

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/nimhhome/index.cfm>

The NIMH mission is to reduce the burden of mental illness and behavioral disorders through research on mind, brain, and behavior. This public health mandate demands that we harness powerful scientific tools to achieve better understanding, treatment, and eventually, prevention of these disabling conditions that affect millions of Americans.

In 1993, Congress mandated that minorities and women must be included in all clinical research studies, that trials must permit valid analysis, and that NIH (including NIMH) must support outreach efforts to recruit minorities and women in clinical studies (Public Law PL 103-43). Furthermore, Congress mandated that cost is not allowed as a reason for exclusion of minorities or women in clinical trials.

Sample NIMH Funded Studies

- Sequenced Treatment Alternative to Relieve Depression (STAR-D) study:
 - 17 percent Black/African-American subjects
 - 8 percent Hispanic/Latino subjects.
- Clinical Antipsychotic Trials of Intervention Effectiveness (CATIE) study of schizophrenia:
 - 34 percent Black/African-American subjects
 - 10 percent Hispanic/Latino subjects.
- Systematic Treatment for Enhancement Program for Bipolar Disorder (STEP-BD):
 - 4 percent Black/African American subjects
 - 3 percent Hispanic/Latino subjects.

Sample Minority-Specific Research Studies Funded by NIMH

- American Indian Services Utilization and Psychiatric Epidemiology Risk and Protective Factors Project (AI-SUPERPFP).
 - National Survey of African Americans (NSAA)
 - National Latino and Asian American Survey (NLAAS)
- All three studies use cultural specific measurements and have representative samples.

NIMH Efforts to Reduce Disparities in Mental Health

- Office for Special Populations (OSP)
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/osp/index.cfm>
 - Develops and coordinates research policies and programs to assure increased emphasis on the mental health needs of women and minority populations.

- Supports programs of basic and applied social and behavioral research on the mental health problems of women and minorities.
- Studies the effects of discrimination on institutions and individuals, including majority institutions and individuals
- Supports and develops research designed to eliminate institutional discrimination Provides increased emphasis on the concerns of women and minority populations in the Institute's training, service delivery, and research programs.
- Supported programs:
 - Advanced Centers For Mental Health Disparities Research (ACMHDR)
 - NIMH Career Opportunities in Research Education and Training (COR) Honors Undergraduate Research Training Grants (T34)
 - NIMH Minority Research Infrastructure Support Program (R24)
 - Mental Health Dissertation Research Grant To Increase Diversity (R36)
- NIMH Five-Year Strategic Plan for Reducing Health Disparities
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/strategic/healthdisparities.pdf>
 In 2001 NIMH developed a five-year Strategic Plan to address disparities through research. The plan focuses on 4 main areas:
 1. Increasing the knowledge base by which disparities are documented and understood.
 2. Improving outcomes of interventions and services through research.
 3. Expanding institutional research infrastructures, research training, and career development.
 4. Enhancing public information outreach and dissemination.
 OSP is the office charge with implementing the plan.