

# Mental Health Disorder in African American Men

William Lawson, MD, Ph.D., DLFAPA  
CEO, Institute for Reducing Disparities, LLC

June 15, 2023

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**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

The purpose of the MHTTC Network is technology transfer - disseminating and implementing evidence-based practices for mental disorders into the field.

Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the MHTTC Network includes 10 Regional Centers, a National American Indian and Alaska Native Center, a National Hispanic and Latino Center, and a Network Coordinating Office.

Our collaborative network supports resource development and dissemination, training and technical assistance, and workforce development for the mental health field. We work with systems, organizations, and treatment practitioners involved in the delivery of mental health services to strengthen their capacity to deliver effective evidence-based practices to individuals. Our services cover the full continuum spanning mental illness prevention, treatment, and recovery support.

# MHTTC Network

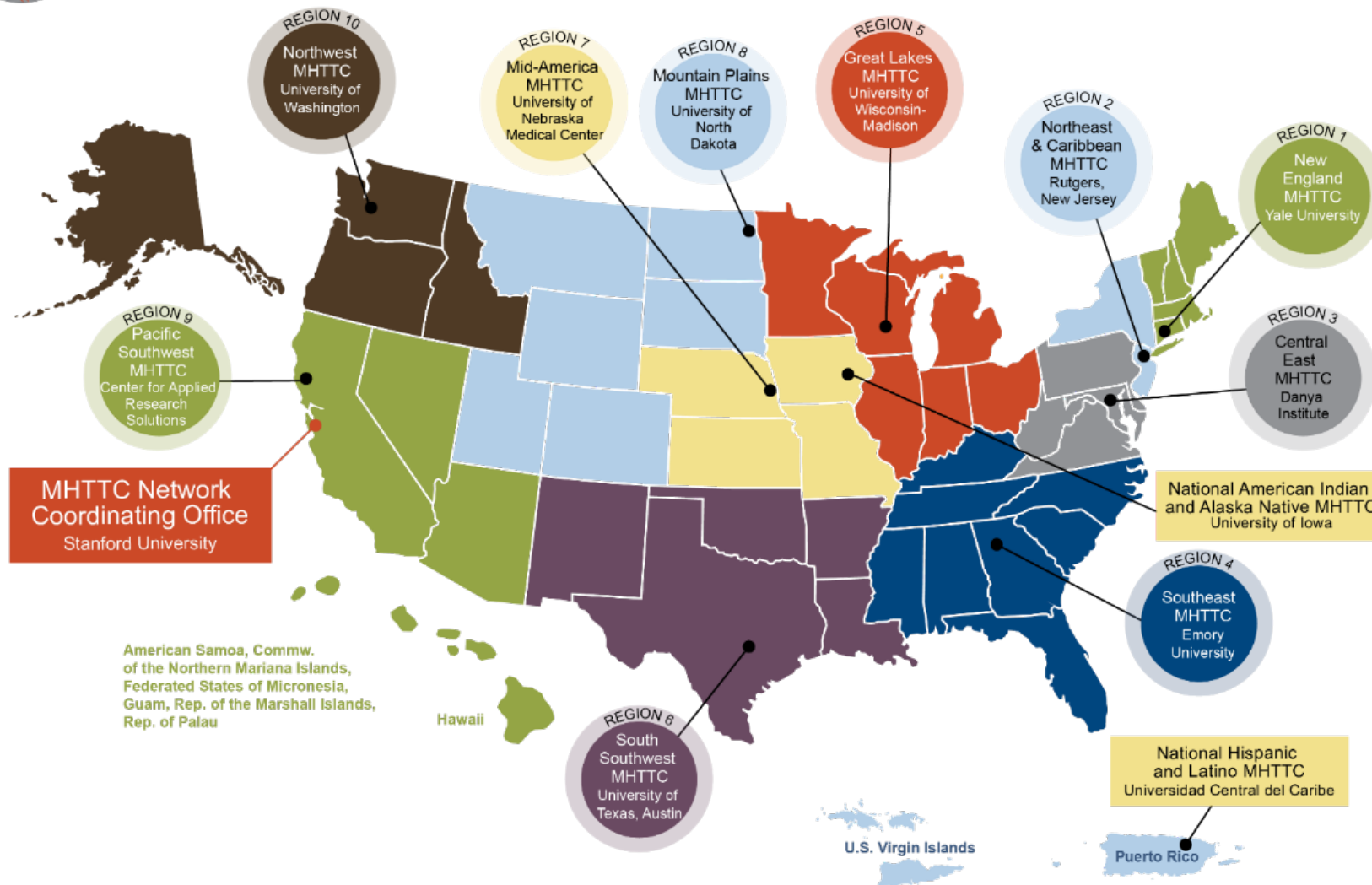


MHTTC

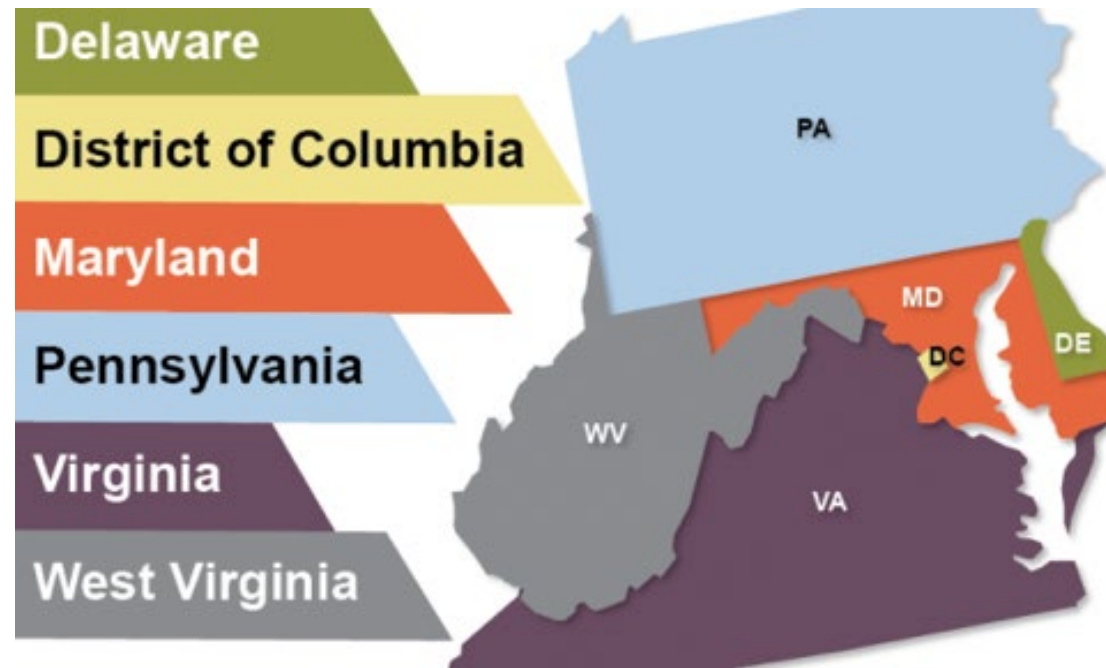
Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

