

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Health Equity

Accelerating a Cure for Each and Every Patient

The mission of the MMRF is to accelerate a cure for each and every patient, because we believe that every patient deserves the best possible outcome. Myeloma can affect anyone, but some populations, including the Black community and older adults, are at higher risk. Moreover, these same groups are more likely to be underserved by the healthcare system and underrepresented in myeloma research. As part of our commitment to addressing disparities in access and care, we believe that every patient deserves equitable access to high-quality resources and opportunities to optimize their outcomes.

Why Focus on DEI & Health Equity?

Inequity runs deep in our healthcare system, and the multiple myeloma community is no exception. Because of racial and ethnic biases, social and financial disparities, and lack of access to quality care, outcomes for patients from underserved communities are much worse than they are for other patients.

Addressing Inequalities in Myeloma

Our goals and initiatives focus on driving greater inclusivity and representation in research studies, addressing disparities that affect patient outcomes and access to quality care through awareness and education, and building a partner network and research community that reflects the diverse patient population that we serve.

Myeloma in the Black Community

Myeloma is the leading blood cancer in the Black community and Black patients make up 20 percent of the approximately 35,000 people diagnosed with myeloma in the United States each year. Despite the high incidence of myeloma in the Black community, most Black patients are diagnosed later when compared to other patient populations. They are also underrepresented in the research and clinical studies that are driving new treatments. In addition, increases in survival rates for Black patients have not kept pace with improved survival rates seen in other patient populations. Yet research has shown that when Black myeloma patients experience a timely diagnosis and receive standard of care treatment, they can achieve the same, or better, disease outcomes as other myeloma patient populations.

Increasing Inclusive Access to Clinical Trials

We're committed to increasing patient access to clinical trials, and increasing the representation of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and other underserved patient communities in myeloma research. We're building these priorities into our research initiatives by:

- Implementing diversity plans and appointing diversity officers for all MMRF-sponsored clinical trials
- Building partnerships with sites in community settings, where most patients are treated, to reach underserved patients
- Broadening eligibility criteria to reduce barriers to participation by underserved patients
- Addressing patient financial barriers to participation

Increasing Access to Educational Resources

To address the lack of access to myeloma specialists among underserved communities, the MMRF is forming partnerships with the health systems and organizations that serve these communities. In addition, we deliver high-quality education resources and programming, both virtually and in-person. We are also identifying cities with a high population of patients of color and developing materials geared toward varying levels of health literacy.

Building a More Diverse Research Community

We are committed to ensuring that the myeloma research and clinical community more closely represents the patient populations they serve by increasing the diversity of the workforce. We launched the MMRF Research Scholars Program to promote the careers of Black post-doctoral researchers and physicians, or those in their first tenure-track jobs in myeloma research. We are also committed to ensuring that at least half of the MMRF Research Fellows Award recipients, who are chosen from the ranks of early career laboratory researchers, are researchers of color.

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

Lazarex Cancer Foundation

The MMRF is partnering with the Lazarex Cancer Foundation, a non-profit organization that improves patient access to cancer clinical trials, to offer myeloma patients financial assistance to cover costs such as transportation and housing when travel is required to participate in myeloma studies.

Help Us Expand Health Equity

Philanthropic support will fuel The Next Leap Forward and empower multiple myeloma patients and expand health equity for underserved patients with myeloma, ensuring that they have the access to clinical trials and novel therapies. Connect with the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation team directly by contacting Brian Hochberg at development@themmrf.org or **203-652-0444**.

**Multiple Myeloma
Research Foundation**
383 Main Avenue
5th Floor
Norwalk, CT 06851