Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
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Patterns of Change in Race Category in the Electronic Medical Record of a Pediatric Population

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The collection, use, and meaning of race in biomedical research is complicated by the tension between the requisite interrogation of health disparities associated with race and the risk of continued insinuation of race as a biologic entity when interspersed with health outcomes. As a social construct, the literature supports that, assessed at the individual level, race as a category has a nontrivial change with repeated assessment. For instance, 12.5% of childrens' US census records had a changed racial category from 2000 to 2010 at the individual response level. Thus, given the duality of race as important yet mutable, we sought to quantify the frequency of change in race category in the electronic medical record (EMR) of a pediatric population.

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