

The Role of African American Health Ministries in Promoting Healthy Behaviors among Type II Diabetics

Sandra Austin, MSW, EdD
Assistant Professor
School of Social Welfare
University at Albany

Purpose:

Diabetes is a chronic disease that disproportionately affects African Americans. This study presents the findings of four newly formed health ministries that collaborated on the design and development of a Type II Diabetes Self Management Program for three African American communities in Albany, New York.

Method:

For this present study, thirty six individuals who were diagnosed with Type II diabetes participated in a seven session workshop. The health ministries modified Project Power, an American Diabetes Association faith based education program. Each workshop consisted of education presentation by a diabetes education professional and experiential activity on healthy eating and exercising by the health ministry committee members. Pre and post surveys and three month follow up phone calls were conducted to determine the impact of the program. The instruments included the Summary of Diabetes Self Care Measurement and the Diabetes Empowerment Scale.

Results:

There was significant improvement from baseline to three month follow up on testing blood, eating healthy: days within a week and days per week within a month, fewer consumptions of high fat foods, ten minutes of exercise and maintaining checking feet. There were improvements from baseline to three months in managing the psychosocial aspects of diabetes, assessing the dissatisfaction and readiness to change and achieving goals.

Implications:

Health ministries can be effective in designing and implementing health promotion programs that result in the promotion of healthy behaviors that could contribute to the reduction in health disparities among congregants.

Submitted by

Dr. Sandra Austin, MSW, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor
School of Social Welfare R 203
University at Albany
135 Western Avenue
Albany, New York 12222

(o) 518 591-8751
(f) 518 442-5380