Disparities Unmasked: COVID-19, Gender, and Equity for All
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Gender Disparities & COVID-19
While men are more likely to experience severe cases if they contract COVID-19, women are more likely to experience associated social and economic hardships.1

Social and Economic Impacts
- 70% of the healthcare workforce are women.5
- Women perform 3x more unpaid and domestic care work than men.2
- The stressors from care work have been exacerbated due to school closures.3
- Violence against women has increased due to economic stressors, isolation with abusers, limited mobility, and other factors.2

Gender inequality analysis that fails to include race, socioeconomic status, sexuality, ability, and gender identity are insufficient to address COVID-19 equitably.5

In majority-Black communities, infection rates are 3x higher and death rates are 6x higher compared to majority-white communities.8

LGBTQ+ people are at higher risk for mental health conditions that may be exacerbated by trauma and isolation due to the pandemic.6

Latinx people are hospitalized from COVID-19 at 4x the rate as white people.7

People with a disability are more likely to have chronic conditions, a risk factor for developing more severe symptoms of COVID-19.9

Implications of COVID-19 for Healthcare
The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated barriers to health care due to: appointment availability, safety and exposure concerns, and loss of insurance.

These barriers cause delays in contraception and abortion care, leading to unwanted pregnancy & associated risks.4

A third of women are reporting wanting fewer children as a direct result of the pandemic.9

Due to COVID:
- 5 states have deemed abortion services "elective" and "nonessential."14
- A Kaiser Family Foundation poll found that nearly half of Americans reported they or a family member have delayed care due to the COVID-19 pandemic.10

In addition to the impacts on reproductive health, delays in care for chronic conditions, mental health, pain management, and preventative health services like cancer screenings and vaccines may cause secondary health consequences for women as a result of the pandemic.

About 1 in 10 of those who delayed care had health problems worsen.11

A Call to Action
Healthcare professionals have an ethical duty to support policies that promote gender equity and equity for all.

To improve the health and wellbeing of women & girls, we must support:
- Access to comprehensive reproductive health care
- Expanded & strengthened BadgerCare
- Affordable childcare
- Paid family & medical leave
- Relief packages that address gendered impacts of COVID-19

For more information: supportwomenshealth.org

Sources:
7. CDC. Communities, Schools, Workplaces, & Events. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 20200618;12(S1):S239. doi:10.1037/tra0000837

United States COVID-19 Deaths by Gender

Mental Health During COVID-19

- 33% of all women and 42% of low-income women report difficulty accessing contraception as a direct result of the pandemic.6
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