MHTTC Network



# Central East Region 3



Central East (HHS Region 3)

**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED  
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND  
ACCEPTING OF  
DIVERSE CULTURES,  
GENDERS,  
PERSPECTIVES,  
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED AND  
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS  
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR  
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND  
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND  
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH  
OUR ACTIONS,  
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

# Acknowledgment

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At the time of this publication, Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D, served as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The opinions expressed herein are the views of the authors and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this document is intended or should be inferred.

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Presented 2023



# Mental Health Disorder in African American Men

**William B. Lawson, MD, PhD, DLFAPA**

**President, Senior Psychiatrists, Inc.  
Past President, Black Psychiatrists of America**

**Moderator: Annelle B. Primm, MD, MPH**

**Council of Elders, Black Psychiatrists of America**

**June 15, 2023**



# Today's Webinar

- Every June we celebrate Father's Day which is a good time to think about the mental health and well-being of men
- Men are less likely than women to seek mental health services
- African American men are no exception to this pattern
- We thank the SAMHSA CE-MHTTC for its partnership on the BPA Health Equity Webinar series
- Content has both Central East region and national relevance.
- Our featured speaker is William B. Lawson MD, PhD, DLFAPA

# Mental Health Disorder in African American Men

**William B. Lawson, MD, PhD, DLFAPA**

*Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences*  
**The George Washington University**

*Adjunct Professor*  
**Department of Psychiatry**  
**University of Maryland School of Medicine**

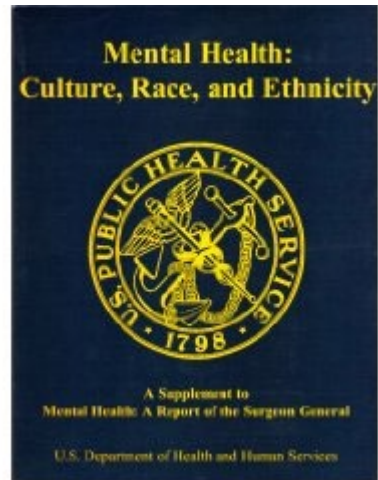
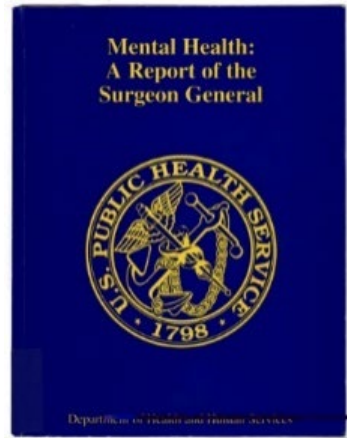
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**(240) 235-5092**

# Landmark Reports



<https://www.espn.com/espn/blackhistory2007/news/story?id=2780294>

# In The Past

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Mental apparatus incapable of higher functioning and emotional depth

Drapetomania, a disease that caused enslaved Blacks to flee their plantations, or Dysaesthesia Aethiopica, a disease that purportedly caused a state of dullness and lethargy in slaves

# Beliefs about Black Men

- One of the most common myths is that African Americans are less likely to have mental health disorders than other ethnic minorities
- Another myth is that seeking professional treatment is a betrayal of faith, spirituality, and group culture
- There is also a myth that enslaved Africans could not develop mental illness because as enslaved people, they did not own property, engage in commerce, or participate in civic affairs such as voting or holding office

# Beliefs about Black Men by Providers and the Larger Community

- Emotionally stoic
- Childlike
- Do not experience pain
- Athletic
- Physically strong
- Cognitively weak and indifferent to intellectual pursuits
- Violent
- Sexually preoccupied
- Drug and alcohol abuser

# What the Data Show

	Online survey	First years	Residents
<b>Percent who believe myths about biological differences</b>			
Blacks' skin is thicker than whites'	58	40	25
Black people's blood coagulates more quickly than whites'	39	29	4
Blacks age more slowly than whites	23	21	14
Blacks' nerve endings are less sensitive than whites'	20	8	4
Blacks have a more sensitive sense of smell than whites	20	10	7
Blacks are better at detecting movement than whites	18	14	11
Black couples are significantly more fertile than white couples	17	10	7
Whites have a more efficient respiratory system than blacks	16	8	4
Blacks have stronger immune systems than whites	14	21	4
Whites have larger brains than blacks	12	2	0
Whites have a better sense of hearing compared with blacks	10	3	0
<b>Percent who believe factual or true biological differences</b>			
Whites are less likely to have a stroke than blacks	29	49	46
Blacks have denser, stronger bones than whites	39	25	29
Whites are less susceptible to heart disease than blacks	43	63	50
Blacks are less likely to contract spinal cord diseases	42	46	57

Hoffman KM, et al. *PNAS*. 2016;113:4296-4301.

Source: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

The Huffington Post



# Black Men

Not only affected by the general barriers to medical treatment that many in the Black community face, also have internalized certain behaviors that fit within the social constructs of Black masculinity — ultimately impacting their help-seeking behaviors.

Despite known or suspected mental health issues, Black men are for numerous reasons often reluctant to seek treatment.

# Black Men (cont.d)

For Black men, the traditional masculinity roles and ideas that have been passed down through generations of different racial and ethnic backgrounds have caused men to struggle with being vulnerable and expressing their emotions, making it harder to seek help.

# Myths about Mental Illness Held by African Americans

- Sign of weakness
- Lack of faith
- Personal failing
- You will be locked up
- It's a sign of poor stock
- Not as serious as physical illness

# According to a National Mental Health Association survey on attitudes and beliefs about depression:

- Approximately 63% of African Americans believe that depression is a “personal weakness,” compared to the overall survey average of 54%
- Only 31% of African Americans said they believed depression is a “health” problem
- Close to 30% of African Americans said they would “handle it” (depression) themselves if they were depressed, while close to 20% said they would seek help for depression from friends and family
- Only one in four African Americans recognize that a change in eating habits and sleeping patterns are a sign of depression; only 16% recognize irritability as a sign
- Only one-third of African Americans said they would take medication for depression, if prescribed by a doctor, compared to 69% of the general population.
- Almost two-thirds of respondents said they believe prayer and faith alone will successfully treat depression “almost all of the time” or “some of the time.”

