



*“Bringing people together to serve humanity”*

## National Black Church Initiative National Clinical Strategy

### *Answering the Call for DIVERSITY In COVID-19 Pharmaceutical Trials*

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of 34,000 African American faith communities who also have additional access to up to 150,000 faith communities. This constitutes 26.7 million African American churchgoers. With this demographic pool, the NCBI has access to a wide spectrum of health issues that impact vulnerable populations and in particular African Americans.

African Americans who suffer from COVID19 are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to experience more severe outcomes and more likely to die from COVID19. As such health disparities have now become almost as much of an associated word with COVID 19 as the world economy. Therefore, it is **vital** that African Americans participate in any clinical trials involving potential medications, vaccines, or cures for COVID 19. Senator Mark Warner and several Senate Colleagues recently urged pharmaceutical companies to ensure that any new treatments they develop work for **all communities** across the country. In that letter, the Senators stated:

*“The disparities in the COVID-19 pandemic are exacerbated by higher rates of chronic disease among many minority populations, inequitable access to health care, and bias within the health care system itself. As such, any clinical trials for vaccines and therapeutic treatments of COVID-19 must include participants that racially, socioeconomically, and otherwise demographically represent the United States... “This virus is striking in its disproportionate impact on minority populations, and it more important than ever that these populations are represented in any clinical trials.”*

In that same communication, those companies undertaking the development of drugs and vaccines were also urged to...” examine new and creative ways to enroll a diverse set of participants in COVID-19-related trials such as reducing barriers to clinical trials...and investing

in participant recruitment by partnering with minority health and community advocacy groups.” NBCI’s National Clinical Strategy is an innovative approach to dividing the African American community into clinical zones for the explicit purpose of mitigating health disparities through clinical trial participation.

### **How to contact us:**

If your organization is engaged in a clinical trial research and in need of assistance to facilitate the engagement of African Americans please contact for Rev. Evans - President NBCI; Evelyn Lewis MD, MA, FAAFP, DABDA – Chief Medical Officer, Warrior Centric Health or Owen Garrick, MD, MBA - President & CEO Bridge Clinical Research at [dcpci2002@gmail.com](mailto:dcpci2002@gmail.com).

Dr. Evelyn Lewis – Principal Investigator

Rev. Anthony Evans – Co-Investigator

Dr. Owen Garrick – Co-Investigator

**Evelyn Lewis, MD, MA, FAAFP, DABDA** is nationally recognized for her expertise in the areas of community outreach, engagement, Veteran health, program development, and evaluation, health and healthcare disparities. Dr. Lewis earned her medical degree from the University of the Health Sciences Chicago Medical School and a MA degree from Pacific Lutheran University. She currently serves as Chief Medical Officer for Warrior Centric Health, LLC and an Appointee to the Advisory Committee on Disability Compensation. She is an Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Family and Community Health, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Clinical Instructor, Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. Previous positions include Senior Researcher in Minority Health and Health Disparities Dillard University; President American Academy Family Physicians Foundation; Deputy Director, W. Montague Cobb/ National Medical Association Health Institute. Dr. Lewis has also served as PI on numerous projects and has been the recipient of grant funding from NIH, CDC, HRSA, Academic Medical Centers and other organizations. She served in the US Navy for 25 years, is a member of several professional organizations and medical associations including the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation, the National Medical Association (NMA), the American Medical Association (AMA), and National Association Corporate Directors.

**Reverend Anthony Evans**, President of the National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) brings over 23 years of extensive experience working in the District of Columbia and around the country on faith-based and social initiatives for the disadvantaged. During the last 17 years, Rev. Evans has developed the budgets, provided fiscal oversight, managed fundraising initiatives, developed and implemented the organizational strategic plan, and hired and trained staff for the NBCI. In addition, he has provided oversight on technical assistance initiatives for 16,000 faith-based

communities. He serves as the liaison between faith-based communities, government agencies, and community-based organizations. Rev. Evans does extensive national and community work in youth crime prevention, sickle cell disease, assisting the United Way, and personally provides volunteer services to a homeless shelter, the DC jail, and serves as an advocate for the mentally challenged.

**Owen Garrick, MD**, is CEO of Bridge Clinical Research which is the leading research organization focused on minority health and improved outcomes. He earned his MD from the Yale School of Medicine and MBA from the Wharton School of Business. He holds an AB in Psychology from Princeton University. Dr. Garrick has served on the boards of several leading healthcare organizations, including Sutter Health – Bay Area Division, Quorum Review IRB, the New York Blood Center, Mentoring in Medicine & Science, Samuel Merritt University and the American Medical Association Foundation where he was board President. He was also formerly a member of the HHS Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Human Research Protections.