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## Racial Inequities in Neuroendocrine Tumor Clinical Trial Enrollment in the United States

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### BACKGROUND

The incidence of neuroendocrine tumors (NETs) continues to rise. Despite several therapeutic advances, racial inequities in outcomes among patients with NETs remain prevalent. We sought to investigate racial inequities in clinical trial enrolment in NET therapeutic clinical trials in the US.

### METHODS

We extracted data from [clinicaltrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov) in July 2024 for all completed U.S.-based interventional clinical trials including patients with "neuroendocrine tumors". Only trials with race distribution in the database or in published reports were included. We extracted data on racial distribution of participants and compared them with the prevalence of NETs in respective categories of race using data from Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER; SEER 18 and SEER-Medicare) database. We then captured additional data related to the clinical trials such as site (single or multi-center), funding source (academic, National Cancer Institute (NCI) or industry), phase (1, 2 or 3), and number of participants.

### RESULTS

A total of 88 NET therapeutic clinical trials were identified, of which, only 37 (42.5%) clinical trials reported breakdown of participants by race. A total of 2,101 trial participants across these 37 clinical trials were included in the analysis, of which majority were White (1772/2101, 84.3%), followed by other races (201/2101, 9.6%) and Black patients (128/2101, 6.1%). Black patients were significantly under-represented in clinical trials ( $p < 0.01$ , 6.1% v. 13.0%), compared to the 2018 SEER prevalence data. White patients were not found to be significantly over- or under-represented in clinical trials ( $p = 0.11$ , 84.3% v. 83.0%). On average, Black patients had higher rates of enrollment in academic (12.5%) and NCI-funded (26.6%) trials compared to other races (4.5% and 13.9%) and White (5.9% and 16.3%) patients ( $p < 0.01$ ). Rates of enrollment in industry-funded trials were lowest for Black patients (60.9%) compared to other races (81.6%) and White (78.6%) patients ( $p < 0.01$ ). Black patients were more likely to be represented in phase 2 clinical trials compared to phase 1 or 3 trials ( $p < 0.01$ ) and on trials commenced after 2012 as opposed to those commenced before 2012 ( $p < 0.01$ ).

## CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis highlights that about 60% of NET therapeutic clinical trials in the US do not report a racial breakdown of participants. Black patients were significantly under-represented in NET clinical trials. Factors such as funding source, phase and year of trial commencement were notably associated with representation of Black patients. Our findings underscore the critical need to diversify clinical trial participation for patients with NETs in the US.

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