# Therefore, for Black Men

Seeking help is a sign of weakness

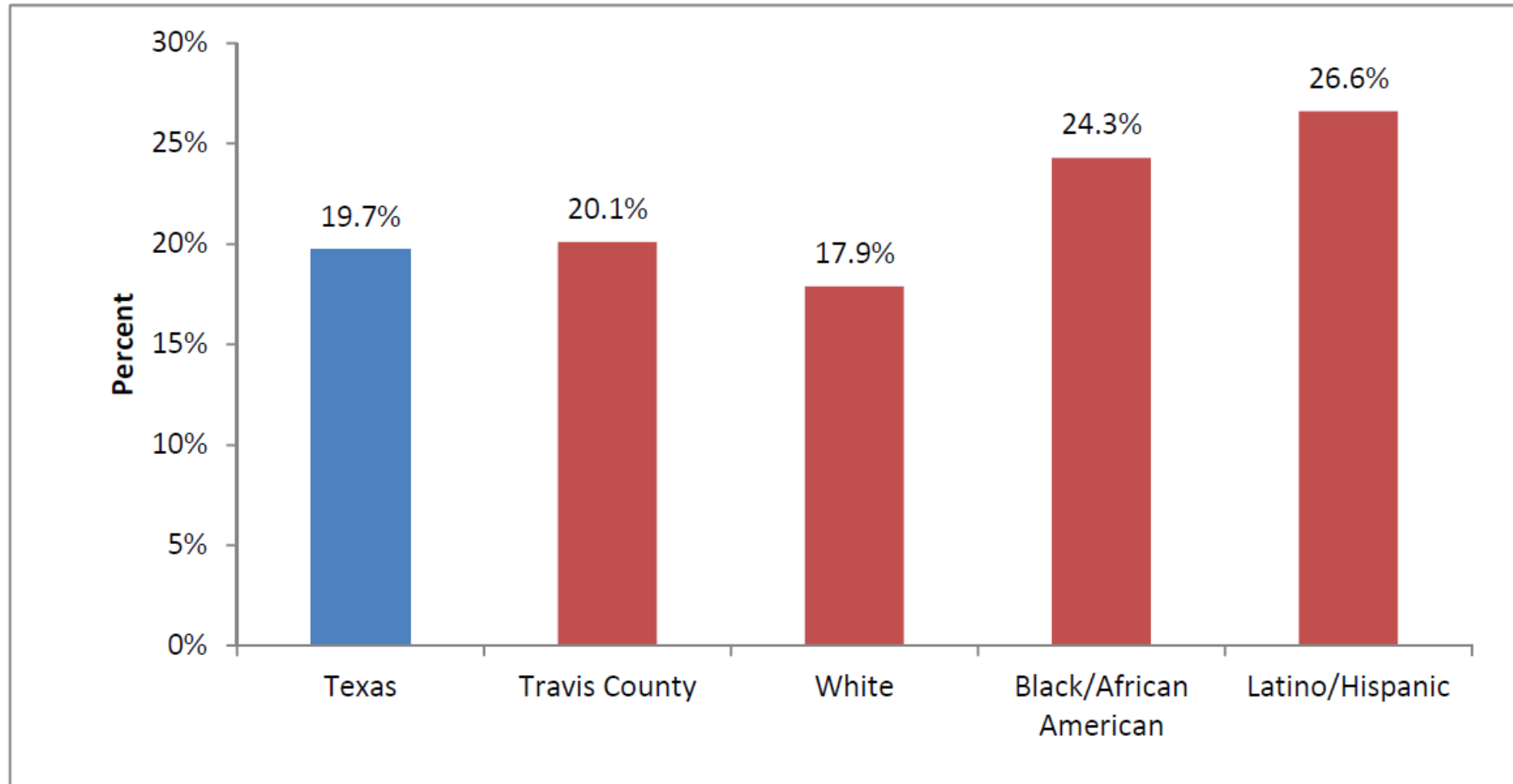
Seeking help is a personal issue to be dealt with privately

Black men don't need therapy they need to toughen up

# Black Men

However: The [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health](#) reports that Black adults are more likely than white adults to experience persistent symptoms of emotional distress, such as sadness, hopelessness, and feeling that they have to dedicate extra effort to everything they do.

**Figure 42: Percentage of Adults Reporting 5+ Days in Past Month of Poor Mental Health in Texas and by Race/Ethnicity in Travis County, 2008-2010**



Data Source: Austin Travis County Health & Human Services Department. *Together We Thrive: Austin/Travis County Community Health Assessment Plan. December 2012*



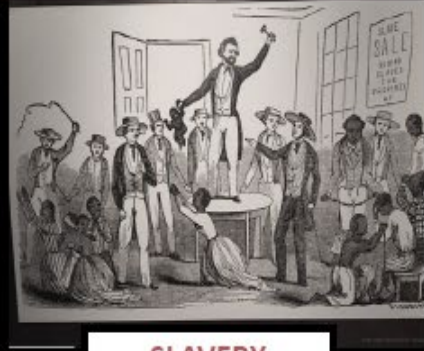


# Mental Disorders are BRAIN DISEASES IRRESPECTIVE OF CULTURE

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- ❑ Similar incidence regardless of culture or geography
- ❑ Imaging studies showed consistent abnormalities
- ❑ Candidate genes have been identified
- ❑ Pharmacotherapy reliably effective





