

Case Vignette

You are a Black, female Behavioral Health Consultant (BHC) working in a primary care clinic. A White, male Primary Care Provider (PCP) in your clinic is seeing a 47-year-old Black woman with Type 2 Diabetes and Hypertension who was recently discharged from the hospital for a hyperosmolar hyperglycemia state (HHS) and a systolic blood pressure in the 200s. The patient lives in on the southeast side of the city, a part of the city that historically has a large number of individuals who are in a low socioeconomic status as well as a large Black population. The PCP consults you to see this patient for treatment adherence and mentions that she was admitted for the same thing two months ago. After discussing the medical plan, the PCP says with frustration, “I don’t understand why some people just don’t want to take care of themselves and depend on us to deal with the consequences.” You walk into the exam room to introduce yourself and PCBH services and the patient is visibly upset, tearful, and asks you that she would like to see another PCP in the clinic. She further indicates she has difficulty explaining to her PCP her situation. She discloses she is unable to advocate for herself out of distrust and fear her PCP will not believe her.

Questions:

1. What are the ethno-racial implications of what the PCP said?
2. How do policies and discrimination lead to ethno-racial segregation in communities and how is ethno-racial segregation in communities relevant to why the patient has now presented twice with the same complications?
3. What puts this patient at higher risk of Hypertension? Why is it that the Black population in the United States has a higher rate of Hypertension compared to other ethnic groups?
4. How would you raise these discussion points in the clinic with other primary care team members? What are the implications of the BHC in this scenario raising these discussion points with her primary care team?
5. How would you alter your treatment approach with this patient if you were the BHC?