

**Research on the Acceptability and Feasibility of a Community-Based Wellness Program to Reduce Depression in African-Americans**

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Many studies document the existence of racial disparities in depression care, but little is known how to reduce such disparities. In collaboration with Dr. Nicolaidis, the AAHC has developed a community-based, culturally-tailored depression care program for African-American women. Together, we pilot-tested a 6-week version of the program with 22 African-Americans with moderate depressive symptoms, and found a large reduction in depressive symptoms, with mean PHQ9 depression scores dropping from 14.8 to 7.1 ( $p < 0.0001$ ). We used these data to submit an R01 proposal to the NIMH (PI: Nicolaidis), which was scored, but not funded. A major reviewer concern was the lack of longer-term follow-up data.

The current proposal will allow us to collect additional pilot-data for a successful resubmission. We propose conducting a pilot intervention with 26 African American participants with moderate depressive symptoms, enlisting them in a structured 8-week group intervention, followed by four monthly “booster” sessions and will follow participants over the full 6-month period. We will assess acceptability and feasibility using process (e.g attendance, retention) and satisfaction data. We will also measure our intended primary and secondary outcomes (change in depression severity, self-efficacy, activity levels, depression self-management behaviors) to inform power calculations and estimate potential magnitude of effect. We will use results to submit an R01 proposal for a large-scale randomized trial testing the effectiveness of the intervention.