SLAVERY



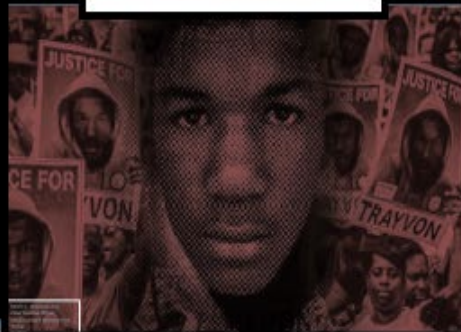
BLACK CODES



CIVIL RIGHTS ERA

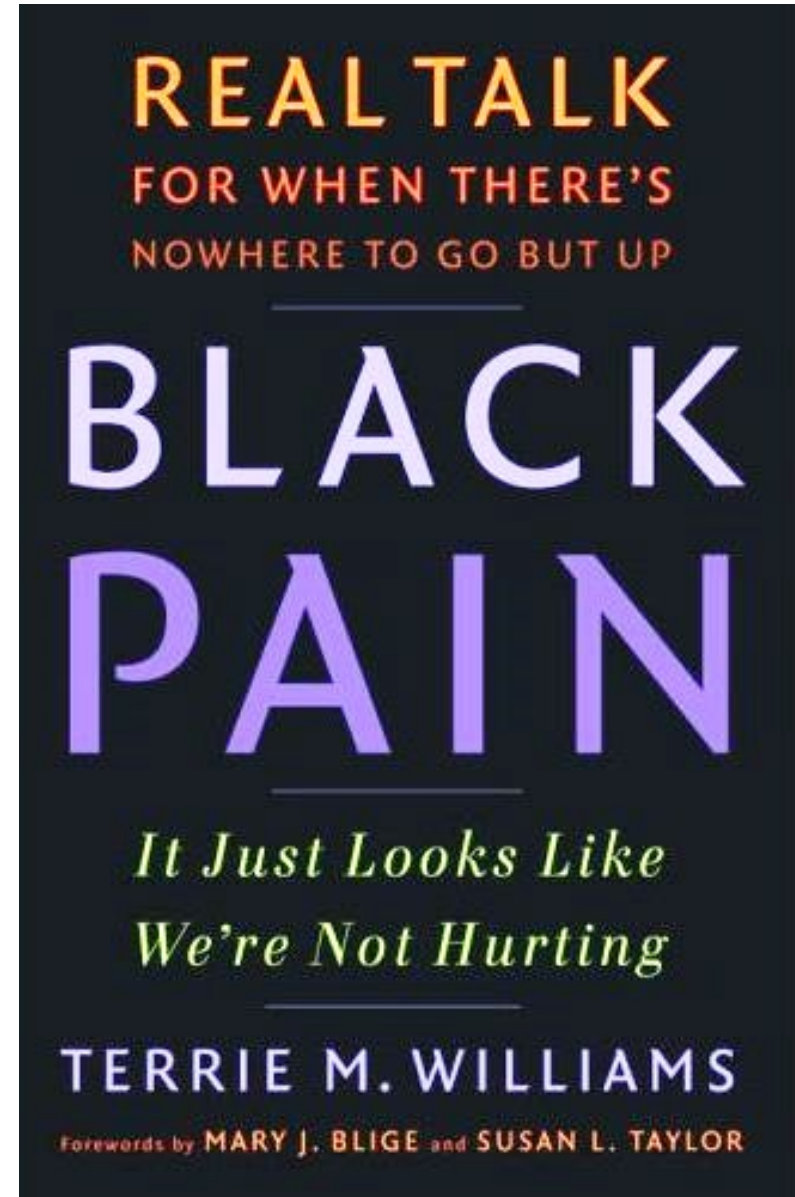
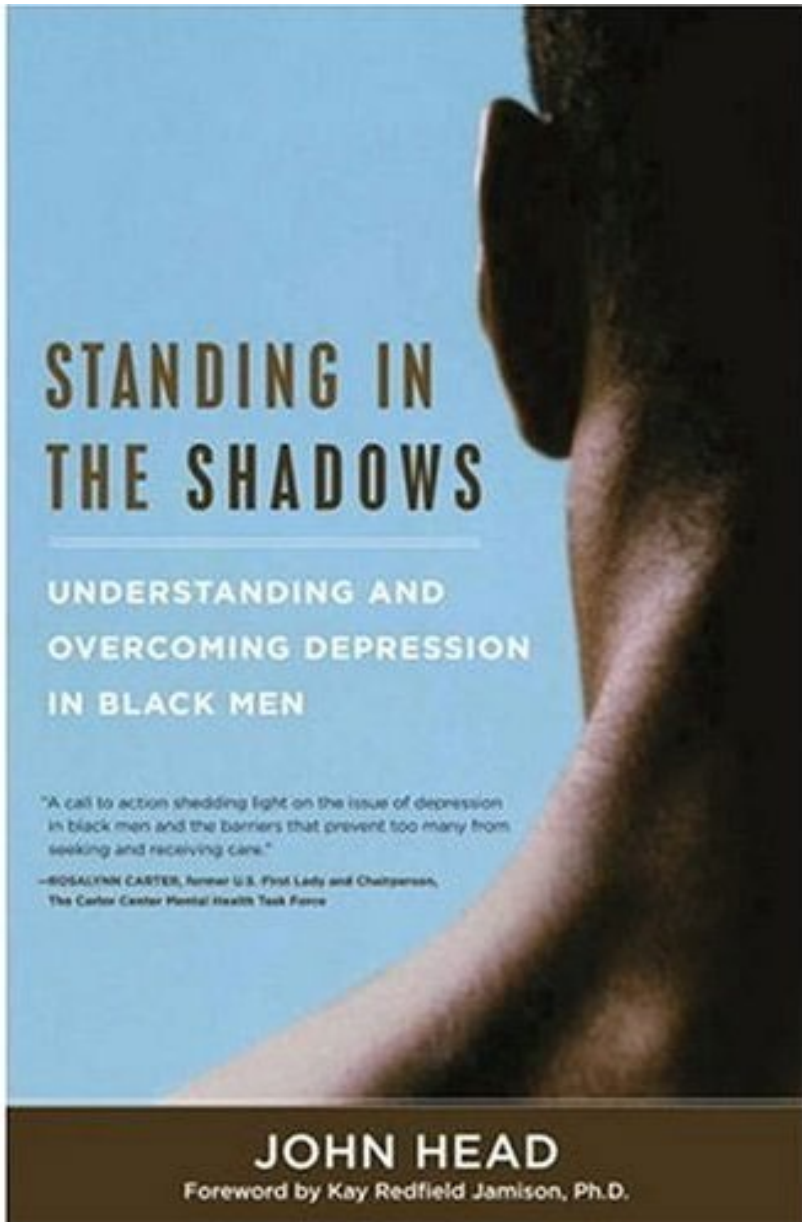
# The "EMOTIONALLY PAINFUL" History of Africans in America

YESTERDAY



TODAY





# Disparities in African Americans

- In diagnosis
- In treatment
- In access to care
- Lead to Mental and **Physical Health Disparities** later in life
- *Greater than for other ethnic groups*
- *Increasing risk of **suicide** if untreated*

# MISDIAGNOSIS IN MENTAL HEALTH

- TREATMENT IS DELAYED OR REFUSED
- NOVEL TREATMENTS AND RESEARCH ARE VIEWED WITH SUSPICION
- SELF TREATMENT IS SOUGHT FROM DRUGS OF ABUSE

