

Abstract

Research has often examined geographical barriers to healthcare accessibility. These examinations, however, are usually focused on primary care and urgent or specialty care. This study focuses on access to vision care and services with the goal of bridging the gap in research for this category of healthcare. Spatial accessibility for Kaiser Permanente members was examined using the Enhanced 2 Step Floating Catchment Area (E2SFCA) method. This method has been used in previous studies to examine spatial accessibility of patients to healthcare services. It examines both supply (the amount of services or providers available to provide services) and demand (patients who may or have used such services). This study also examined the differences between using ZIP codes and Census tracts as the base geography and for understanding how this choice is likely to affect the performance of the E2SFCA method and the final outputs. The analysis showed that the southern region of the Riverside Medical Services Area (MSA) has a shortage of optical services and that members must travel longer distances for these services. Future research should further analyze the accessibility of the members living within the Riverside MSA to vision services offered by Vision Essentials of Kaiser Permanente.