

Health Promotion Plan

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

## Assessment 1: Health Promotion Plan

### **Mental Health among African Americans**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2023) reports that about 21% of African Americans experience mental health issues, with only 39% accessing mental health services, compared to 52% of whites. In 2020, suicide was the third leading cause of death among African Americans, with a suicide rate 60% lower than that of whites (SAMHSA, 2023). Additionally, African Americans report higher levels of feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and sadness compared to non-Hispanic whites.

#### **Risk Factors**

African Americans face numerous socioeconomic challenges that heighten the risk of mental health issues. For instance, the high poverty rates among African Americans limit access to resources for diagnosis and treatment of mental health problems (CDC, 2023). Poverty results in insufficient funds for primary care and early screening interventions (SAMHSA, 2023). Moreover, unemployment and low income contribute significantly to mental distress within the African American community. Racial biases and discrimination further exacerbate mental health problems among African Americans (Fadus et al., 2019). Stigma also prevents many from seeking mental health services, worsening their conditions.

#### **Adverse Health Outcomes of Mental Health Problems**

Unmanaged mental illnesses lead to detrimental effects on mental, physical, and behavioral health. SAMHSA (2023) highlights that mental health issues can cause legal and financial problems, poverty, and homelessness due to decreased productivity. Mental illnesses also result in relationship difficulties, increasing the risk of isolation, criminal activities, and substance abuse (Fadus et al., 2023). Untreated mental illnesses can lead to family conflicts and

self-harm, including suicide. Consequently, intervention is crucial for improving physical, psychological, and behavioral health (CDC, 2023). Effective treatment and management can enhance physical health, relationships, and socioeconomic success (SAMHSA, 2023). Managing mental health issues also reduces self-harm and fosters positive social relations and family stability, leading to better employment opportunities and higher socioeconomic status (Fadus et al., 2023).

### **Best Practices for Health Improvement**

Taylor and Chatters (2020) note that socioeconomic disparities, stigma, and discrimination impede African Americans' access to mental health resources and quality care (Fadus et al., 2019). Effective practices involve community and individual-based approaches to address specific needs and concerns (Alang, 2019). Enhancing community resources and healthcare services is essential for successful interventions (Healthy People 2020, 2023). Cultural competency and awareness are vital for understanding and respecting individuals' values and needs (Jackson, 2020). Additionally, promoting mental health education and awareness within the community is crucial for improving health literacy and encouraging timely healthcare-seeking.

### **Scenario**

I implemented an educational intervention targeting the predominantly African American community in the neighborhood. The intervention team comprised various stakeholders, including healthcare professionals. The intervention included workshops and community outreach programs to engage residents in education and awareness about mental health disorders. This included screening, symptom identification, interventions, and coping mechanisms. The

participants shared similar experiences of high mental health disorder prevalence despite their diverse backgrounds.

### **Population**

The selected population had diverse demographic characteristics. The focus was on different demographic factors, such as location in city suburbs and low to middle-income levels. The population's age ranged from 30 years and above, with participants being African Americans from various ethnic backgrounds. The group included both males and females with varying marital statuses: single, divorced, married, and remarried. Additionally, participants were employed and unemployed, with educational levels ranging from college graduates to high school graduates and dropouts.

### **Characteristics of Hypothetical Individual and Group**

I involved John, a 48-year-old African American male with four children, and ten other community members with similar demographic traits, including males and females. John, who has a high school education and works as a delivery person, struggles financially to support his family. He resides in a city suburb and faces various challenges, exposing him to stressors such as job difficulties and financial constraints. These systemic inequalities contribute to mental health issues and are crucial for understanding the challenges faced by many African Americans.

### **Risk Factors of Mental Health Disorders Among African Americans**

Mental illness among African Americans has multiple risk factors, where health promotion and education plans play a vital role in coping mechanisms and preventing or managing adverse mental health outcomes. Systemic inequalities are a significant risk factor (Taylor & Chatters, 2020). For instance, low educational attainment leads to unstable employment, low income, and limited access to quality healthcare services for mental health

issues (Jackson, 2020). Furthermore, the working conditions and financial struggles among African Americans due to high rates of low income and unemployment contribute to various mental illnesses.

### **Development of Sociogram**

In John's case, the sociogram encompasses various social factors, from family to community. John's lifestyle involves interactions with family, community resources, and colleagues. We established collective learning needs and goals by enhancing effective communication and collaboration. I assessed the needs of John and the African American population, identifying the need to understand major mental illnesses like depression and stress, their symptoms, treatment, management, personal management, and coping strategies. Additionally, learning needs included accessing support and resources to address systemic inequalities and subsequent mental illnesses (Fadus et al., 2019).

### **SMART Goals**

- We aim to attend training and education sessions on various coping mechanisms twice a month.
- Doing physical and relaxation activities twice weekly, such as yoga and meditation.
- Enhancing accessibility to community resources for diverse social and financial support.

### **Current Behaviors**

John and other African Americans prioritize providing for their families despite challenging working conditions and low wages, often neglecting their mental health and well-being. Alang (2019) notes that this population endures financial struggles and long working

hours, leading to exposure to stressors that result in mental illnesses. Therefore, the education and awareness sessions focus on training individuals on the importance of mental health and well-being (Fadus et al., 2019). Additionally, assisting John and the population in accessing resources to address their mental health needs through individual and community support is part of the program (Taylor & Chatters, 2020). Practical recommendations include training on coping mechanisms, understanding symptoms of mental illnesses, and facilitating access to community resources to address these issues.

### **Collaborative Learning Objectives**

I collaborated with the individual and group to implement goals that promote behavior change and achieve desired outcomes. We agreed on multiple goals critical to improving health and well-being, including providing necessary training and education. Increasing public awareness of mental health aspects, such as risk factors, symptoms, coping, and management strategies, is essential to foster behavior changes and focus on health and well-being (Alang, 2019). Developing and training in coping skills and assisting individuals and groups in accessing mental health resources are vital for achieving the objective of reducing and mitigating mental illness among African Americans.

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