

**Chicago philanthropies fund nearly \$500,000 in clinical trials that will address health disparities in Chicago's communities of color**

**Cures Within Reach selecting at least 10 clinical trials to address health disparities and empower underrepresented researchers in the US and LMICs**

Chicago – November 2, 2021 – [Cures Within Reach](#), a global nonprofit leading the use of medical repurposing research to help improve patients' lives, today announced that Chicago philanthropies are working to improve health disparities and health inequities by funding clinical repurposing trials. Led by the **Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust** with additional support from **Walder Foundation, Adtalem Global Education Foundation, Susie and David Sherman** and other donors, Chicago's respected research institutions will play a leading role in research to find new treatments for diseases that disproportionately affect communities of color with therapies already proven safe and effective in other diseases.

Also within its 2021 [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) (DEI) efforts, Cures Within Reach has raised more than \$500,000 in additional funds from **Takeda Pharmaceuticals' R&D Center for Health Equity and Patient Affairs**, Adtalem Global Education Foundation, **Horizon Therapeutics** and others to fund clinical repurposing trials led by underrepresented researchers in the US or in low and lower-middle income countries (LMICs). In the US, this will help support racial/ethnic minority researchers who receive less funding from the National Institutes of Health and other sources, and, therefore, are underserved in clinical trial research.

Cures Within Reach's DEI goals include reducing health disparities, improving health equity and enabling minority researchers who are underrepresented and may help overcome skepticism among patients of color regarding clinical trial participation – all through the funding of proof-of-concept clinical trials to test already approved therapies for patients. In total, Cures Within Reach will select at least 10 DEI-related clinical trials testing already approved therapies in new indications by the end of 2021: in Chicago to improve health disparities, in any disease area led by underrepresented researchers based in the US or based in LMICs to build clinical trial capacity – plus more to be selected in 2022.

“With our lead philanthropic partner, the Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust, we are positioning Chicago as the pilot market for health disparities clinical trials,” said Barbara Goodman, president and CEO of Cures Within Reach. “We encourage philanthropic organizations in other regions to join us so that we can find and fund similar research testing already approved therapies in new indications in their regions, thereby expanding our broad DEI efforts and patient impact.”

The effort to address health inequities that's beginning in Chicago can be easily replicated in other metropolitan areas.

“We are excited about this pilot of clinical trials to find alternative uses for existing treatments. By focusing on underserved communities of color, the pilot can help demonstrate new ways to address the health disparities that result from the same systemic inequity that created our region's racial and ethnic wealth gap,” said Helene Gayle, MD, MPH, president and CEO of The Chicago Community



Trust. “In the long-term, we hope this will be a model for biomedical communities across the country,”

Researchers of color are underrepresented in scientific research, according to a 2020 report from the National Institutes of Health.

Walder Foundation believes the clinical trials will promote two essential objectives. “We must proactively work towards solutions to diseases and conditions that have a disproportionate impact on communities of color, as well as enhance opportunities for underrepresented scientists,” said Elizabeth Walder, president and executive director of Walder Foundation.

Cures Within Reach finds and funds clinical trials using approved therapies to fast-track safe and effective treatments for patients with unmet medical needs. In 2020, Cures Within Reach funded clinical trials focused on reducing the burden of COVID-19 on Black and Latinx communities and 3 led by underrepresented researchers in LMICs.

“There is a very real and pressing need to diversify the clinical trial ecosystem to include traditionally under-represented patients and researchers, particularly those from communities of color, says Dr. Chris Reddick, Vice President and Head of R&D Health Equity at Takeda. “We are working with partners like Cures Within Reach to empower clinical researchers to address the health inequities that matter most to their communities and ultimately to provide better care for their patients long-term.”

On November 9, Cures Within Reach is holding a virtual event, Diversity of Clinical Trial Researchers and Patients, on the dual opportunities of clinical trial diversity to impact health disparities and/or improve minority leadership in scientific research. Free to patients and caregivers, more details are at [bit.ly/cwrghra2021](https://bit.ly/cwrghra2021).

Cures Within Reach’s focuses on first-in-human or proof-of-concept clinical repurposing trials that, if successful, catalyze follow-on funding needed to continue the research – building enough evidence for reputable publication allowing clinicians to make their own decisions with their patients (called off-label use), or for regulatory approval by the FDA or other agencies. In addition to this DEI initiative, other 2021 initiatives at Cures Within Reach include impacting Veterans’ Issues and Pediatrics.