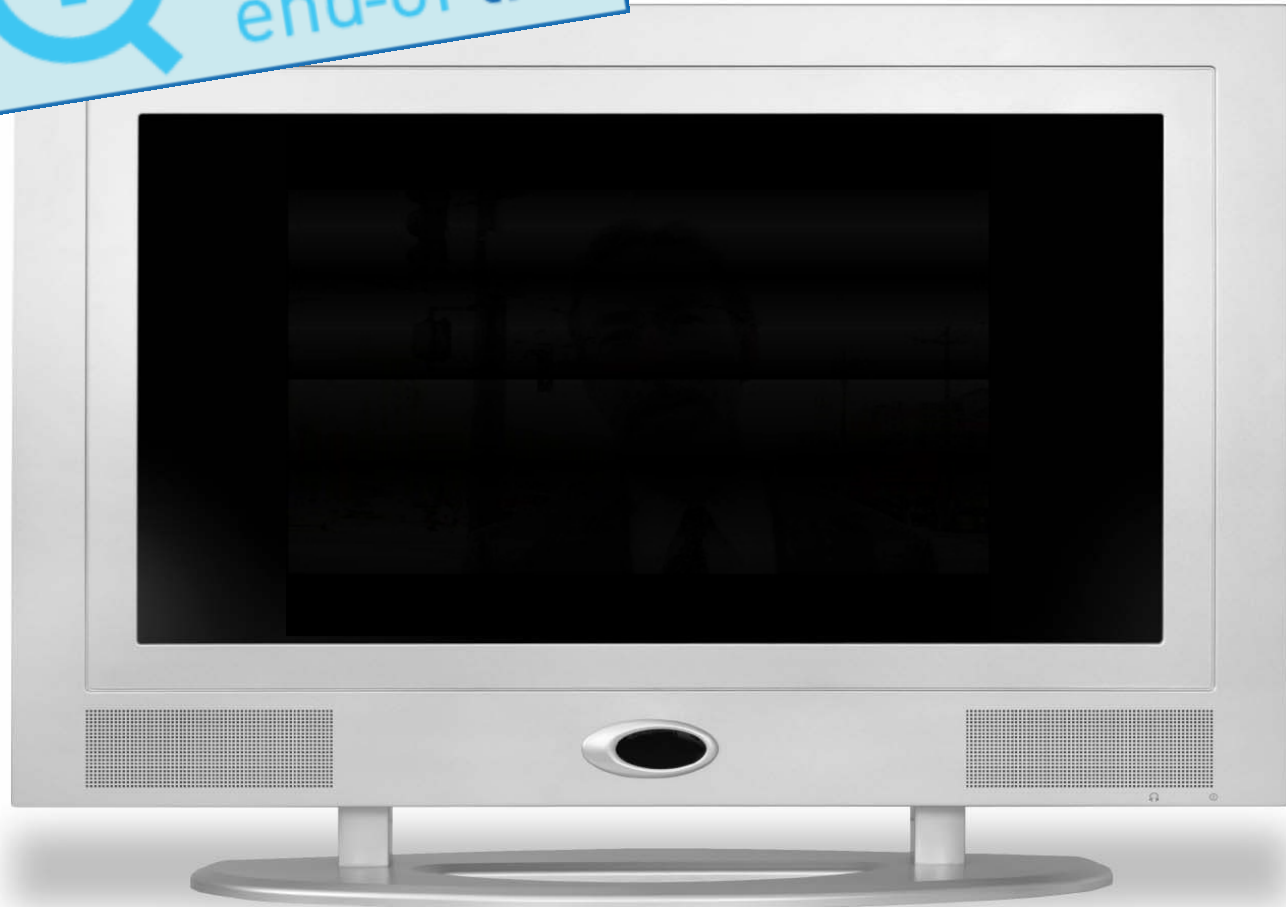
- Defining EOL care:
  - Usually at end stage of serious chronic condition, terminal illness
  - Common terms: palliative care, hospice care, advance directives.
  
- Challenges to providing good EOL care:
  - Cultural denial of aging and death in U.S.
  - Focus on aggressive treatment/cure
  - Financial incentives encourage intensive treatment
  
- Last six months of life:
  - Huge variation in costs across United States
  - More than 20% of Medicare FFS spending per patient

# End of Life: A New CHCF Focus

- California is a critical place for EOL care:
  - Growing population over age 65
  - Ethnically diverse state
  - Poor communication among patients, families, clinicians
- CHCF Focus:
  - Care delivery innovations
  - Benefit design
  - Regulatory policy
  - Culturally appropriate services



# CHCF End-Of-Life Projects





- Lake Research Partners, Attitudes Toward End-of-Life Care in California (2006)
- Death and Dying in California (2006)
- Hospice In California: A Look at Cost and Quality (2006)
- Racial, Cultural, and Ethnic Factors Affecting End-of-Life Care (March 16, 2007)

