



Program: Evidence-Based Disease Prevention:
Disease Self-Management

Organization: Sheltering Arms Senior Services of Houston, Texas

Project Title: Healthy IDEAS: Evidence-Based Disease Self-Management for Depression

Project Period: September 30, 2003 TO September 29, 2006

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Evidence Base

The Healthy IDEAS program is a community-based depression model program. Using routine interactions with clients at community aging service provider (CASP) organizations, basic depression screenings are used to identify people at risk. The screening consists of two research-based depression screening questions, and uses the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) as a follow-up to these questions.

Original Research Evidence

Healthy IDEAS (Identifying Depression, Empowering Activities for Seniors) was first introduced into the Houston Area in 2002 by a regional team of aging network, mental health, and health services professionals. It is a model program that has been administered nationally through the National Council on the Aging and funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation.

Adaptation of Model

Sheltering Arms will expand the Healthy IDEAS program by adding or enhancing three new components: Health and wellness promotion, medication management, and depression prevention, detection, and treatment.

The health and wellness promotion will emphasize the benefit of exercise, stress management, and nutrition on depressive symptoms.

The medication management portion will highlight the polypharmacy and medication misuse that is so common in the senior population. The CASPs will work with prescribing physicians, provide education to clients and family members, and monitor medication side effects.

Sheltering Arms will also offer additional education and training to CASP staff to improve the recognition of depression.

Project's Overall Design

Sheltering Arms Senior Services proposes to build upon the Healthy IDEAS project. The goals of this project are:

- To prevent or detect depression through effective, evidence-based screening and health promotion education;
- To promote more effective treatment through appropriate mental health referrals;
- To decrease symptomatology and improve functioning in depressed elders who participate in the depression self-management program;
- To improve linkages between community aging service providers and healthcare practitioners;
- To prevent recurrence of the disease through regular depression screening.

Clients of the CASPs are given a basic depression screening during routine interactions with staff. Depending on their score on the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS), clients are then given preventive educational information, the opportunity to participate in behavioral activation therapy (a depression self-management program provided by the CASP), and/or channeled to professional health or mental health care.

CASP staff are given information and education by academic partners who are knowledgeable about mental health and who serve as coaches for the organizations.

Target Population

This project will target a diverse older population residing in Houston, Harris County, Texas. Special efforts have been made to target Asian, Hispanic, and older women of all racial backgrounds living on low income.

Anticipated Outcomes

- More effective partnerships will be developed between community aging service providers, healthcare organizations, academic researchers and consumers.
- The evidence-based depression self-management intervention will be refined to increase recognition, promote effective treatment, and prevent excessive functional disability due to depression.
- Culturally and socio-economically diverse populations of older adults at risk for unrecognized or under-treated depression will be identified and will receive tailored intervention.

Evaluation Design

The Process Evaluation will use semi-structured interviews to obtain input about the feasibility, utility, and outcomes of the intervention. Measures used in the evaluation include: the size of the population for whom the intervention is made available, the number of potential participants screened, the number of people eligible in both mild-moderate and severe categories, the number of participants in each severity category who participate in the intervention, and reasons for participant refusal.

The Impact Evaluation will include a Client Satisfaction Questionnaire to be completed by clients and their family members, a modified version of the questionnaire to be

completed by providers, in addition to focus groups conducted with clients and agency providers. A self-reported health status will also be completed using the GDS and the SF-36 to assess depressive symptoms and functional status.

Partnerships

- Care for Elders-Sheltering Arms is the local Community Aging Service Provider (CASP) and grantee for this project. They will provide a project coordinator and nurse consultant to help coordinate training, intervention, and evaluation activities.
- Baylor College of Medicine along with the Houston Center for Quality Care and Utilization Studies are the academic research partners who will conduct data analyses and the evaluation of the program.
- The Harris County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) will be responsible for identifying and selecting CASPs to implement the program. They will also be promoting the Healthy IDEAS model to other agencies in the area.
- A National Advisory board consisting of three researchers in the field of depression will review the progress of the intervention and provide guidance on the evidence base.
- The Consumer Advisory Council of *Care for Elders* will provide feedback on the cultural relevance of the approach and the materials used in the intervention.