Establishing a community steering committee through a community-based participatory approach: Lessons learned from the FAITH! (Fostering African-American Improvement in Total Health) program

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Presenter Disclosure

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(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

We have no financial or commercial relationships to disclose
Learning objectives

1) Describe the CBPR process utilized to establish a 10-member community steering committee to provide infrastructure for an overarching academic-community research partnership;

2) Discuss recommendations and implications for development of culturally-relevant health interventions in marginalized African-American communities;

3) Identify key lessons learned for using an integrated capacity building approach to enhance CBPR skills and knowledge to promote equal partnerships aimed at addressing community-identified issues, engaging community partners in all aspects of the research and interventions.
Overview

• Background on FAITH! Program
• FAITH! Community Steering Committee (CSC) Purpose
• CSC Phases/Programming
• FAITH! CSC Covenant
• Lessons Learned
African-Americans in Minnesota: Yes, they exist!

- 189% population growth from 1990-2010, 5.2% of state (n=275,804)
  - Rochester: 6.3%
  - Minneapolis: 18.6%
  - St. Paul: 15.7%
  - African descendants vs. immigrants/refugees

- Worse health despite MN’s designation as one of the healthiest states
  - higher CVD and stroke incidence, mortality than overall state population
  - diabetes mortality rate nearly 2x higher than whites

Fostering African-American Improvement in Total Health (FAITH!)
Heart Health Promotion Program

- Community-medical center partnership with African-American congregations and Mayo Clinic, Rochester and Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN expansion

- Goals:
  1. Increase awareness of importance of healthy lifestyle in the prevention of heart disease in the African-American faith community
  2. Provide knowledge and tools on heart health to support healthy lifestyle
  3. Improve heart health in African-Americans

- CBPR Partnership Academy:
  - CBPR approach facilitates co-learning and capacity-building
  - Community steering committee key for long-term action plan

MAYO CLINIC
FAITH!, there's an app for that!: Heart Health Promotion Pilot Study, 2016-2017

Community-based approach with Community Partners

Church leadership spiritual inspiration

General Content

Health Behavior Messaging

- Enrolled 50 participants
- 10-week intervention phase

Education Modules

Sharing Board

Tracking Feature

Enrolled 50 participants
10-week intervention phase
CBPR Partnership Project: FAITH! Community Steering Committee (CSC)

- **Goal:** To establish a CSC specific to FAITH!, comprised of representatives from the local African-American community and community-based organizations to foster productivity and facilitate sustainability.

- **Purpose:** Infrastructure for members to voice priorities and preferences regarding the cardiovascular health (CVH) project/intervention.

- **Desired Outcome:** To more effectively address CVH disparities in MN and urban, African-American faith communities.

- **Phases:**
  1. Membership Formation/Recruitment
  2. Engagement
  3. Evaluation and Empowerment

- **CBPR Partnership Academy:**
  - Outline specific process to identify and select potential members.
  - Group meetings foster equitable participation and power sharing.
FAITH! CSC Activities

I. Membership Formation/Recruitment phase (January 2017 - March 2017)

1. Academic-community partner team brainstorming with CBPR Partnership Academy mentor guidance:
   • “Potential member matrix” approach, selection/criteria:
     • CBPR Partnership Academy:
       ➢ Ensure all members’ skills used fully (appropriately) for partnership goals

2. Invitation letter by email with follow-up in-person meeting

3. Signed letter of agreement for CSC membership
   • 1 decline out of 10 invitations (Church Pastor)
   • Pastor self-identified at community health networking event
FAITH! CSC Incentives

- Monetary gift card at start and completion of meeting phases
- Physical activity monitor
- 1-year YMCA fitness center membership
- FAITH! T-shirt/Totebag
- Mayo Clinic health books
- Meals/refreshments at all meetings
- Free parking at meetings

**CBPR Partnership Academy:**
- Compensate community partners for their time and expertise
- Facilitate and support participation of partners
II. Engagement phase (May - August 2017)

1. Team-building retreat (May 2017):
   - CSC members engaged in a low-key environment to foster social interaction

   • CBPR Partnership Academy:
     - Ensure access to agenda and informal communication
     - Outline CBPR approach benefits
CSC Retreat Agenda

• Welcome and Introductions

• CSC & Retreat Purpose

• Group Discussion - Why I joined the FAITH! CSC!

• Overview of CBPR

• FAITH! Project Background

• Active Break

• Breakout Session 1: Elements of a successful community meeting

• Questions and Answers

• Closing Remarks and Next Steps
CSC Retreat
FAITH! CSC Activities

II. Engagement phase (May - August 2017)

2. Operating Procedures and Maintenance (August 2017):

• Building team dynamics, defining how CSC will function (i.e., operating norms, expectations) towards achieving project goals

• CBPR Partnership Academy:
  ➢ Conversations deepen understanding of community dynamics and appreciation/trust among partners
III. Evaluation and Empowerment Phase  
(July - August 2017)

1. Covenant Development (September 2017):
   • Outlined components of a FAITH! CSC Covenant, set of agreed upon guiding principles or bylaws to promote an action-oriented CSC
   • "Living document" to maintain focus on CBPR project to benefit the community
   • Draft prepared by 2 CSC members

2. Covenant Endorsement (October 2017):
   • Discussed Covenant draft and suggested changes
   • Next draft in preparation (review at next meeting)

CBPR Partnership Academy:
- Crucial to “decide how to decide”
  • Draft prepared by 2 CSC members
FAITH! CSC Covenant key features

• Mission statement: The FAITH! CSC will support actionable research to improve community health with an overall desired outcome to effectively address CVH disparities which exist throughout Minnesota and within African-American communities

• Co-chairs: L. Brewer, C. Jones

• Meeting frequency: Quarterly, every 3 months

• Committees: Operations, Strategy

• Voting approval: 6 out of 10 members

• Membership criteria:
  • At least 1-year commitment, must resign in writing
  • Attend 50% of proposed 4 meetings/year
  • New member nomination: present to co-chairs then CSC vote

• Amendments: Annual review, if sooner presented at CSC meeting and voted upon
How does the CSC fit into the FAITH! Program?

• Feedback/Input from CSC to further culturally-adapt community-based behavioral interventions
• Develop culturally-relevant, community-informed research study protocols
• Disseminate study findings to the local community and community-at-large

Advocates for heart health in the community!
Building a CSC: Lessons learned

1. Be flexible and patient
2. Get to know CSC members and issues important to them
3. Place emphasis on value of each CSC member as authentic part of team
4. Review CBPR principles early with CSC to foster trust, mutually agreed upon objectives and understanding of role in addressing health disparities
   • Key impact of CBPR Partnership Academy
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Thank you for your attention!

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