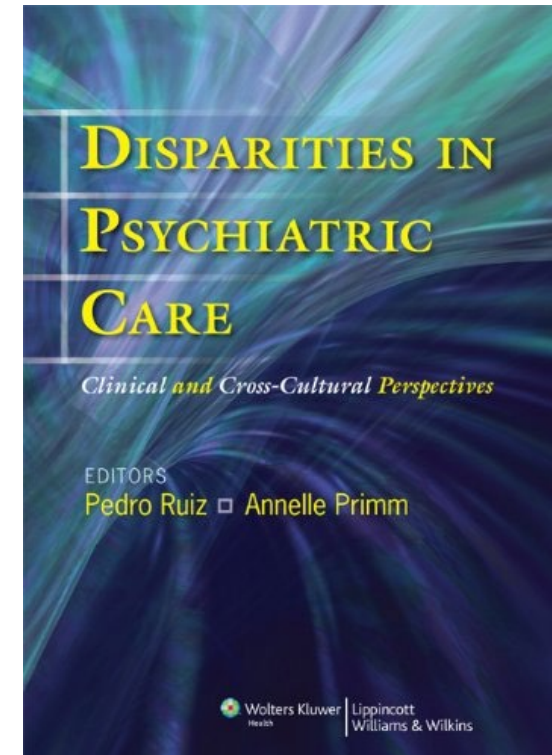
# Schizophrenia More Common in African Americans?



# Misdiagnosis or Under Diagnosis

## African Americans

- Over diagnosis of schizophrenia
- Under diagnosis or under recognition of:
  - Depression
  - Bipolar Disorder
  - PTSD



Primm, A.B. and Lawson, W.B. "Disparities Among Ethnic Groups: African Americans" in Disparities in Psychiatric Care: Clinical and Cross-Cultural Perspectives; Eds. P. Ruiz and A. Primm, Wolters Kluwer /Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, 2010, Pp19-29

# Mental Disorders

- Epidemiological Catchment Area Study and National Comorbidity Study
- Few ethnic differences in prevalence of most mental disorders

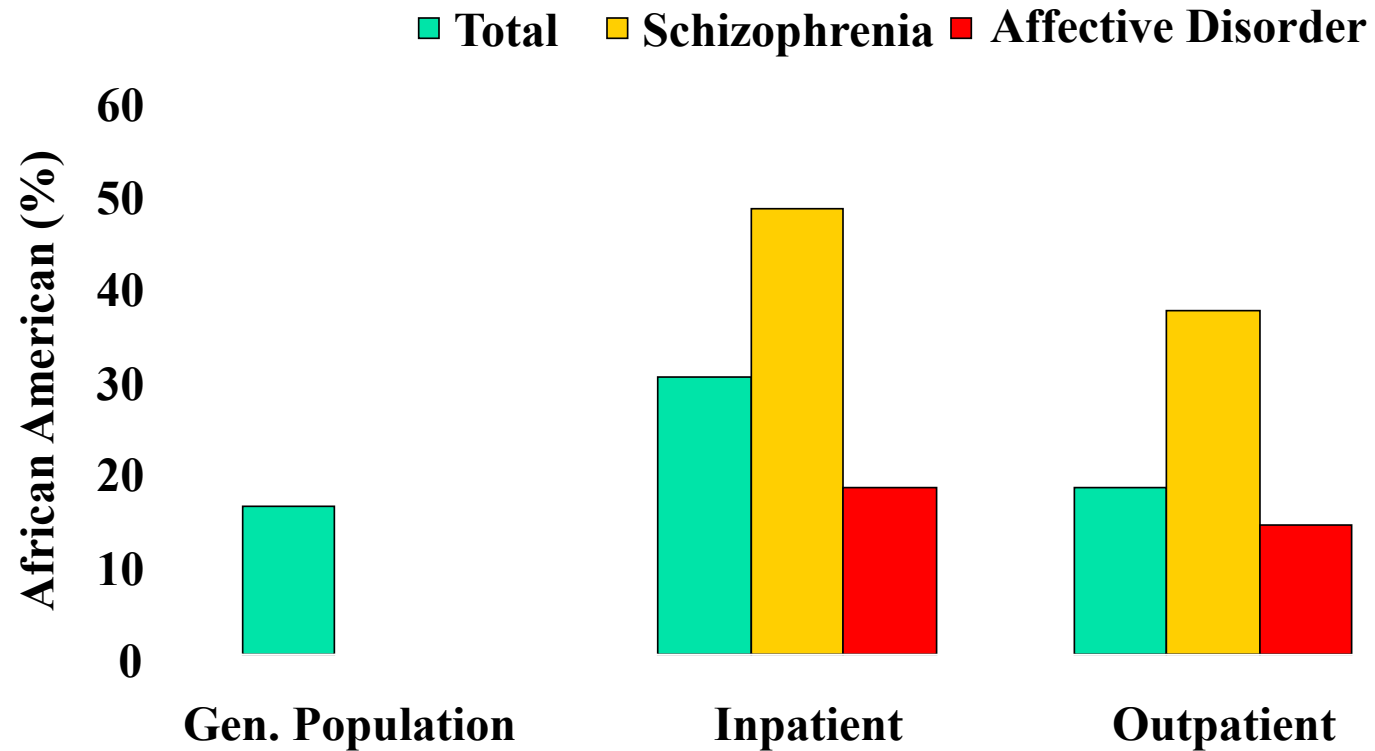
Regier DA, et al. *Acta Psychiatr Scand.* 1993;88:35-47.

Kessler RC, et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry.* 1994;51:8-19.



# Problem: Schizophrenia Over-Diagnosed in African Americans

## Results from Tennessee



<b>REFERENCE</b>	<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>SETTING</b>
Delbello et al.2001	AA more likely to be diagnosed with schiz than W	Inpatient adolescent facility
<a href="#">Blow FC</a> ,et al. 2004	AA 4X more likely to be diagnosed with schiz than W	Veteran administration database
<a href="#">Barnes A</a> , 2004	AA 4X more likely to be diagnosed than W with schiz	State psychiatric hospitals
<a href="#">Neighbors HW</a> ,et al. 2003	AA more likely to be diagnosed than W with schizophrenia when semi structured interview is used	Private and public inpatient facilities
<a href="#">Strakowski SM</a> , et al. 2003	AA more likely to be diagnosed than W despite structured interview	Inpatient, outpatient county mental health system
<a href="#">Minsky S</a> et al 2003	AA more likely than Latino or European Americans	Behavioral health service system in New Jersey

## Carl Bell MD

- Dr. Bell might have been the first psychiatrist to alert the medical community about the misdiagnosis of **schizophrenia** among African Americans with bipolar disorder (J Nat Med Assoc. 1980 Feb 72 :141-5)



