

**Enhancing Health Disparities Research Related to Substance Use and Addiction:
Research Gaps and Opportunities
February 16, 2021, 1:00 to 5:00pm Eastern Time
February 17, 2021, 1:00 to 4:30pm Eastern Time**

Sponsored by the Research Gaps and Opportunities Workgroup of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Racial Equity Initiative

The goals of this virtual meeting are to discuss research gaps on racial inequities in substance use and addiction and to inform NIDA’s commitment to this area by identifying short- and long-term plans for enhancing the research portfolio. Discussion will center on research in areas where there are known racial/ethnic inequities; and where research has the greatest potential to reduce those disparities. These include, but are not limited to, persistent health disparities related to substance use, addiction, and related outcomes; a lack of attention to research questions most salient to underrepresented communities; and existing system bias in the scientific enterprise. The overarching goal of the Research Gaps and Opportunities Workgroup is to engage the scientific community in identifying research priorities that can inform NIDA programs/funding opportunities and ultimately reduce health disparities and improve outcomes.

VIRTUAL MEETING AGENDA
DAY 1: SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

TIME	PROGRAM
1:00	Welcome Remarks <i>Speaker: Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director, NIDA</i>
1:15	Meeting Overview <i>Speakers: Meeting Co-chairs, Will M. Aklin, Ph.D., Director, Behavioral Therapy Development Program, Division of Therapeutics and Medical Consequences (DTMC); Carlos Blanco, M.D., Ph.D., Division Director, Division of Epidemiology, Services and Prevention Research (DESPR)</i>
1:30	Keynote Presentation #1: Opportunities for NIDA to Transform their Disparities Research <i>Speaker: Margarita Alegria, Ph.D., Chief, Disparities Research Unit, Massachusetts General Hospital</i>
1:45	Keynote Presentation #2: Unpacking the ‘Causes of the Causes’ and the Need to Mandate Equity to Address the Social Determinants of Health <i>Speaker: Debra Furr-Holden, Ph.D., Director, Flint Center for Health Equity Solutions; Associate Dean for Public Health Integration, Michigan State University College of Human Medicine</i>
2:00	BREAK
2:10	Discussion Session 1: Priorities for racial inequity research related to substance use and addiction (<i>Keynote speaker #1 will join a panel of 3 members from the scientific</i>

community to discuss priorities for racial inequity related to substance use and addiction. The below listed questions will be covered in depth, as well as questions that will be moderated from meeting attendees)

Questions

1. How can we more effectively study the interaction between race and social, psychological, and structural factors in relation to substance use and addiction? What are the key elements that define research studies that have the potential to advance efforts toward racial equity in health? How can we expand current research to ensure it informs on racial equity?
2. What research topics should NIDA prioritize to fully address racial inequities? For example, how might stigma research, as well as treatment outcomes and dissemination research be expanded to benefit people of color?
3. How best do we prioritize research areas of interest to PIs of color, which may in turn reduce the funding disparity?

Session 1 Panelists:

- *Margarita Alegria, Ph.D., Chief, Disparities Research Unit, Massachusetts General Hospital*
- [Sandro Galea, M.D., MPH, DrPH, Dean and Robert A. Knox Professor, Boston University](#)
- [Helena Hansen, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Director, Center for Social Medicine and Humanities, University of California, Los Angeles](#)
- [Wizdom Powell, Ph.D., Director, Health Disparities Institute, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at University of Connecticut Health](#)

Moderated Discussion/Q&A

Research Gaps and Opportunity Committee Member: [Aria Crump, Sc.D., Deputy Branch Chief of Prevention, Division of Epidemiology, Services and Prevention Research \(DESPR\)](#)

3:10

BREAK

3:20

Discussion Session 2: Study designs for studying racial inequities (Format: Keynote speaker #2 will join a panel of 3 members from the external scientific community to discuss priorities for racial inequity related to substance use and addiction. The below listed questions will be covered in depth, as well as questions that will be moderated from meeting attendees)

Questions

1. What research designs and methods are most appropriate for addressing questions of racial inequities?
2. How do we balance generalizability/scalability with cultural adaptation?
3. What contextual variables should be included to ensure that findings about racial differences can uncover underlying causes rather than being attributed to race itself? What other steps should be taken to support informed data interpretation?
4. What are the implications and sample sizes needed?

5. What is required to support true community engagement? What mechanisms best support this and what programs might be developed to support community engagement goals that are required to attain scientific goals?
6. In addition to efforts on best practices around having diverse panels for review, how might NIDA along with the Division of External Research develop evaluation to assess best practices for evaluating research equity opportunities and gaps?

