

A Model in Diversity Reporting 2024: Orthopaedic Trauma Association

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Purpose: The persistent lack of diversity in orthopaedics has garnered increasing attention in recent years. This study examines the current gender, racial, and ethnic diversity of the Orthopaedic Trauma Association (OTA) and proposes an implementation plan for assessing membership diversity in professional organizations to improve diversity reporting.

Methods: In 2023, the OTA membership and diversity committees implemented a suggested questionnaire on its website, collecting demographic data, including gender, race, and ethnicity. Members could opt out of any questions by selecting a “prefer not to say” response. Reminders were sent at multiple points throughout the year (eg, OTA Annual Meeting registration, other education event registration, dues renewal, and membership applications). This cross-sectional study analyzes responses from this new data collection system.

Results: Of the 3548 OTA members who participated in the survey, 2862 (80.67%) identified as male, 613 (17.28%) as female, 72 (2.03%) preferred not to disclose, and one (0.03%) identified as nonbinary. Survey respondents indicated their race as follows: 2218 (69.49%) White, 401 (12.56%) Asian, 123 (3.85%) Black, 95 (2.98%) multiracial, 9 (0.28%) Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 7 (0.22%) Native American, 84 (2.63%) other, and 255 (7.99%) who preferred not to disclose. Data for 356 members (11.15%) were missing due to a data capture error that covered several months in 2024. Of the respondents, 2611 (81.75%) indicated that they are not Hispanic/Latino, 197 (6.17%) are Hispanic/Latino, and 386 (12.09%) preferred not to disclose. Data for 354 members (11.08%) were missing because of the same data capture error.

Conclusion: To our knowledge, the OTA is the first orthopaedic society to implement a suggested data collection system resulting in nearly 100% participation. The data confirm that the OTA, like other orthopaedic subspecialties, is insufficiently diverse and does not mirror the general population or the population of medical school graduates in the United States. Accurate demographic reporting is crucial for understanding diversity gaps and for tracking the impact of future initiatives. We recommend that other orthopaedic organizations adopt similar systems to improve diversity reporting that can inform efforts at achieving meaningful change.