

Patients’ Perspectives of Religiously Affiliated Care in Urban and Rural Settings

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Introduction/Background

- It is currently estimated that nearly 20% of hospital beds in community settings in the United States are provided by a religiously affiliated hospital¹
- In ten states across the country including Washington, Iowa, and Wisconsin more than 30% of acute care hospital beds are religiously owned or affiliated
- Little is known about patients’ attitudes toward receiving care at religiously affiliated institutions¹
- This study seeks to identify patients’ attitudes towards religiously affiliated hospitals and clinics

Methods

- Survey with Likert scale-type and free responses of patients >18 years old who receive medical care in non-religiously affiliated primary care offices in Lincoln County, Colorado and Denver County, Colorado between July 2019 – January 2020
- Demographic information, measures of religiosity and spirituality (R/S), and opinions regarding religious affiliation of providers and health care systems were obtained

Figure 1: Lincoln County Map

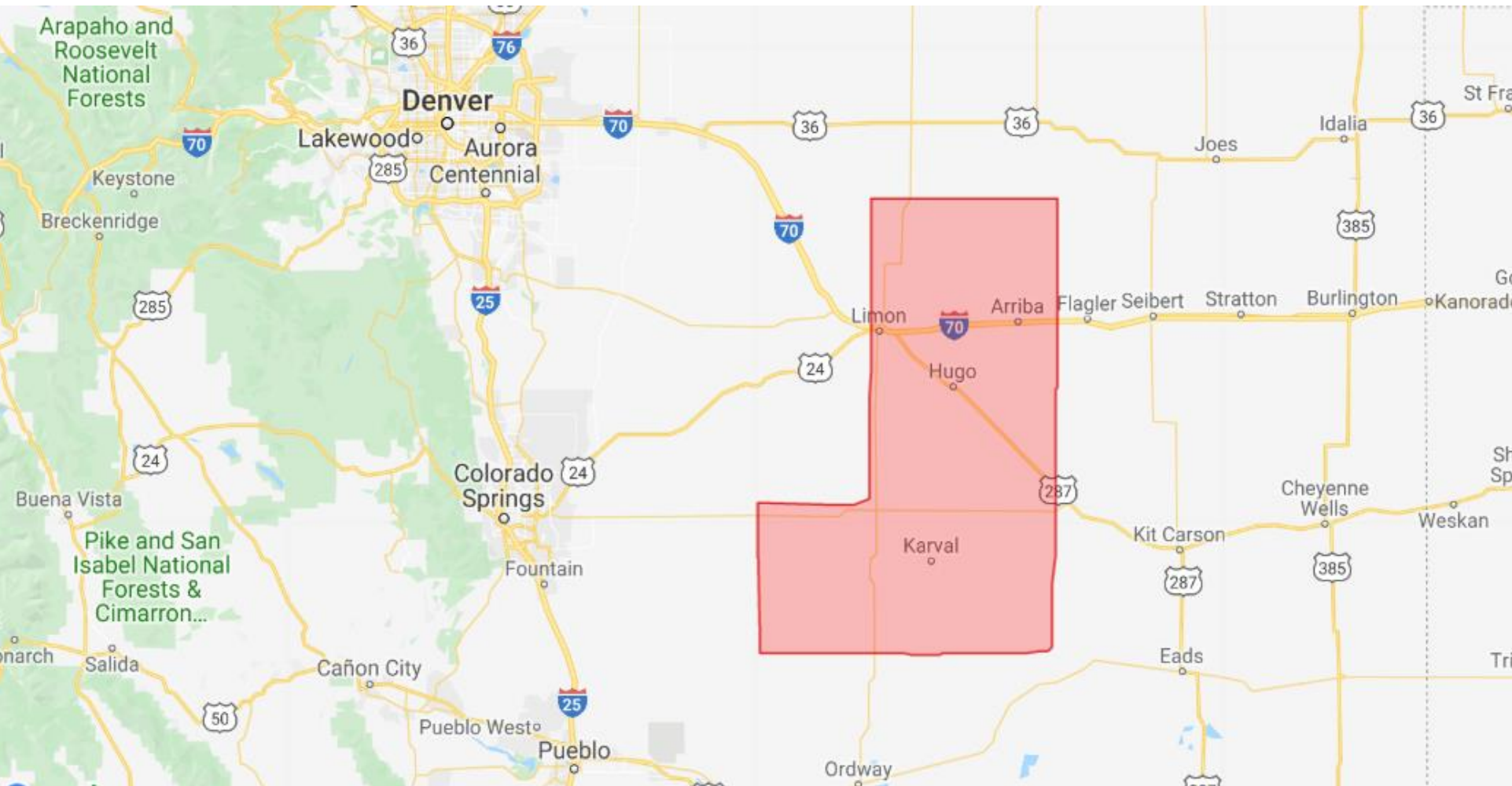
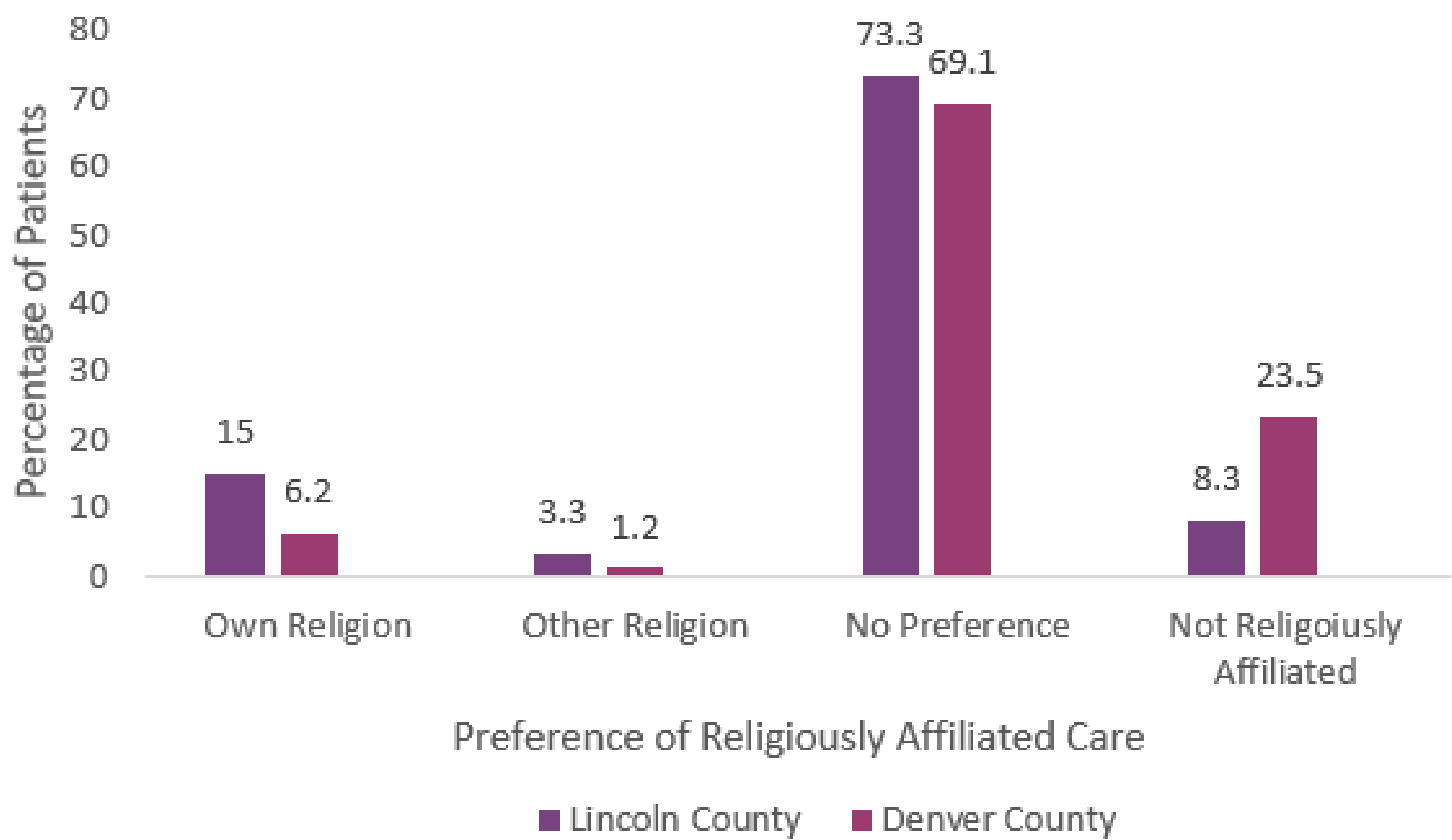


