

Developing a Brain Health Education Program to Support Cognitive Screening and Alzheimer's Research Engagement in Black Older Adults

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These findings provide evidence that refining a culturally responsive intervention that incorporates study partner support, community-centered learning environments, and proactive outreach could be beneficial in enhancing early detection of Alzheimer's disease in Black older adults and, therefore, ultimately aid in reducing longstanding disparities in research participation within this group.

INTRODUCTION	METHODS	RESULTS	RESULTS CONTINUED	CONCLUSION																		
Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) disproportionately affect Black older adults, who experience higher risk yet lower rates of timely diagnosis^{1,2}. Cognitive screening not only enables earlier diagnosis, but participation in research as well. Engagement is often limited by many factors². This program was refined directly with input from Black older adults and their close interpersonal relations. OBJECTIVE To culturally adapt a brain health education program and understand key factors influencing engagement in cognitive screening through feedback solicited from Black older adults and their study partners. <i>References</i> 1.Alzheimer's Association. <i>Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures</i>. 2025; Available from: https://www.alz.org/getmedia/ef8f48f9-ad36-48ea-87f9-b74034635c1e/alzheimers-facts-and-figures.pdf. 2.Pérez-Palmer, N., et al., <i>Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Timeliness of Dementia Diagnosis: A Narrative Review</i>. <i>Current Geriatrics Reports</i>, 2025. 14(1).	DESIGN - Semi-structured qualitative interviews to review components of the Brain Health Education in Minority Communities to Promote Knowledge about Early Detection of Alzheimer's Disease and Research Participation (EMPOWER) program components – visually adapted print materials and educational modules – and discuss cognitive screening PARTICIPANTS (N = 12) - Black older adults (≥50 years) - Selected study partners (≥18 years) - Community organization staff PROCEDURE - Semi-structured interviews were transcribed and open-coded for content on cognitive screening and perceptions of EMPOWER - Codes were organized into themes using Braun & Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis - Accuracy of emerging themes was verified via member checking	Table 1 Emerging Themes <table><tr><td>1.Theme: Study Partners as Critical Supports in Brain Health Decisions</td></tr><tr><td>A study partner plays a significant role in the welfare and decision-making of participants within the Black community.</td></tr><tr><td>2. 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Community-informed, visually engaging educational materials that prioritize trust, representation, and clear messaging may enhance brain health awareness and cognitive screening participation among Black older adults. Future research should evaluate whether the refined program improves brain health knowledge and willingness to engage in cognitive screening. CONTACT  Christopher Carey Research Scientist Bridging Science, Community & Innovation Public Health Advocate   ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION AAIC 26
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