

Title: Hard Knock Life for Us: Poverty and Chronic Health Conditions

Author: Makayla Anderson

Support Team: Zach Porreca, Dr. Julie Hicks Patrick

Purpose: Chronic health conditions (CHC) are associated with aging, and most older adults have at least one (Fillenbaum et al, 2000). This study examines whether adults in WV experiencing financial hardship have a higher prevalence of developing CHCs earlier in age.

Methods: Logistic regressions and cross tabulations with difference in proportion Z tests were performed using BRFSS data. WV and non-WV adults (ages 18-64) and older adults (65+) were compared using income and 6 CHCs: diabetes, heart disease, cancer, skin cancer, obesity, and depressive disorders. We define income levels below \$25,000 as impoverished.

Results: Having a CHC and experiencing poverty had a positive significant relationship at the 1% level for adult WV residents. Being an older adult WV resident with a CHC and experiencing poverty was not significant.

Discussion: Being a poor WV resident increases the likelihood of having a CHC. This finding implies that young, poor WV residents with a CHC may not be living to see old age, although further studies will be needed to corroborate.