

Yale SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Biostatistics

Telehealth Use to Support Management of Anxiety and Depression Among African American Women

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ABSTRACT

Approximately 1 in 4 African American women has experienced mental illness, however, they significantly underutilize mental health services. Anxiety and mood disorders are among the most common mental health conditions within this population. Past studies exploring the use of smartphone mental health interventions to reduce anxiety or depressive symptoms revealed that participants experienced significant reduction in anxiety or depressive symptoms post-intervention. African American women are comfortable with participating in mHealth research and interventions, and 80% own smartphones. Therefore, there is great potential to remedy the disparities in mental health service utilization by leveraging use of smartphones for information dissemination, and delivery of mental health services and culturally-informed resources. The topics covered in this talk explore: (1) barriers to use of mental health services among African American women; (2) acceptable modalities to receive support for managing anxiety and depression; (3) user-centered recommendations for content and features that should be included in a smartphone application culturally-tailored to support management of anxiety and depression in African American women; and (4) results of usability testing of an initial prototype of such app.