Available at: [www.chcf.org](http://www.chcf.org)



Racial, Cultural, and Ethnic  
Factors Affecting the Quality of  
End-of-Life Care in California:  
Findings and Recommendations

March 2007

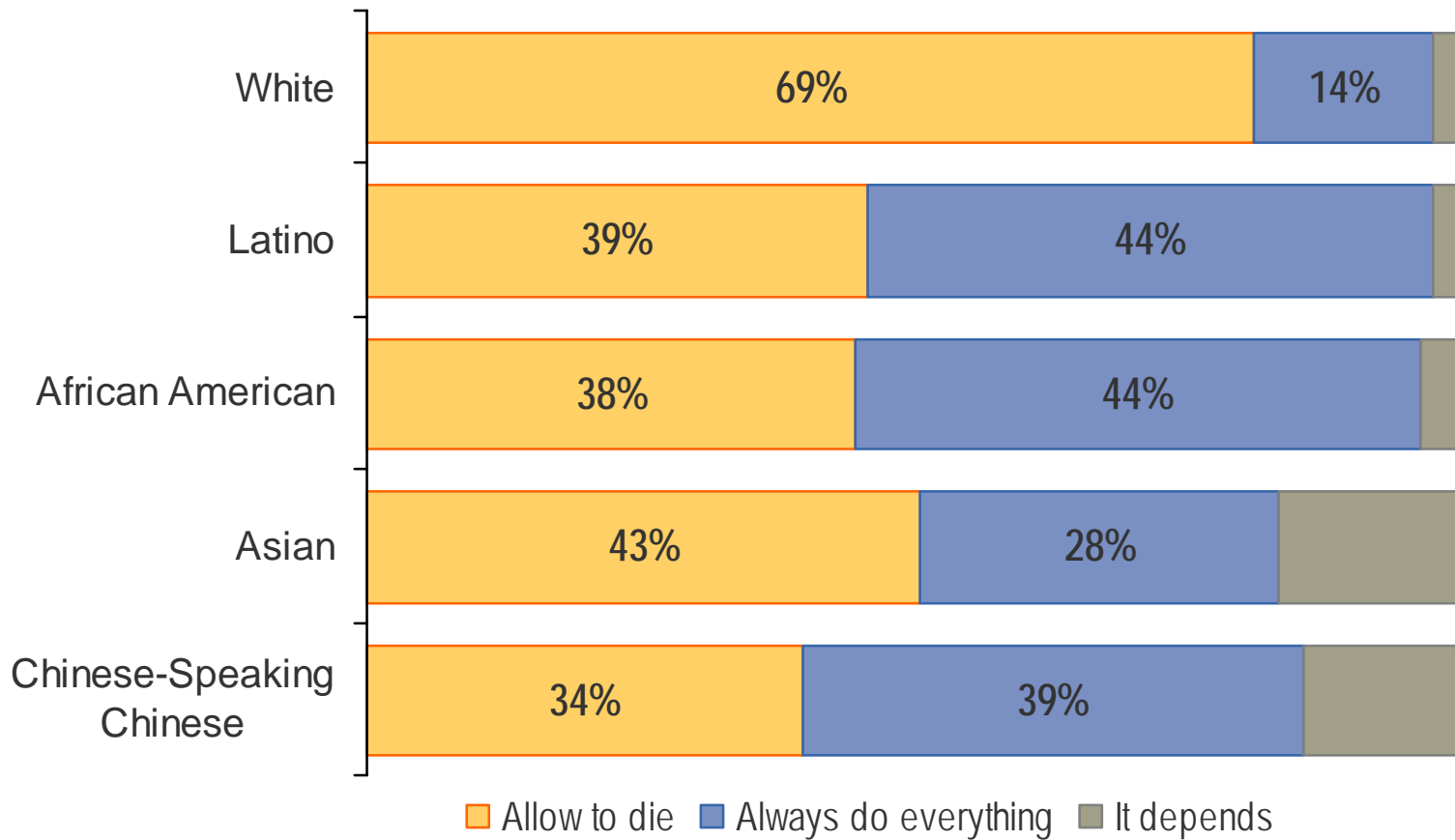
# EOL Differences Among Californians

Lake Research Partners 2006  
survey and focus groups:

