

Nine clinical trials starting soon in health disparities and/or led by underserved researchers

These Diversity, Equity & Inclusion trials, funded by Cures Within Reach, include support from community-based organizations

Chicago – May 5, 2022 – [Cures Within Reach](#), a global nonprofit that identifies and funds clinical trials testing approved therapies in new indications to improve patients’ lives, recently announced the selection of **nine Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)-related clinical trials** starting as early as Spring 2022 after regulatory and related approvals.

Five of the nine are **health disparities trials** that include engagement with health and/or social services-related community-based organizations that are trusted and already engaged with communities of color to support the trials. These trials also seek to engage and educate prospective participants, help to reduce both mistrust and distrust, and share the opportunity to improve the health and healthcare of communities of color. This community engagement is an integral part of these clinical trials.

Respected research institutions across the U.S. will start the following clinical trials soon, all led by underrepresented researchers and four within health disparities:

- Testing a combination of repurposed cancer drugs to treat **oral cancer** in Pacific Islander patients at Stanford University
- Repurposing pelvic floor electrical stimulation for the treatment of **chronic pelvic pain** at University of California, Los Angeles
- Addressing **chronic pain in HIV** patients with an approved addiction treatment at Emory University School of Medicine
- Repurposing a diagnostic device to address health disparities in **esophageal cancer** screening and outcomes in Black and Hispanic patients at University of Illinois, Chicago
- Topical probiotic sinus irrigations for the treatment of **chronic rhinosinusitis**: a randomized controlled trial at University of Illinois, Chicago
- Repurposing a rare disease treatment for the immune disorder [eosinophilic esophagitis](#) at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

In addition, three more clinical trials will start soon in low and lower-middle income countries (LMICs):

- For **pancreatitis/chronic pancreatitis** patients in India
- For **triple negative breast cancer** in Nigeria
- In [pediatric chronic ear infections](#) in Nigeria

The nine trials were selected as part of Cures Within Reach’s [DEI](#) efforts to reduce health disparities, improve health equity and increase diversity in medical research. These proof-of-concept clinical repurposing trials may help overcome skepticism among patients of color regarding clinical trial participation. In the U.S., this initiative also helps to support racial and ethnic minority researchers who receive less funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other sources, and, therefore, are underserved in scientific research, according to a 2020 NIH report.



Cures Within Reach's DEI trials are supported by donors and sponsors that include the **Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust, Takeda Pharmaceuticals' R&D Center for Health Equity and Patient Affairs, Burroughs Wellcome Fund** and others.

"Burroughs Wellcome Fund (BWF) is excited to partner with Cures Within Reach to address health disparities. By engaging community-based organizations who are actively working with the communities affected by health inequities, innovative new therapies are more accessible to a wider swath of patients," said BWF Program Officer Dr. Kelly Rose. "Involving a diverse patient population in clinical trials can lead to a data set that more accurately represents how the intervention will work in the general public and lead to more robust therapies."

"Our funding partners represent a variety of interests, but with aligned goals to address health disparities," said Barbara Goodman, president and CEO of Cures Within Reach. "These include foundations with geographic interests, industry who prioritizes health equity beyond their own portfolio, and private foundations who value catalytic impact in unsolved diseases through low-risk, high-reward efforts that we support."

Cures Within Reach focuses on first-in-human or proof-of-concept clinical repurposing trials that catalyze the follow-on funding needed to continue the research – building evidence for publication and follow-on trials 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 2022 initiatives at Cures Within Reach include impacting Veterans' Issues and Pediatrics, as well as several disease-specific efforts.

"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."