Where do people access services for mental health and substance abuse?
What neighborhoods are impacted the most by disparities in health services?

Related Geography Careers:
- Medical Records Specialist
- Cartographers and Photogrammetrists

Applications:
- Use a Geographic Information System (GIS) to identify the location of health services.
- Analyze the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of neighborhoods where health services are available.
- Develop policy recommendations for expanding access to health care for underserved populations.

Interview Digest: Suparna Das
“My projects span demography, GIScience, and spatial epidemiology. For me, it is impossible to resolve mental health and substance use disparities and encourage health equity without spatial thinking and geocomputation. I have not been part of any project that did not entail extensive statistical/data management-based coding.” - Suparna Das

Photo: COVID-19 data geographically
Photo: Suparna Das smiles in front of a tree stump as tall as her in a dry forest
LESSON ACTIVITY EXAMPLE:
How accessible are substance abuse and mental health services in your city?

GLOSSARY:

HEALTH EQUITY

DEMOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SCIENCES (GISC)

SKILLS:
- GIS
- Demographic analysis

BACKGROUND RESOURCES:
- Definition of medical geography
- Health equity statistics in San Diego

DATA:
- SAMHSA Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator
- SAMHSA public data collections available
- Census data

Photo: Map of different medical icons used across the US

{ Rpp for CS : ENCODING GEOGRAPHY }