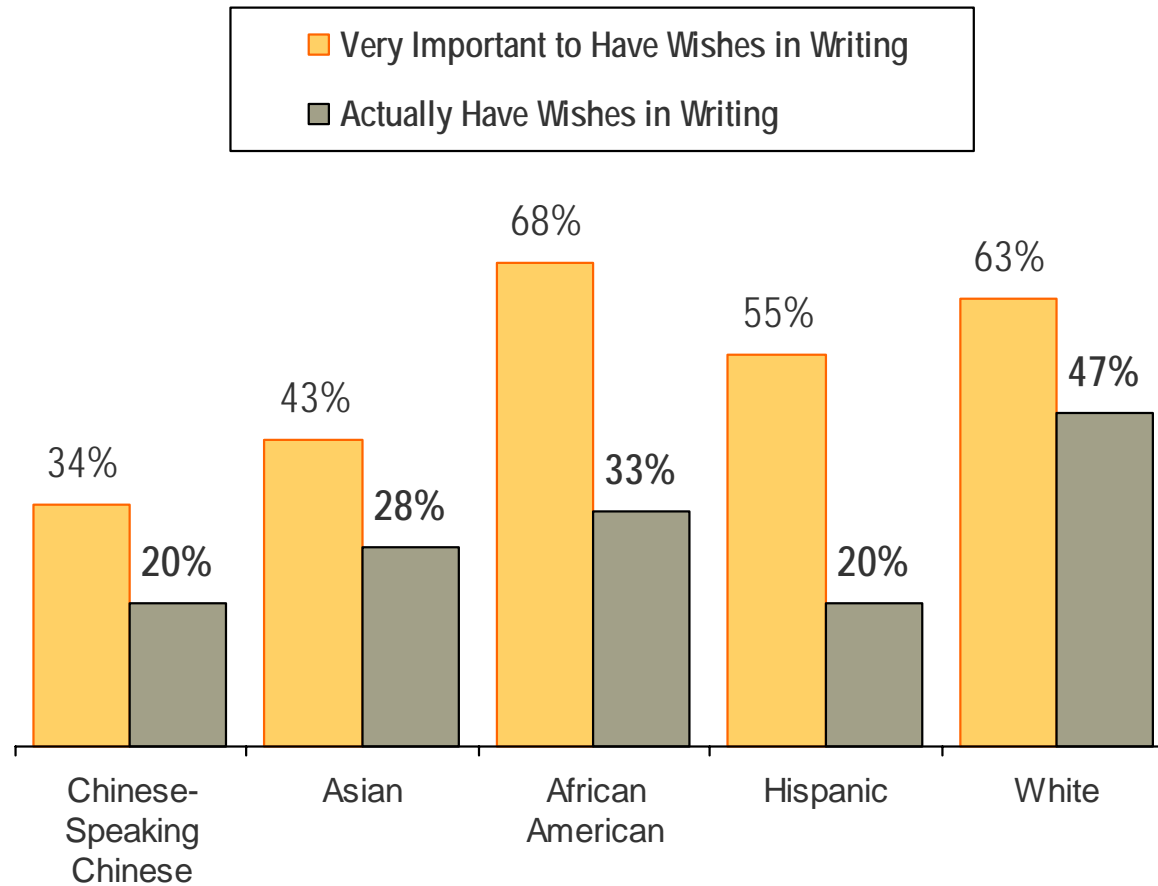
- Gap between patients' wishes and care they actually experience
- Lack of communication between individuals and family members
- Significant multicultural and ethnic differences in preferences for EOL care



# Racial and Ethnic Differences: Aggressive Treatment



# Racial and Ethnic Differences: Having Wishes in Writing





# Racial and Ethnic Differences: Top Concerns (Lake Survey)

- Affordability is a top concern for Latinos, Asians, and Chinese-speaking Chinese
- Pain and discomfort is a top concern for whites
- Finding providers who respect your culture is a top concern for African Americans

# Crawley Report: Key Findings

- Ethnically diverse populations use hospice care less than whites
  - Restrictions on curative care
  - Language barriers
  - Cultural barriers to acceptance of terminal conditions
  
- Undertreatment of pain prevalent among elderly, poor, and racial/ethnic minorities
  - Expansion of palliative care programs needed
  - Clinician training programs should include multi-cultural component

- Advance care planning (advance directives) isn't as highly valued by some communities
- Ethnic diversity requires a health care workforce that can provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services
- Spread of culturally appropriate care models:
  - *Find a Friend Project* by the Alta Bates Summit Ethnic Health Institute focuses on sharing values in general with family or friends

- Sudden deaths due to accidents and assaults are higher among young African Americans (11%), Native Americans (14%), and Latinos (16%), compared to Asian Americans (8%) and whites (7%)
  - Implications for ED services
- Clinicians lack skills to address culturally sensitive issues in end-of-life care
  - Few training opportunities for clinicians



- California HealthCare Foundation: [www.chcf.org](http://www.chcf.org)
- Center to Advance Palliative Care:  
[www.getpalliativecare.org](http://www.getpalliativecare.org)
- Caring Connections: [www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org)
- National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization:  
[www.nhpco.org](http://www.nhpco.org)
- Growth House: [www.growthhouse.org](http://www.growthhouse.org)
- California Coalition for Compassionate Care:  
[www.finalchoices.calhealth.org](http://www.finalchoices.calhealth.org)