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Declaration of Interests

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A summary of The Lancet Group's guidance to authors on reporting race and ethnicity

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Power disparities lie at the heart of racism and discrimination, and medical journals such as *The Lancet* have long held positions of great power. *The Lancet* has provided a platform for research and health-care systems that have disadvantaged certain racial and ethnic groups, adversely affecting research integrity and perpetuating inequities harmful to health and society.¹ Recognising this, The Lancet Group pledged solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 and is working to turn that pledge into action. This includes revising its guidance to authors² on reporting race and ethnicity across The Lancet Group of journals. The guidelines formalise editorial initiatives that were already in place³ and were further developed after consultation with The Lancet Group for Racial Equity (GRacE), comprising volunteer staff members, GRacE's external Racial Equity Advisory Board,⁴ other international experts, and editorial colleagues across The Lancet Group.

Our guidance encourages researchers to include people from minoritised racial or ethnic populations as research participants and to plan to report and analyse data by race, ethnicity, or both. We ask authors to explain what definitions or categories were used in reporting race or ethnicity, the conceptual framework behind the choice of categorisation, and how these categories were assigned. If data on race or ethnicity were not collected, analysed, or reported, we ask authors to explain why to better understand barriers. When discussing their results, we ask authors to remark on the representativeness of the study population to help readers assess the applicability of the findings to their own setting.

For research specifically involving groups that have historically been marginalised, we also

ask how researchers have prioritised community engagement and self-determination in the research process. Such practices reduce the potential for harm to these communities, ensure that research reflects the priorities of these communities, and increase real-world effectiveness. For all papers focused on minoritised populations, we encourage researchers to include authors from those populations.

Because race is a sociocultural construct rather than a fixed biological trait,² we ask that discussions of observed disparities in data regarding racial or ethnic groups consider the wider context of socioeconomic or other structural drivers of these disparities, such as colonisation or racism, for which race or ethnicity may be surrogate measures. We ask authors to qualify race-based associations drawn from observational data by discussing the potential limitations of such data and the possible role of unmeasured confounders.

We also ask authors to consider a strengths-based approach,⁵ rather than a so-called deficit discourse, when discussing findings related to race and ethnicity. For instance, instead of focusing purely on the problems, how might findings lead to improved health outcomes?

We do not seek to minimise or obfuscate data highlighting disparities; such data help to understand where inequities lie, to measure progress, and to hold relevant stakeholders – including funders and policymakers – accountable. Rather, our new guidance is a further means to oppose racism and advance equity.

Note: Adapted with permission by Diana Samuel, from original article:

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