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CRISP Abstract

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DESCRIPTION (provided by applicant): The current worldwide HIV/AIDS pandemic is having a devastating impact on African American and Hispanic populations in the United States. Recent surveillance data available from CDC indicate that 50% of new HIV infections occur in the African American community, which includes only 12% of the U.S. population. Hispanics, also representing 12% of the population account for 19% of new HIV cases. As much as one third of the HIV/AIDS in the African American community is associated with substance abuse, particularly injection drug use. Once infected, members of the minority community are less likely to receive timely care and are more apt to die sooner of AIDS associated disease. Given the horrific impact of HIV/AIDS on the African American community, one would assume that African Americans would be at the forefront of research efforts designed to develop better and cheaper treatments for AIDS and effective preventive vaccines. Unfortunately, the legacy of the Tuskegee Syphilis Trials lives on. The goal of this proposal is to increase understanding of the ethical issues surrounding the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse in minority communities and to better prepare researchers and other professionals to engage in ethically designed and implemented research of special significance to the minority community. The core of the program will be to offer on an annual basis: 1) a 2-day workshop "Seeing Beyond the Barriers: Minority Participation in HIV/AIDS and Substance Abuse Research" for persons involved in clinical research and ethical oversight of research involving HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. Participants may include researchers; physicians, IRB and CAB members and Community-based organization care providers. The course will offer a case-study approach to ethical issues in HIV/AIDS and substance abuse with class leadership provided by affected individuals, community leaders and professionals involved in these issues, and 2) a month long clinical elective "Clinical and Research Ethics: Issues in HIV/AIDS and Substance Abuse" for junior and senior medical and other students that will offer expertise in clinical and research ethics with emphasis on ethical issues relating to HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. The course will combine didactic presentations and case-study discussions with field experiences allowing students to interact with clinical researchers and community outreach leaders as they confront the ethical issues inherent in the practice of their professions.