



Advancing Hypertension Care

Hypertension, a strong predictor for cardiovascular complications such as heart attack, stroke, and heart failure, is a critical public health issue. In response to this challenge, ACPM funds projects across five diverse clinical settings to develop practice models that advance the standard of preventive care for hypertension in African American Men.

University of Alabama University Medical Center Increasing Efficiency of Care In and Out of the Clinic

Project Description:

The University Medical Center is increasing its attention to hypertension screening and care in a number of ways.

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Within the clinic, the team initiated a campaign to reinforce a standardized blood pressure measurement routine across staff and residents who cycle in and out of the program. The clinic posted American Heart Association posters within the clinic to remind providers and patients of proper blood pressure measurement protocol. The UA-UMC team holds regular meetings with clinical, nutrition, social work, and resident home visit programs to co-develop patient education, classes and materials.

The UA-UMC team developed an algorithm in their electronic medical records system to identify patients with undiagnosed hypertension and create a referral process that allows clinicians to refer patients to lifestyle training.

A part-time Licensed Practical Nurse enrolls patients into the program, educates patients on self-monitored blood pressure techniques, feeds information back into the tracking system, and raises physician awareness of the clinic's lifestyle training classes.

The organization is working with successful graduates of their diabetes education program to learn what worked well that can be applied to the hypertension program and will continue to develop and refine their strategy and learn from all of their patients.

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As part of a separate project, UA-UMC developed a free mobile-app, HYPE, which provides lifestyle training and a tool to record blood pressure, weight, activity level, and medications.

The team has developed pocket cards for clinicians to remind providers of the electronic records process, the use of the hypertension app, and referral to lifestyle classes.

Social Determinant of Health (SDoH) Addressed:

The University Medical Center has chosen to address the Social Determinant of transportation. Transportation vouchers will be given to patients who would like to attend classes and need reliable transportation. Patients will be able to use the Hype app to participate from home when they are not able to come to the clinic.

Organization:

The University of Alabama University Medical Center (UA-UMC) is utilizing the Family Medicine Residency’s clinical infrastructure to build on previous work at the UA-UMC team to reduce



hypertension among African American men. UA-UMC operates nine clinics that serve almost 60,000 residents of a 5-county area, several without nearby hospitals or local providers. The organization has over 70 providers, including 48 family medicine residents.

In 2019, the overall patient population by age was: under 18, 20%; 18 to 64, 40%; and 65 and older, 40%.

African- Americans were 35% of the service population, Whites 60%, and Hispanic/ Latinos 5%. In this population, there were 2,016 African American men ages 35-64. 2,016 had had blood pressure measurements taken in the year prior.

Materials, Technology, Resources and Partnerships:

- HYPE mobile app is free, cross-platform, and can share information with medical providers.
- Donation of 25 blood pressure cuffs from the Alabama Department of Public Health.
- Patient education booklet.

Payor Mix:

- Medicaid 30%
- Medicare 40%
- Commercial 30%
- Uninsured 10%

