



Diversity, equity and inclusion in cardiovascular medicine and research

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are key to innovation, but the culture in the cardiovascular medical and research sector is often not supportive of diversity and collaboration.

This issue of *Nature Reviews Cardiology* features a selection of articles that emphasize the importance of a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce in improving the quality of patient care and scientific research. These articles are brought together with others from our journal archive in an online Collection entitled [DEI in Cardiology](#), which will be continually updated.

In a Roadmap article, [Francine Z. Marques and colleagues](#) warn that the cardiovascular research workforce is at imminent risk as a result of low staff retention, particularly among female scientists, and we urgently need solutions that can be implemented at an individual, organizational and sector-wide level to improve retention and increase diversity. The authors present a set of actionable strategies aimed at addressing issues experienced by early-career and mid-career cardiovascular researchers that focus on three key areas: capacity building, research funding and fostering diversity and equity. These strategies, they say, could allow the cardiovascular research sector to thrive and, in turn, to reduce the global burden of cardiovascular disease.

Given that cardiology is a male-dominated profession, the editors of *Nature Reviews Cardiology* wanted to highlight the voices of some of the leading female cardiologists from around the world. In a series of World View articles, [Andréa A. Brandão](#) from Brazil, [Yaling Han](#) from China, [Ana Mocumbi](#) from Mozambique and [Nizal Sarrafzadegan](#) from Iran share the challenges that they faced during different stages of their careers, including sociocultural expectations and gender-based discrimination. Two common themes were apparent throughout their stories: the difficulty of maintaining a good balance between their professional and family lives, and having their capabilities undermined at times because of their gender.

In a Comment article, the leadership team behind the [Black In Cardio](#) initiative highlight that, globally, Black people have some of the highest rates of cardiovascular disease and that racial inequities in cardiovascular health need to be proactively addressed. Black In Cardio is a trainee-led initiative aimed at raising awareness of issues related to the cardiovascular health of Black communities and promoting the representation of Black people in the cardiovascular field. Their concern is that racial

inequities in cardiovascular diseases cannot be eliminated without adequate representation of Black people in a diverse cardiovascular workforce.

Three more Comment articles focus on various initiatives that can contribute to building and promoting a more diverse, equitable, inclusive and respectful work environment in cardiovascular medicine and research. [Pamela S. Douglas](#) raises awareness of the pervasive nature and negative effects of bullying in cardiology and highlights the requirements for implementing an anti-bullying culture, which, she argues, requires commitment, resources and sustained effort. Childbearing cardiologists face several challenges during pregnancy and early parenthood, including inadequate parental leave and return-to-work structures. [Inbar Raber](#) and [Amy A. Sarma](#) provide recommendations to address these challenges through the development of policies and the investment of resources to support cardiologists during pregnancy and early parenthood. Mentorship is also a key element to success and satisfaction among both mentors and mentees. In their Comment article, [Martha Gulati](#) and [Priya Kohli](#) discuss, from the point of view of a mentor–mentee pair, the necessary attributes for a productive mentorship relationship.

Finally, the team at *Nature Reviews Cardiology* pledge to contribute to fostering more diverse and inclusive research and clinical communities. We strive towards having diverse demographic representation, particularly with respect to gender and geography, in our author and peer reviewer pools. So far, some of our efforts have included increased transparency in our peer review process by giving referees the opportunity to be named in published Reviews, as well as an initiative to involve more early-career researchers in our peer review process by encouraging established referees to co-review with one early-career researcher.

Building a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment in which cardiologists and cardiovascular researchers can thrive is a long-term, iterative process. Meaningful change requires time and a coordinated effort from all stakeholders. *Nature Reviews Cardiology* is committed to advocating for change, amplifying a diverse range of voices, and practising equity and inclusion in all its editorial processes.

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