

# Controlling High Blood Pressure

## Impact of Heart Disease in Rural Northern California

- One in three U.S. adults will develop hypertension in their lifetime<sup>1</sup> and more than half of Americans with high blood pressure do not have it under control.<sup>2</sup>
- In Rural Northern California 47.5% of adults aged 55 and older have been diagnosed with high blood pressure.<sup>3</sup>
- High blood pressure that is left untreated can result in heart attack, stroke, vision loss, memory loss and congestive heart failure.
- Heart disease affects more than 35,000 adults in Rural Northern California.<sup>4</sup>
- Proper management of hypertension, along with adopting healthy lifestyle behaviors, correlates with the prevention of 80% percent of all cardiovascular diseases and a 64% reduction in the development of heart failure.<sup>5</sup>

## How Health Centers Provide the Necessary Care

### *Clinical Interventions*

- Provide at least annual blood pressure screenings for adults 18 and older.
- During the primary care visit, take multiple blood pressure readings to accurately assess the patient's status, especially when blood pressure is 140/90 or higher. Breathing exercises may help some patients relax and lower blood pressure.
- Screen men aged 35 and older for lipid disorders and screen women 45 and older for lipid disorders if they are at increased risk for heart disease.
- Integrate evidence-based guidelines and treatment support tools into the electronic health record and conduct annual proper blood pressure technique trainings for care teams.
- Actively engage patients in their own care by providing home blood pressure monitoring kits, offering nurse education visits, and regular communication with the care team via appointment or patient portal.

### *Community Interventions*

- Educate patients about maintaining a healthy diet, reducing sodium intake to no more than 2,300 mg per day, and including at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.
- Promote meditation and other relaxation methods to support healthy blood pressure.
- Disseminate smoking cessation materials at health fairs and community events.

<sup>1</sup> Nelson, Sarah, Whitsel, Laurie, et al. Projections of Cardiovascular Disease Prevalence and Costs: 2015-2035. Nov 2016.

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Health Statistics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Nutrition Examination Surveys. 2013-2016. 2017 ACC/AHA Criteria Hypertension Guidelines applied.

<sup>3</sup> California Health Interview Survey. CHIS 2019 Adult Public Use File. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

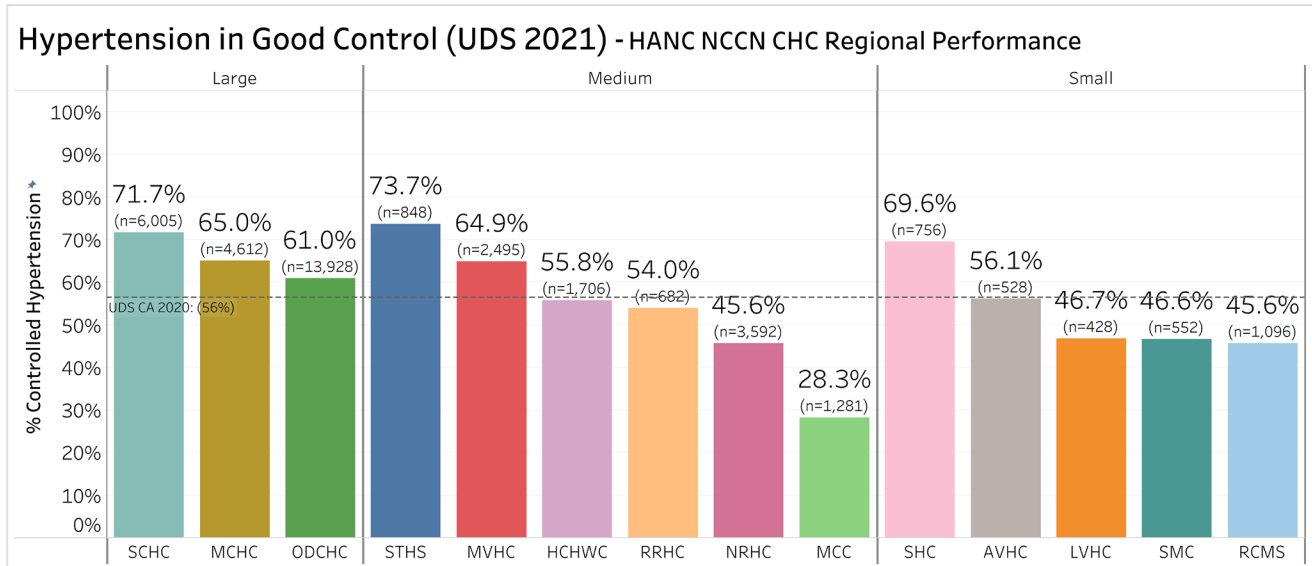
<sup>5</sup> Tackling G, Borhade MB. Hypertensive Heart Disease. [Updated 2019 May 5]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2020 Jan-. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK539800/>

# Controlling High Blood Pressure

## Rural Northern California Health Center Data

### Key Points

- Many patients experience “white coat hypertension,” causing them to be anxious as they arrive for their primary care visit. This can contribute to elevated blood pressure readings.
- There is no cure for hypertension, unless a specific cause is found and corrected. Medical therapy and/or lifestyle modification can control hypertension and, in many cases, prevent complications.<sup>6</sup>



### Quality Measure Definition (UDS)

The percentage of adults aged 18-85 who have received a diagnosis of hypertension and whose blood pressure is less than 140/90 mm Hg.

- Normal blood pressure levels are less than 120/80 mmHg.
- Hypertensive patients who reduce their blood pressure to less than 140/90 are considered under control.

### National and State Quality Benchmarks

**UDS 2020 U.S. Average:** The average performance among health centers across the U.S. was 58.0%.

**UDS CA 2020 Average:** The average performance among health centers in California was 56.4%.

<sup>6</sup> Medline Plus U.S. National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health Updated July 13, 2016 retrieved from web July 26, 2016. [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)