



## **WHAT DOES PRECISION MEDICINE MEAN FOR AANHPI PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS?**

### **PRECISION MEDICINE USES ALL AVAILABLE DATA FOR MORE EFFECTIVE MEDICINE**

“Precision medicine” is an approach to disease treatment and preventative care that takes the full diversity of the individual into account, including their environment, lifestyle, behaviors, and genes. For clinicians, it means having the best information and tools available to treat patients from all walks of life. For patients, it means receiving treatment that is tailored to their unique needs.

Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) experience many health disparities. A major contributing factor for this disparity is that they have often been excluded in the research that leads to the development of treatments and prevention programs. To put it simply: there is not sufficient information about AANHPI health. Strides have been made by researchers and advocates, but there is a huge need for more AANHPI inclusion in research.

### **PRECISE TREATMENTS ARE IMPORTANT FOR AANHPI HEALTH**

Here are just two examples of how a lack of information, and a lack of precise treatments, has negatively impacted AANHPI:

- “Screen at 23” / Diabetes Screening Practices: Asian Americans are at a higher risk of getting type 2 diabetes than Whites, and their diabetes risk is higher at a lower body mass index.<sup>1</sup> Up until 2015, national screening guidelines did not take into account this risk, because they had not been included in large national studies, and awareness of their increased risk was low.
  - Now, we know that Asian Americans should be screened at a BMI of 23 (not 25), but that they are the least likely ethnic group to be given a diabetes screening test, despite over 50% of Asian Americans with diabetes being undiagnosed.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Diabetes Home. “Diabetes and Asian Americans” Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, October 2016 <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/library/spotlights/diabetes-asian-americans.html>.

<sup>2</sup> National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, News Releases. “More than half of Asian Americans with diabetes are undiagnosed” Bethesda

- Adverse Drug Effects: Asian Americans, as well as Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, are extremely underrepresented in clinical trials.<sup>3</sup> Drug therapies are not designed for them specifically, and sometimes this can lead to serious consequences. In 2005, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a warning and changed the label for a widely prescribed statin drug after a study revealed that Asians had an increased risk of muscle damage as a side effect. The new label recommended Asian patients be started at the lowest dose possible.<sup>4</sup>
  - We know that AANHPI need more information on clinical trials and their potential benefits, as well as participation in research efforts. Without increased participation, we won't know about potential harms of drugs in specific populations - not until well after they've hit the market and been prescribed.

## **NCAPIP IS INVESTED IN IMPROVING AANHPI HEALTH RESEARCH AND HEALTH OUTCOMES**

The National Council of Asian Pacific Islanders (NCAPIP) is a national policy advocacy organization of Asian and Pacific Islander physicians advocating for optimal health and healthcare for their patients and communities. Over the years, we have been advocating for more research to better understand how diseases, medications, and treatment options impact our different populations. **We have long said that one size, one dose, one option, does not fit all, and that we need accurate information on our patients to help them better.** We are now working to raise awareness of the value of precision medicine, and the need for more AANHPI physicians and patients to be involved in research.

We have often been met with the following challenge: *"We don't have the data on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI), let alone on specific subgroups, to be able to move the needle in eliminating disparities and improving health outcomes for our communities."*

We hope you will engage with NCAPIP as we continue to raise awareness of precision medicine and programs that help lead to it becoming a reality for all patients.

**[www.ncapip.org](http://www.ncapip.org)**

---

<sup>3</sup> Ma, Grace X. et al. "Increasing Asian American Participation in Clinical Trials by Addressing Community Concerns." *Clinical trials (London, England)* 11.3 (2014): 328–335. *PMC*. Web. 1 June 2018.

<sup>4</sup> WebMD, "FDA Updates Crestor Warning Information" WebMD, March 2005  
<https://www.webmd.com/cholesterol-management/news/20050303/fda-updates-crestor-warning-information#1>