Using Mixed-Methods to Examine Factors that Influence Exercise Prescription from Healthcare Providers: A Community-Engaged Research Project

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Keywords
exercise, physical activity, exercise prescription referrals, healthcare providers, barriers, facilitators

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Using Mixed-Methods to Examine Factors that Influence Exercise Prescription from Healthcare Providers: A Community-Engaged Research Project

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BACKGROUND
Physical activity can reduce obesity, CVD and diabetes (USDHHS, 2008)
- 40.5% U.S. adults do not meet physical activity guidelines (Hailal, 2012)
- African American women less likely to meet guidelines (Troiano, 2008)
- The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) started the Exercise is Medicine (EIM) Initiative to promote physical activity in healthcare settings (Lobelo et al., 2014)

ACSM’s Exercise is Medicine (EIM)®

SETTING
Healthworks Community Fitness
http://healthworkscommunityfitness.org/

- Women’s only fitness/wellness facility located in Dorchester, MA
- A 501c(3) public charity with subsidized membership rates to serve all income levels
- Offers free memberships for patients with ExRx to manage diabetes, obesity, hypertension and mood disorders
- Membership Profile: 93% African American

PROJECT AIMS

Aim 1: Explore barriers and facilitators related to the referral process that are associated with ExRx adherence.

Aim 2: Examine individual, interpersonal and environmental factors associated with utilizing ExRx.

METHODS Quantitative Methods

Compare Patient/Members: 1) High vs. Low Utilization (# visits) 2) Responders (activate ExRx) vs. Non-responders

Socioecological Model

Environment
- Distance from facility
- Walkability

Interpersonal
- Social Support
- Family Environment
- Age, CV risk factors, Health, family health
- Physical activity, Stressing
- Self efficacy
- Stage of Change

Individual

PROJECT SUMMARY

Healthcare Providers: 1) assess physical activity in their patients, 2) make Exercise Prescriptions (ExRx), and 3) refer to a community exercise resource.

Community Resources: support patients in increasing physical activity through education, programming and assessment.

Active Health Technology: utilized for patients and community exercise resources to track participation, conduct assessments and report information back to healthcare providers.

Current Challenges at Healthworks Community Fitness

- ExRx Adherence:
  - Only 40% of women who receive ExRx use/redeem them for resources, education and/or access (Waterman et al., 2014)
- ExRx Utilization:
  - Only 10% attend the facility >1/week (Waterman et al., 2014)
  - Attendance decreases over time (Waterman et al., 2014)

Healthcare Providers

http://www.exerciseismedicine.org

http://www.health.gov/paguidelines

FUTURE GOALS
Information gathered from this phase of research will inform:
1) Design assessment, programming and active health technology strategies tailored specifically for women with ExRx
2) Test the effectiveness and feasibility of assessment, programming and active health technology strategies at Healthworks Community Fitness

Qualitative Methods

- One-on-one telephone interviews with:
  - Member/Patient
  - Healthcare Provider
  - Healthworks Staff

Themes:
- Barriers and facilitators to ExRx adherence:
  - ExRx referral process
  - Redeeming ExRx
  - Utilizing Healthworks Community Fitness resources
- Program/Assessment preferences
- Communication between stakeholders
- Active Health Technology use (phone, computer, apps)

References:
- http://www.health.gov/paguidelines

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