Session 2 Panelists:

- *Debra Furr- Holden, Ph.D., Director, Flint Center for Health Equity Solutions; Associate Dean for Public Health Integration, Michigan State University College of Human Medicine*
- [Elena A. Erosheva, Ph.D., Associate Director, Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences, University of Washington](#)
- [Guillermo J. Prado, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, University of Miami](#)
- [Tabia Henry Akintobi, Ph.D., MPH., Professor of Community Health and Preventive Medicine, Morehouse School of Medicine](#)

Moderated Discussion/Q&A

Research Gaps and Opportunity Committee Member: [Kathy Etz, Ph.D., Program Officer, Division of Epidemiology, Services and Prevention Research \(DESPR\)](#)

4:20	BREAK
4:30	Closing Remarks <i>Speakers: Meeting Co-chairs, Will M. Aklin, Ph.D., Program Director, DTMC; Carlos Blanco, M.D., Ph.D., Division Director, DESPR</i>
5:00	Adjourn

DAY 2: HARNESSING BASIC SCIENCE TO UNDERSTAND RACIAL DISPARITIES AND THE IMPACT OF RACISM

TIME	PROGRAM
1:00	Day 1 Recap <i>Research Gaps and Opportunity Committee Member: <u>Carol Hubner, Ph.D., Health Scientist Administrator & Associate Director, Addiction Treatment Discovery Program, Division of Medications Discovery and Toxicology Branch (DTMC)</u></i>
1:15	Keynote Presentation #1: Genomic Architecture, Brain Science, and Neuroethics <i>Speaker: <u>Kafui Dzirasa, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Duke University</u></i>
1:30	Keynote Presentation #2: Racial Discrimination, Precursors of Health Disparities, and Prevention <i>Speaker: <u>Gene Brody, Ph.D., Regents' Professor of Child and Family Development and Director of Center for Family Research, University of Georgia</u></i>

1:45	BREAK
2:00	<p>Discussion Session 1: Responsible integration of race in basic science research to better understand health disparities</p> <p>Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why should basic scientists incorporate race into their studies? 2. What research designs and methods are most appropriate for addressing questions of racial inequities? For example, how can social determinants of health be incorporated into basic research? What contextual variables should be included to ensure that findings about racial differences can uncover underlying causes rather than being attributed to race itself? 3. What are the implications for recruitment and community engagement? 4. What steps or considerations should be taken to support informed data interpretation? <p>Session 1 Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kafui Dzirasa, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Duke University</i> • <u>Martha J Farah, Ph.D., Professor in Natural Sciences and Director, Center for Neuroscience & Society, University of Pennsylvania</u> • <u>Raul Gonzalez, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry and Immunology, Florida International University</u> • <u>Natalie Slopen, Sc.D., Assistant Professor, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, University of Maryland</u> <p>Moderated Discussion/Q&A <i>Research Gaps and Opportunity Committee Member: <u>Holly Moore, Ph.D., Program Officer, Division of Neuroscience and Behavior (DNB)</u></i></p>
3:10	BREAK
3:20	<p>Discussion Session 2: Priorities for understanding the biological impacts of racism and how basic science research can advance efforts toward racial equity in health?</p> <p>Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can we more effectively study the biological impacts of racism and whether or how they may play a role in substance use and addiction? 2. How can research on the biological impacts of racism be used to advance efforts toward racial equity in health? 3. What basic science research topics should NIDA prioritize to fully address racial inequities? <p>Session 2 Panelists:</p>

- *Gene Brody, Ph.D., Regents' Professor of Child and Family Development and Director of Center for Family Research, University of Georgia*
- [Tallie Z. Baram, Ph.D., Professor, Pediatrics, Anatomy and Neurobiology, Neurology, Physiology and Biophysics, University California, Irvine](#)
- [Jean Lud Cadet, M.D., Senior Investigator, Molecular Neuropsychiatry Branch, National Institutes of Health, Intramural Research Program](#)
- [Rohan Palmer, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology, Emory University](#)

Moderated Discussion/Q&A

Research Gaps and Opportunity Committee Member: [Mehdi Farokhnia, M.D., Staff Scientist, Clinical Psychoneuroendocrinology and Neuropsychopharmacology Section, NIDA Intramural Research Program \(IRP\)](#)

4:20

Meeting Wrap-Up/Closing Remarks

Speakers: Meeting Co-chairs, Will M. Aklin, Ph.D., Program Director, DTMC; Carlos Blanco, M.D., Ph.D., Division Director, DESPR

4:30

Adjourn