Figure 2: Patient Preference Regarding Religious Affiliation



Patients’ preferences regarding religious affiliation of the clinic or hospital in which they are receiving care

Table 1: Logistic Regression Models of Religious Affiliation Preference Based on Location

Religious Affiliation Preference	Lincoln County OR (95% CI)	Denver County OR (95% CI)
All patients		
Not affiliated with any religion	0.10 (0.02-0.30)	2.95 (1.16-8.56)
No preference	0.67 (0.31-1.43)	1.47 (0.69-3.20)
Christian Patients		
Affiliated with my own religion	5.03 (1.13-35.27)	0.26 (0.05-0.97)

Results

- 60 patients completed the survey in Lincoln County (response rate 70.59%), representing more than 1% of the county population, 81 patients completed the survey in Denver County (response rate 78.64%)
- In Lincoln County 68.3% of patients were female, the average year born was 1971 (± 18.8 years), and 93.3% identified as white/Caucasian (non-Hispanic)
- In Denver County 69.14% of patients were female, the average year born was 1963 (± 17.8 years), and 86.42% identified as white/Caucasian (non-Hispanic)
- 70% of patients in Lincoln County and 70.4% in Denver County identified as belonging to a specific religion, the majority identifying with a Christian denomination in both locations
- Of the 15% of patients in Lincoln County and 6.2% in Denver County who preferred a religiously affiliated hospital of their own religion, all were of a Christian denomination

Conclusions and Further Direction

- The majority of patients in rural and urban settings have no preference as to the religious affiliation of their healthcare
- Patients in urban Denver County were more likely to prefer non-religiously affiliated care, which may be due to a greater number of healthcare options in urban areas
- Christian patients in rural Lincoln County were more likely to prefer care affiliated with their own religion
- Further study should include diverse geographies and populations of non-Christian majorities to further characterize patient preference on this issue

References and Disclosures

¹Stulberg, D. B., Lawrence, R. E., Shattuck, J., & Curlin, F. A. (2010). Religious hospitals and primary care physicians: Conflicts over policies for patient care. *Journal of general internal medicine*, 25(7), 725-730.

The authors report no conflicts of interest in relation to this study