# MISDIAGNOSIS IN MENTAL HEALTH

- TREATMENT IS DELAYED OR REFUSED
- NOVEL TREATMENTS AND RESEARCH ARE VIEWED WITH SUSPICION
- SELF TREATMENT IS SOUGHT FROM DRUGS OF ABUSE

# Depression

- For folks of color sadness may not be there
- A lack of interest and pleasure in daily activities
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Lack of energy or an inability to concentrate
- Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide or suicide equivalents



# Recognizing Mental Disorders: Cultural Issues

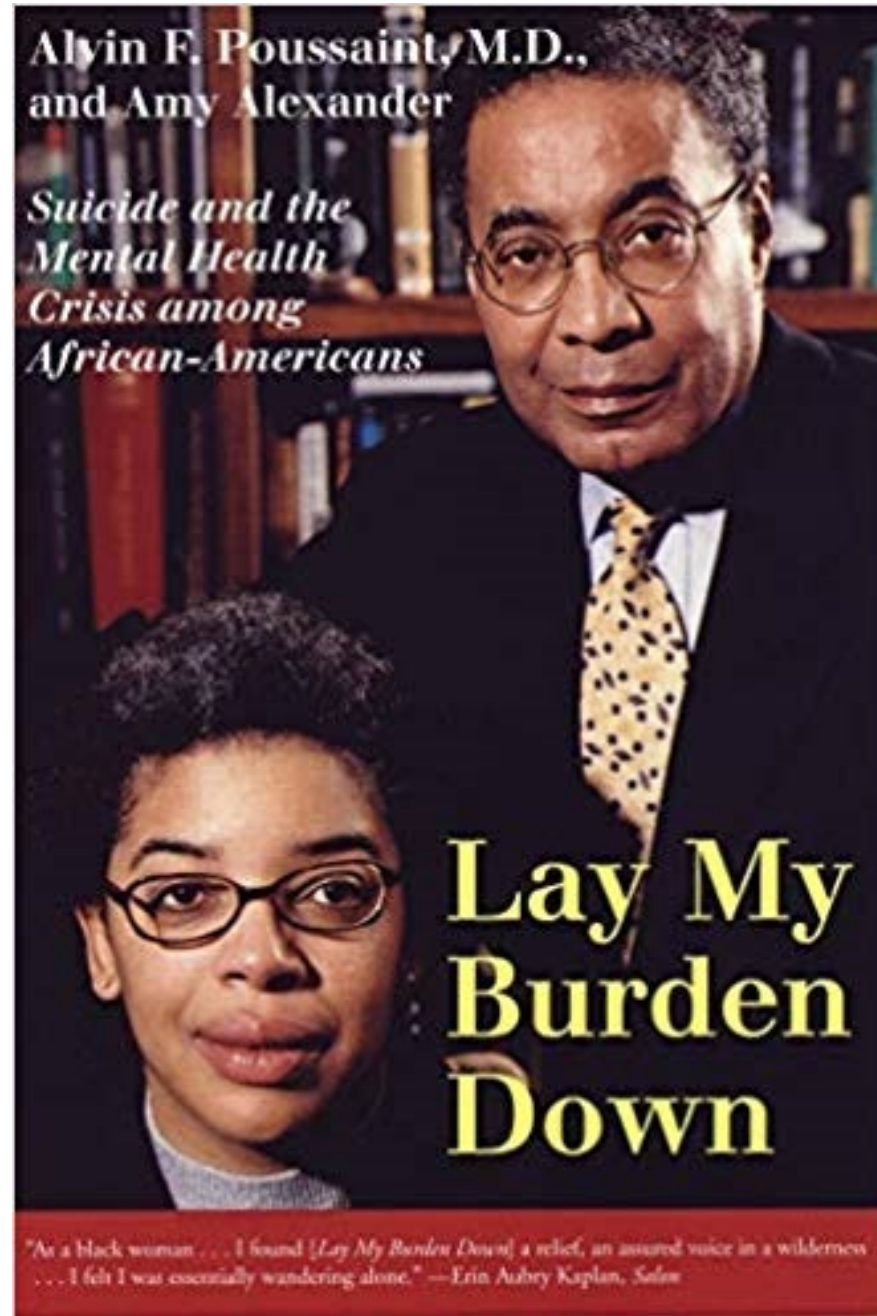
- In many West African countries
  - No single word for depression
  - Guilt is rare, shame is common
- In U.S., rather than sadness or anxiety, African Americans show:
  - Somatization
  - Denial
  - Irritability
  - “Falling out”
  - Failure to disclose inner feelings
  - Healthy paranoia
  - John Henryism
- Mental Disorders are thought to be
  - Inconsistent with African American resilience
  - Inconsistent with religious beliefs

# Black Men Die by Suicide (but won't admit it)

- Suicide by proxy?
- Not being afraid to die is a value not pathology
- Better to be bad than mad

# Suicide occurs in Black folks

- Dr. Alvin Poussaint and journalist Amy Alexander offer a groundbreaking look at 'posttraumatic slavery syndrome,' the unique physical and emotional perils for Black people that are the legacy of slavery and persistent racism





# Suicide

- Suicide rates for Black children aged 5-12 were roughly two times higher than those of similarly aged white children
- These findings provide further evidence of a significant age-related racial disparity in childhood suicide rates and rebut the long-held perception that suicide rates are uniformly higher in whites than Blacks in the United States
- Another study, found the rate of suicide deaths among young Black males increased by 60 percent from 2001 through 2017

# Suicide does not respect income or race



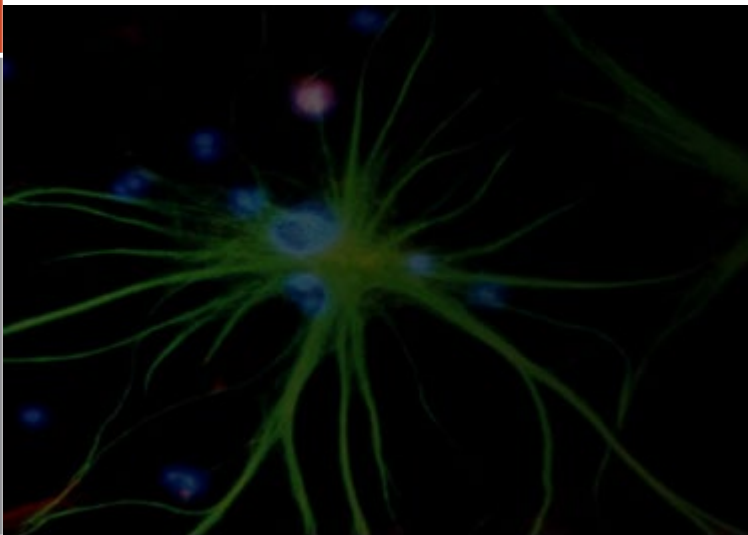
Credit: John Hayes/AP Photo

Don Cornelius' death from a self-inflicted gunshot wound has drawn new attention to the dark side of the "Soul Train" founder.

