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## RESEARCH FINDS DISPARITIES IN ROUTINE CARDIAC CARE FOR CHRONIC HEART VALVE DISEASE

Baltimore, Md. – While much attention has been focused on ways to lower heart disease-related injuries and deaths, there is accumulating evidence that there is still much to be done for this work to reach all segments of the U.S. population. A group of researchers from Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), looked at cardiovascular patient care during a 15-year time frame and found there remains significant disparities in routine cardiac care for chronic heart valve disease. Minorities, Hispanics in particular, continue to be less likely to receive timely and thorough evaluations.

Research led by Varsha K. Tanguturi, MD, of MGH looked at more than 31,058 patient records and found that Hispanic patients were less likely to receive follow-up transthoracic echocardiograms (TTE) for their valve issues than would be considered appropriate by medical guidelines. “Looking at patient patterns from 2001-2016, our preliminary analysis shows there may be disparities in the receipt of surveillance imaging for mitral valve disease,” says Tanguturi. Researchers also found that as patients aged, the odds of having a TTE within the appropriate time interval decreased across all races.

Further research into other types of valvular disease in broader patient populations is needed to determine the extent and significance of these results. The cause of these disparities, whether from variability in ordering by the provider, or patient access to care is unknown. The clinical significance of these disparities is also yet to be determined, but identification of the causes could allow for interventions to improve the ability for at-risk patients to complete appropriate surveillance of valvular disease, which could in turn possibly improve cardiovascular health outcomes.

Tanguturi will present a poster based on this research on Monday, June 5, 2017 during the American Society of Echocardiography 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Sessions at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, Md. Additional researchers on the study “*Disparities in Echocardiographic Surveillance of Mitral Regurgitation (MR)*”, include Vijeta Bhambhani, Michael Picard, MD, Katrina Armstrong, MD and Jason Wasfy, MD, MPhil.

For media requests, please contact [Angie Porter](#).

*As the largest global organization for cardiovascular ultrasound imaging, the American Society of Echocardiography (ASE) is the leader and advocate, setting practice standards and guidelines. Comprised of over 17,000 physicians, sonographers, nurses, and scientists, ASE is a strong voice providing guidance, expertise, and education to its members with a commitment to improving the practice of ultrasound and imaging of the heart and cardiovascular system for better patient outcomes. For more information about ASE and the 2017 Scientific Sessions, visit [ASEScientificSessions.org/](http://ASEScientificSessions.org/).*

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