

### RURAL AND URBAN WOMEN

Residents of rural areas tend to face greater socioeconomic disadvantage and live farther from health care resources than their urban counterparts. For example, rural areas have fewer physicians and dentists per capita than urban areas, and may lack certain specialists altogether.<sup>17</sup> A variety of social, economic, and geographic factors are likely to contribute to higher rates of chronic disease, injury, and mortality observed in rural areas (see *Women's Health USA, 2012*).

A common definition of rural and urban relies on residence outside or inside metropolitan statistical areas—counties with an urbanized area of at least 50,000 people or adjacent commuting

counties. In 2011, over 19 million women aged 18 and older lived in non-metropolitan or rural areas, representing 16.7 percent of all women.

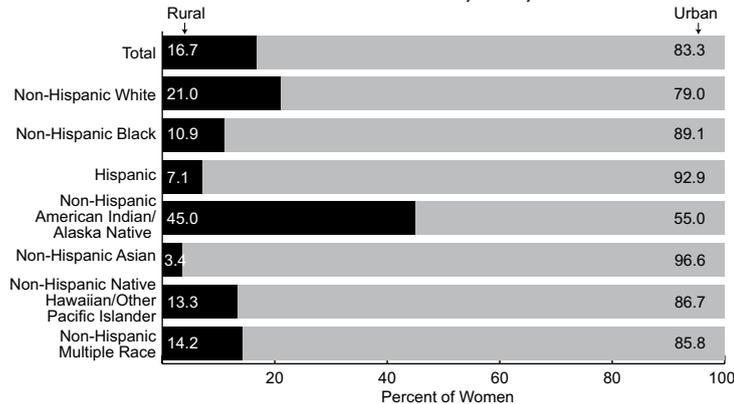
Rural women were more likely to be older and less racially and ethnically diverse than their urban counterparts. In 2011, the median age of rural women was 4 years older than for urban women (50 versus 46 years, respectively) and 23.0 percent of rural women were aged 65 years or older, compared to 18.3 percent of urban women (data not shown). Non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native women were the only racial and ethnic groups that were more likely to reside in rural areas than the total population of women. Nearly

half of non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native women (45.0 percent) resided in rural areas and 21.0 percent of non-Hispanic White women lived in rural areas compared with 16.7 percent of women overall and less than 15 percent of women of other racial and ethnic groups.

Women living in rural areas also had lower levels of educational attainment and higher levels of poverty than urban women. Among women aged 25 and older, 19.1 percent of rural women had a college degree or higher, compared to 30.8 percent of urban women. About 18 percent of rural women had household incomes below the poverty level, compared with 15 percent of urban women (data not shown).

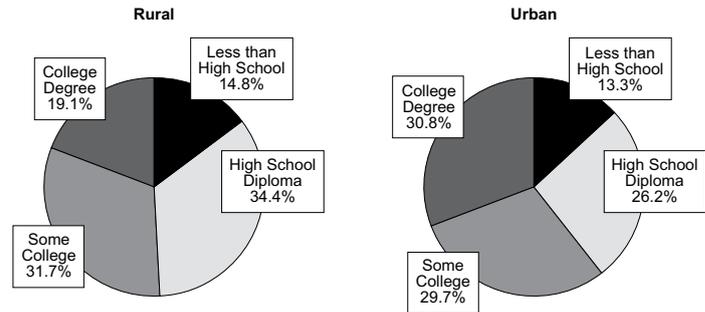
### Rural and Urban\* Women Aged 18 and Older, by Race/Ethnicity, 2011

Source I.11: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey



### Educational Attainment Among Women Aged 25 and Older, by Rural and Urban Residence,\* 2011

Source I.11: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey



\*Defined as residence in non-metropolitan (rural) and metropolitan (urban) statistical areas; percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.

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