Cornelius, 75, was plagued by health problems in the last three decades of his life. He underwent a 21-hour operation in 1982 to correct a congenital malformation in blood vessels in his brain. "You choose your brain surgeons for their stamina," he said afterwards, according to The Washington Post. "You're never quite the same afterward. Travel is always a real test."

His personal life also suffered. In 2008, he was arrested for felony domestic violence against his estranged wife, Victoria Avila-Cornelius. In 2009, he plead no contest to one count of "corporal injury resulting in traumatic condition of a spouse," was put on probation for 36 months, and ordered to pay over \$1,000 in fines. She also filed multiple restraining orders against him.

But Cornelius' lasting legacy is his impact on diversifying pop culture and giving rise to a hugely influential group of black performers. Cornelius created "Soul Train" and hosted the show in national syndication from 1971 to 1993. It was the first real venue on American TV for soul music, and as the show's writer, producer, and emcee, Cornelius played a vital role in bringing stars like James Brown, Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson to a wider audience.





# Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

*A stress like a soldier in combat*

Psychological and physiological response to an extreme stressor

Three cluster of symptoms:

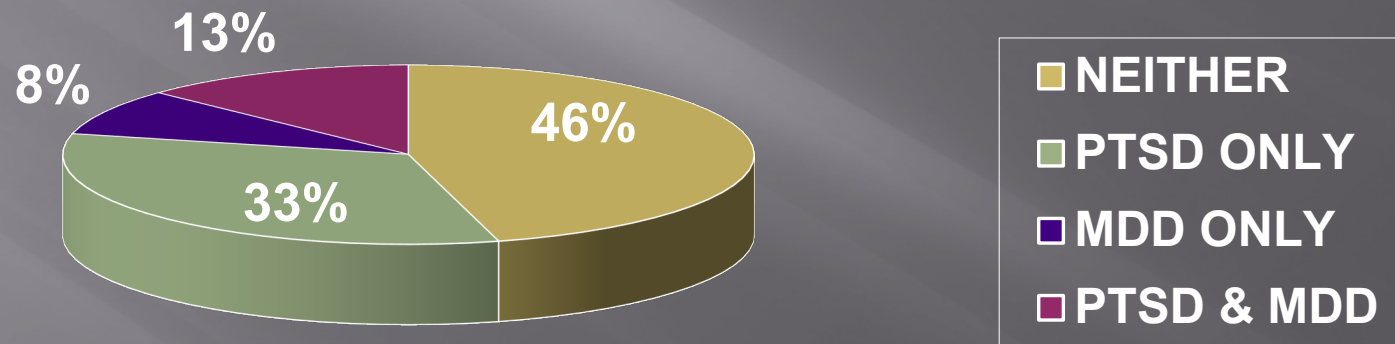
- Ruminantion: flashbacks
- Hyperarousal: jump at anything, racing heart
- avoidance behaviors

# PTSD

- More likely in civilians
- More common in African Americans
- Misdiagnosed as schizophrenia
- Often NOT referred to mental health providers
- Do not get evidence based effective treatment: either psychotherapy or pharmacotherapy

# Percentages Meeting Criteria for Lifetime PTSD & MDD in a Primary Care Clinic

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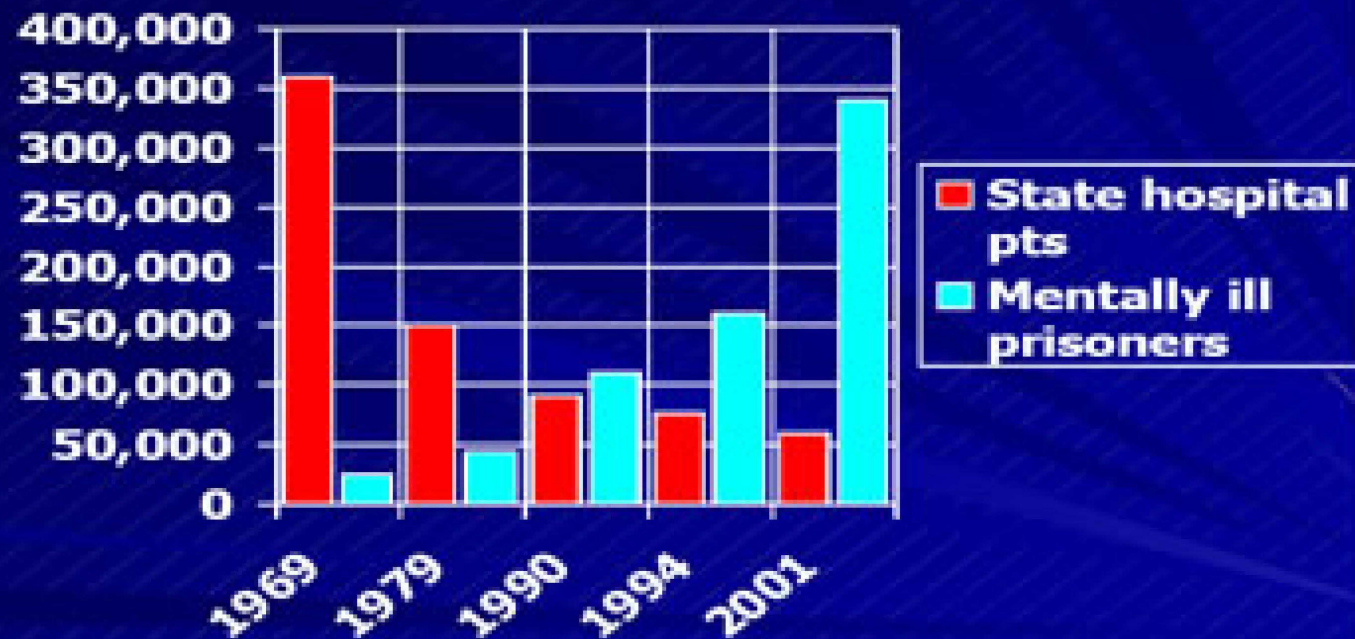


