Depression Is Real: Developing a Health Communication Campaign in an Urban African American Community

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What Is the Purpose of the Study?

• To describe the use of Boot Camp Translation, a community-based participatory method, in designing a health communication campaign on depression in a predominantly African American community.

• To describe the “Depression Is Real” health communication campaign and its effectiveness in improving the use of depression screening and treatment services in a predominantly African American community.

• To discuss lessons learned from using the Boot Camp Translation method in developing a health communication campaign.

What Is the Problem?

• Depression is a main cause of disability worldwide and in the United States.

• African Americans have higher rates of depression and experience more serious depression and disability than other racial/ethnic groups.

• Public awareness campaigns on depression often lack community input and are not always responsive to minority populations’ unique cultural needs and preferences.

What Are the Findings?

• Boot Camp Translation offered a structured process for engaging diverse community stakeholders.

• Boot Camp Translation enabled the development and dissemination of a culturally tailored health communication campaign addressing depression in an urban African American community.

• Boot Camp Translation activated community members to become health champions/advocates.

• Depression is still stigmatized in the African American community, including faith communities.

Who Should Care Most?

• Community members.

• Community leaders.

• Mental/behavioral health professionals.

• Faith leaders.

• Researchers and academics interested in Community-Based Participatory Research, mental health, and health disparities.
Recommendations for Action

- Public health practitioners and researchers should establish collaborative partnerships between community members and other stakeholders to develop culturally informed health communication campaigns or interventions.
- Efforts to address depression in the African American community should actively engage the faith community.