

Hidden figures and misnomers: a case for disaggregated Asian health statistics in Aotearoa New Zealand to improve health outcomes

Summary

People of Asian ethnicity in Aotearoa New Zealand currently constitute 15% of the population. The majority are migrants. The current sources of data to monitor Asian health in New Zealand are routine population surveys and administrative data. This article highlights the effect of “masking” due to the use of a single “Asian” category for reporting health indicators. Issues regarding the use of the “Other Asian” category in administrative data are also discussed. This discourse provides an impetus to raise questions on how we should be developing policies, strategies and investments to make visible the hidden figures of Asian health statistics in New Zealand. Given that Asian population will become the second largest ethnic group in New Zealand, practical steps need to be taken to strengthen the New Zealand health strategy and enable equitable investment in Asian health.