

Harrow Monitoring Group

<https://harrowmonitoringgroup.uk>

For the kind attention of Michael Warren, Chief Communications Officer, and Dr Tim Sprosen
Executive Director, Participant Recruitment Operations - *Our Future Health*

26 September 2025

Dear Dr Sprosen and Mr Warren

We read with interest *Our Future Health's* invitation to participate in its health research programme, especially your statement:

"We're building a diverse community of volunteers that truly reflects the UK's population, so that we can identify differences in how diseases begin and progress in people from different backgrounds. By ensuring that a range of people take part in Our Future Health, we can make discoveries that benefit everyone."

We recognise that *Our Future Health* is much more explicitly designed to be inclusive of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BME), as well as deprived and other under-represented, populations than many previous health research programmes in the UK. This is a strong and welcome step forward.

However, inclusion alone is not enough. To be genuinely "BME-specific" in effect (not just in design), the programme will need to navigate practical, ethical, statistical, and trust-related challenges. There is real potential here, but fulfilling it will require careful and sustained effort, particularly in the communities most affected.

We, and our readers, would be very interested to know how this research will link up with medical care provision, especially:

- Who will be responsible for ensuring these challenges are addressed, and
- How exactly the programme intends to meet them in practice.

In particular, it is not clear what mechanisms exist for regular public reporting on:

- Whether BME participation targets are being met,
- Whether retention differs by ethnic group, and
- Whether results are yielding tangible benefits that reduce health disparities.

We look forward to your response.

Warm regards

Husain Akhtar
Coordinator

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[also former Harrow councillor and Ofsted Inspector of Schools]