

## ABSTRACT

Lynwood E. Carlton: Increasing Confidence in Sharing Knowledge about Depression with Barbers as Lay Mental Health Advocates: A Cognitive Rehearsal Project Utilizing A.D.A.A.M.-QR Web Design.

(Under the direction of Cheryl Giscombe)

**Aim:** This project was implemented to assist barbers at a barbershop in Durham, North Carolina, to increase confidence in sharing information about mental illness with their African American male clients. Against Depression in African American Men-Quick Response (A.D.A.A.M.-QR) provides evidence-based material about mental health, misconceptions about mental illness and community resources that are available for treatment of mental illness.

**Background:** Barbers are vital stakeholders in the AA community. They play an integral role in community outreach services, but they often do not have supportive resources to assist them in sharing information about mental illness with their clients.

**Methodology:** The barbers completed a Quick-Response (QR) code link-accessible questionnaire to evaluate what they knew about mental illness and their perceptions on depression. Following, a one-hour mental health educational module introduced the barbers to A.D.A.A.M.-QR, a web-based resource with culturally relevant mental health information for African American men. After completing the A.D.A.A.M.-QR educational module, barbers completed a questionnaire to evaluate the effectiveness of the website. The evaluation was conducted to determine if the web design increased confidence in sharing information about

mental illness in a manner that supports the enactment of change related to the stigma of mental health.

**Results:** Barbers reported that participation in the A.D.A.A.M-QR educational session: 1) increased confidence in sharing knowledge and mental illness, 2) empowered them to share information about mental illness, and 3) provided a discreet tool to provide information and community resources for mental health wellness.

**Conclusion:** This education session targeted barbers' confidence in sharing knowledge using A.D.A.A.M.-QR web design to increase awareness of mental illness in African American men. Fostering awareness and providing resources are the first steps to reducing the stigma of depression in African American culture. The initial stages of designing A.D.A.A.M.-QR established a web-based design module that could be used to increase barber's confidence in sharing knowledge to eliminate discomfort when discussing mental illness, the stigma of mental illness and the myths associated with mental illness among African American males.

**Keywords:** depression, African American, men, cognitive rehearsal technique, barbershop, barbers, stigma