



Heart failure data challenge to address social and structural determinants of health

Dallas, TX – March 16, 2021 – In an effort to better understand the impact around the social and structural determinants of health on heart failure, the [American Heart Association](#) and the [Association of Black Cardiologists](#) today launched a data challenge to encourage cross collaboration among researchers.

The American Heart Association, the leading voluntary organization devoted to longer, healthier lives, recognizes structural racism as a major cause of poor health and premature death from heart disease and stroke¹. The data challenge is specifically focused on testing the relationships between heart failure and health disparities, social determinants of health and structural determinants of health.

- Health disparities include environmental threats, individual and behavioral factors, inadequate access to health care, poverty and educational inequalities.
- Social determinants of health include resources such as food supply, housing, economic and social relationships, education and health care.
- Structural determinants of health include economic, governing and social policies that affect pay, working conditions, housing and education.

“Addressing racial and ethnic disparities in heart failure diagnosis and treatment is key to combatting the high rate of heart failure and cardiovascular mortality for diverse patient

¹ Churchwell K, Elkind MSV, Benjamin RM, et al. Call to action: structural racism as a fundamental driver of health disparities: a presidential advisory from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2020;142(24).

populations, especially for Black patients,” said Michelle A. Albert, MD, MPH, president of the Association of Black Cardiologists. “In order to move the needle, we must develop implementation strategies that incorporate social determinants of health to decrease the toll of heart failure in diverse populations.”

Researchers will use data from the American Heart Association’s Get With the Guidelines® - Heart Failure program on the American Heart Association’s [Precision Medicine Platform](#). They may also bring additional data. The Precision Medicine Platform provides streamlined data access and cloud-based workspaces, removing traditional barriers researchers often face when approaching challenging scientific questions.

“At the American Heart Association, equity and science are at the center of everything we do,” said Mitchell S. V. Elkind, M.D., MS, FAAN, FAHA, president of the American Heart Association, professor of neurology and epidemiology at Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons and attending neurologist at New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center. “Using the Precision Medicine Platform, researchers across disciplines can come together to help us better understand how social and structural determinants of health impact heart failure in patients of multiple races and ethnicities.”

Researchers will compete for a \$25,000 grand prize, with the second-place team receiving \$10,000 and the third-place team receiving \$5,000. All applications will be peer reviewed by a panel of data science and heart failure experts. Publication is a requirement for the winning teams in an effort to more widely disseminate the findings to the public. Announcement of winning teams is planned for October 2021.

The mission of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc. is to promote the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease, including stroke, in Blacks and other minorities, and to

achieve health equity for all through the elimination of disparities. The Association of Black Cardiologists assisted with the design of the data challenge and members will participate as reviewers.

To learn more about how to participate in the Heart Failure Data Challenge, researchers should click [here](#).

Additional Resources:

- Available multimedia is on right column of release link:
<https://newsroom.heart.org/news/heart-failure-data-challenge-to-address-social-and-structural-determinants-of-health>
- American Heart Association COVID-19 Data Challenge winners [press release](#)
- [Video](#): Dr. Jennifer Hall on equity, diversity and social determinants of health in the COVID-19 Data Challenge
- [Precision Medicine Platform](#)
- Follow AHA/ASA news on Twitter [@HeartNews](#)

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About American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. We are dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities. Through collaboration with numerous organizations, and powered by millions of volunteers, we fund innovative research, advocate for the public's health and share lifesaving resources. The Dallas-based organization has been a leading source of health information for nearly a century. Connect with us on [heart.org](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.

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[heart.org](#) and [stroke.org](#)

Association of Black Cardiologists

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