

Implementing a Barbershop-based Hypertension Treatment Model in the Community to Reduce Hypertension Health Disparities

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ABSTRACT

Background: The Cut Hypertension Program (CHP) at Roots Community Health Center seeks to use a low-cost, community-based intervention to engage people the healthcare system has historically failed to reach or serve: African American men. Black barbershops can be places of health promotion, outreach, community building, and a crucial point of access for treatment in the black community. Roots has cultivated a network of barbers with roots in East Oakland's African ancestry communities to conduct free blood pressure screenings and provide culturally congruent health coaching by trained barbers with support from a UCSF hypertension-specialty pharmacist.

Approach: CHP patients are recruited through blood pressure screening events held at partnered barbershops, local community events, healthcare institutions or clinic-based referrals. All participants screened or referred for an elevated blood pressure reading ($\geq 140/90$) are contacted by a staff member for an intake appointment. All initial intake appointments take place onsite within our barbershop network. After receiving a haircut and a confirmed diagnosis of hypertension by the CHP pharmacist, the likely patient is offered enrollment.

Results: There are 19 patients enrolled within the program. Black barbershops can be places of health promotion, outreach, community building, and treatment for the Black community. Incorporating barbers as health coaches into our patients treatment plan has significantly helped our patients to identify, reduce or prevent high blood pressure in clients and referred participants. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CHP was unable to begin until January 2021. Preliminary results are still under review.

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