Implementation of the AHA *Search Your Heart* Program: Moving from the Church to the Community

Shauntice Allen, MA
Suparna Bagchi, MSPH

1st Annual Meeting
The Society for Spirituality, Theology, and Health
Duke University

Presentation Outline

- Magic City Stroke Project Overview
- AHA Search Your Heart Overview
- Evaluation Methods
- Results
  - A. Survey Demographics
  - B. Church Demographics
  - C. Program Results
- Conclusions & Public Health Implications
Implementation Objectives

• To evaluate the effectiveness of faith-based/academic partnerships as a community-based locus for frontline health education in minority communities.

• To discuss lessons learned from the collaboration between faith-based organizations and academic institutions in survey research.

• To recognize the importance and utility of comparing characteristics of respondent populations to demographic and epidemiologic data.

Magic City Stroke Prevention Project

• 4-year demonstration project funded by the Office of Minority Health.

• AL, NC, SC received funding to address stroke awareness among African-Americans

• Project aimed at reducing the burden of stroke through community collaboration and partnership.
Search Your Heart™ Overview

- Program initiated in 1996 by AHA to provide a core curriculum that delivers knowledge and action steps to encourage people to reduce risk factors for heart disease and stroke among African-Americans.

Spirituality and Health

- Spirituality is a mechanism of finding meaning, hope, comfort and inner peace in life.

- Spirituality can be achieved through music, art or a connection with nature, and also through attendance of religious services.

- African-American churches have served a pivotal role in reaching, advocating, and enabling public awareness of health and action in the community.
Healthy People 2010 Focus Objectives

- Obj. 12.8
  - Increase the number of adults who are aware of the early warning symptoms and signs of stroke
- Obj. 12.11
  - Increase the proportion of adults with high blood pressure who are taking action (for example losing weight, increasing physical activity, or reducing sodium intake) to help control their blood pressure

Stroke as a health disparity issue

2004 Stroke Mortality Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>African American/White Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2004 NCHS, CDC Compressed Mortality File
Snapshot of Birmingham

- Approximately three-fourths (73.5%) of Birmingham is African-American.
- In 2000, Birmingham had the 17th largest number of African-Americans of the cities in the United States.
- African-Americans in Alabama:
  - 37.5% had high blood pressure
  - 68.8% are at risk for health problems from being overweight
  - 12.7% have diabetes
  - Only 62.6% participated in any physical activity.

2000 Census Bureau Report. 2002 AL BRFSS.

Program Overview

- Purpose of the assessment activity – to determine the knowledge level of adult individuals in Birmingham regarding stroke awareness, blood pressure knowledge, and nutrition & physical activity behavior.
- An evaluation team at UAB developed a pre/post instrument comprised of items addressing content of the Search Your Heart™ curriculum.
Program Overview

• Six primary churches facilitated survey administration
• Congregations for Public Health staff and volunteers solicited respondents’ participation in the AHA Search Your Heart™ program.
• Participants were recruited within a one-mile radius of each of six primary church locations

Congregations for Public Health, Inc.

• Organized in 2002 with 501(c)3 designation established in March 2004
• Founding members included 9 African-American Protestant churches with congregations ranging in size from 150 – 1500.
• Poverty in the various church communities ranges from 44.2% to 85.1%, representing some of the most serious poverty in the city of Birmingham.
• CPH was chosen to work with due to its mission and overall structure
Congregations for Public Health Sites

CONGREGATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, INC
PARTICIPATING CHURCHES
- 1. Faith Apostolic Church
- 2. Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church (North Pratt City)
- 3. Bethel Baptist Church
- 4. Lily Grove Baptist Church
- 5. Greater Temple Missionary Baptist
- 6. First Baptist Church of Fairfield

Survey Methodology

- Neighborhood Outreach Specialist served as coordinators of the data collection process
- Volunteer health professionals were utilized to implement the curriculum
- Post-program surveys were administered after each module implementation
Survey Methodology

• A random sample of 902 participants completed the evaluation of the SYH program.
• Surveys administered utilizing a mixed-method approach through neighborhood association meetings, community health events and door-to-door participation.

Survey Methodology

• Participants received educational instruction through the Search Your Heart curriculum
• Curriculum comprised of 6 activity modules:
  • Check for Life
  • Activities for Life
  • Bread of Life
  • Stress Reduction
  • Lift Every Voice
  • Stomp Out Stroke
Program Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church ID</th>
<th>Implementation Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00</td>
<td>Bethel Baptist Health professional volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Faith Apostolic Health professional volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Lily Grove Baptist Church Facilitated by Outreach Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>First Baptist Church – Fairfield Health professional volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church Facilitated by Outreach Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Greater Temple Missionary Baptist Church Health professional volunteers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>74.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Demographics

- Average weight of the participants was 187 pounds
- Mean Blood Pressure
  - Systolic –127
  - Diastolic – 80
- Participants average church attendance was twice per week.

Survey Demographics – Marital Status

- Married (n=302)
- Separated/Divorced (n=203)
- Widowed (n=154)
- Never Married/Member of unmarried couple (n=194)
- Missing (n=48)
### Denominations Surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (&lt;4%)</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Immediate Response to Stroke

- Respondents were asked what would be their first response when someone was having a heart attack or stroke.
- Responses were dichotomized into categories: correct [911] and incorrect [all others].
- A statistically significant difference ($p=.002$) in knowledge & awareness among the respondents regarding the immediate response to stroke was found.
Discussion & Lessons Learned

• Survey participant general feedback was positive of SYH program educational modules.
  • “Encouraged me to exercise and as a result my cholesterol is lower”
  • “It was very good and the info was knowledgeable, being that I am a firefighter I understand it all much better than the average person. I myself try to be healthy as much as possible”

• Existing social support systems in churches provides a natural foundation for conducting the SYH program.

Discussion & Lessons Learned

• Consistent survey administration strategies for each church site is necessary.
• Survey administration pace and plan requires constant revision as community events are planned and executed.
• Rigorous tracking of survey participants is needed in order to conduct sound research methodology.
• Time frame of health education interventions in communities should be taken into consideration.
Points to Ponder: Public Health Practice

- Community dynamics and flexibility are key elements in health-education initiatives in predominately African-American urban areas.

- Faith-based and academic partnership agendas require constant interaction and transfer of information in order to be successful.

Dear Friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.

3 John 2 NIV
Thank You

Questions & Comments