

[[This item was an attachment to a July 13, 2015 email from Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Medical Office Ernest Moy, which is part of an exchange found [here](#).]]

July 13, 2015

Dear Mr. Scanlan:

Your letter of July 1st was forwarded to me for response.

AHRQ thanks you for your continued interest in improving the measurement of disparities. As we have discussed, we are also concerned about the effect that baseline prevalence can have when assessing disparities as relative rates as well as instances when assessments of disparities based on relative differences and absolute differences do not agree. As you know, in the distant past, we tried to address these issues by assessing disparities using both relative and absolute difference framed both positively and negatively. We only reported disparities in which assessments based on relative and absolute differences were in agreement.

In recent years, we have moved away from comparing the magnitude of disparities across measures to instead focus on rates of change in disparities. Hence, I am very interested in your recommended approach to quantifying change in disparities. This is the first time that I recall that we have discussed this issue. However, I had difficulty interpreting your suggestions. Could you help me understand your approach by explaining how you would quantify and characterize the following comparisons?

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
A (Reference)	20%	15%	10%	5%
B	25%	20%	15%	10%
C	40%	30%	20%	10%
D	90%	85%	80%	75%

- B vs. A: Is this disparity changing over time? What calculation would you use to show this?
- C vs. A
- D vs. A

Thank you again for your willingness to help us explore this complex issue.

Sincerely,

Ernest Moy