Including Diverse Participants in a Telehealth-Delivered Pragmatic Trial of Mindfulness for Persons with Chronic Low Back Pain

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Disclosures

I DO NOT have any financial disclosure or conflicts of interest with the material in this presentation.
Many clinical research trials in integrative and complementary health suffer from a lack of participant diversity.

Underrepresentation may delay the widespread application of evidence-based interventions.
Background

Optimizing Pain Treatment in Medical Settings Using Mindfulness

- A multi-site pragmatic clinical trial for persons with chronic low back pain randomized to a mindfulness clinical pain management program or to usual care.
- Target Enrollment: 450 patients.
Background: Three Health Care Systems

- Boston Medical Center
- UPMC, Pittsburgh, PA
- University of North Carolina Chapel Hill in Partnership with Piedmont Health Services
Participant has chronic low back pain.

Participant is interested, screened for eligibility, and consents to take part in the study.

Participant completes baseline surveys.

Participant gets usual primary care by provider.

Participant gets group pain management program for 8 weeks.

Participant completes surveys monthly, after 8 weeks, 6 months and 12 months.
Recruitment Strategy

- Intentionally recruit from health systems with diverse populations:
  - Safety net health system.
  - Large academic health system.
  - Federally qualified health centers.
Recruitment, Retention & Engagement Strategies

- Integrate voice of study participants & stakeholders into research:
  - Established a Community Advisory Board (CAB).
  - Conduct focus group interviews with study participants.
Recruitment, Retention & Engagement Strategies

Community Advisory Board (CAB)
- Review strategies.
- Provide feedback.

OPTIMUM Study
- Implement strategies.

Creative Committee
- Incorporate feedback.
- Modify recruitment materials.
## Recruitment, Retention & Engagement Strategies

### Feedback from CAB:
- Recruitment materials need to be:
  - More diverse, and visually appealing.
  - Include more “mindfulness” theme in recruitment materials.
  - Highlight benefits of participating in the study.

### Implementation:
- Designed new posters.
- Updated and redesigned the study website.
- Created quarterly newsletter.
- Developing a study animation video.
Recruitment, Retention & Engagement Strategies

- Have diverse research team members.
- Staff training in communication & mindfulness:
  - Make participants feel seen, acknowledged, and heard.
  - Empathy and compassion with chronic pain.
Focus Group Comments

- Research Assistants received lots of praise from participants for being polite, open, and accommodating.
- The study team make them feel important because we listen to them.
- They appreciated that the team is respectful of their time.
Race/Ethnicity Data

Percentage of OPTIMUM participants, by race
As of October 2022 (n = 272)

- 117 (43%) Non-Hispanic Black
- 124 (45.6%) Non-Hispanic White
- 14 (5%) Hispanic
- 9 (3%) Other
- 5 (2%) Asian
Conclusion

- Intentionally include diverse participants by:
  - Targeting health systems with diverse populations.
  - Having diverse research team members.
  - Providing communication training for staff.
  - Creating a culture of respect and kindness for participants.
  - Leveraging insightful feedback from participants & stakeholders
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Thank you

Any questions?

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