*But only 17% were treated or referred for mental health treatment*

# Criminalization of Mental Illness

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## “Trans-Institutionalization” (Criminalization of the Mentally Ill)



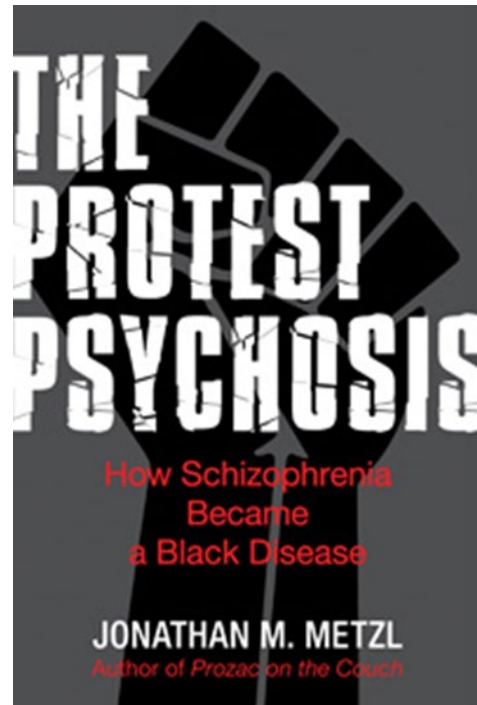
Source: US Dept. of Health Human Services & Dept of Justice statistics

# More likely to be incarcerated





# Race, psychosis, and violence



# Double Whammy

Stereotypes of African American men as criminal are deeply embedded in American society

The violent mentally ill are also a widely held belief

These stereotypes are most likely used by decision makers in the criminal sentencing process

**African American men who commit crimes are less likely to be given a psychiatric evaluation to determine their mental capacity at the time of the offense**

It has been repeatedly shown that Black men are also disproportionately arrested and given longer sentences than whites

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**In general, people of color face health disparities in mental health treatment, and are more likely to be incarcerated than treated**

**US jails and prisons hold more people with mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders than most inpatient psychiatric facilities**

# Treatment in Confinement

- Less than 15% of incarcerated people receive the necessary treatment
- Strong correlation between states spending on mental healthcare and incarcerating those with mental illness (Torrey, Kennard, Eslinger, Lamb, & Pavle, 2010)

# Double Whammy

Mentally ill African-American inmates are **less likely to receive treatment than mentally ill white prisoners**

Even without the racial disparities, mentally-ill-minority inmates have little hope of receiving adequate treatment while in jail. With some jails reporting only 1 psychiatrist for nearly 1,000 inmates, chances are slim that inmates with mental illness will receive the help they need to keep their symptoms from worsening while in jail. *K Jones, 2014*

# Are Mentally Ill Individuals More Violent?

While those diagnosed with a mental disorder are often blamed for violent crimes and frequently portrayed as such in the media, the relationship is not that simple. Having a mental disorder without treatment and associated with drug abuse increases the risk of violence. African Americans are especially more likely to lack treatment for mental health and substance abuse. Improving treatment access in a variety of settings is the most effective way to address community violence.

# The Reality

- African Americans less violent than their Caucasian counterparts on an inpatient unit
- The study has been replicated multiple times
- Faculty and staff refused to believe it

**Lawson, W.B.**, Yesavage, J.A. and Werner, P.D. Race, Violence and Psychopathology. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 45:294-297, 1984.

# Who Is The Victim?

- According to a study by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (PNAS), among all groups, Black men and boys face the highest lifetime risk of being killed by police. The study predicts that about **1 in 1,000 Black men and boys** will be killed by police over the life course<sup>1</sup>. Edwards Lee Esoisuti 2019
- Another study found that over the course of one's lifetime, about **1 in every 1,000 Black men** are likely to be killed by the police. This risk is at its highest between the ages of 20 and 35 — a peak that is otherwise the same for men and women of all racial and ethnic groups<sup>2</sup>. A Sandoiu
- Black people account for **27%** of those fatally shot and killed by police in 2021, according to Mapping Police Violence 2022



# Austin Tragedy

- No charges for Texas cop who fatally shot unarmed, naked teen
- The fired Texas police officer who fatally **shot** an unarmed, **naked teen** will not face charges after a grand jury declined to indict him Tuesday. Travis County jurors decided against charges after meeting for five days and hearing 12 witnesses' testimony.

## *TREATMENT OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES*

- *INPATIENT CARE*
- More likely to be admitted to inpatient care
- More likely to be referred to the correctional system
- More likely to be involuntarily committed
- More likely to leave against medical advice
- *OUTPATIENT CARE*
- More likely to be referred for medication only or to the emergency room
- More likely to be terminated early (Flaherty & Meagher 1980; Lawson 1994; Lindsey et al. 1989; Paul & Menditto 1992; Soloff and Turner, 1982; Strakowski et al. 1995)

# African Americans and Hispanics

- Often do not receive evidence based psychotherapy
- Often do not receive antidepressants
- Often do not receive second generation antipsychotics
- More likely to receive older antidepressants
- More likely to receive older antipsychotics and in excessive doses

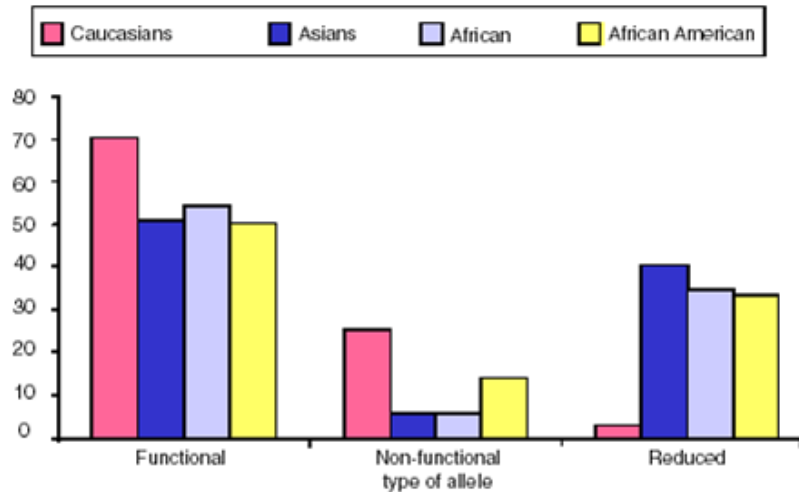
# Limited Therapeutic Options

- Lack of access to culturally competent therapists
- Lack of access to evidence based therapy
- Lack of contact with mental health and substance abuse provider specialists
- Better to be thought to be bad than mad

# Pharmacokinetics or Attitude

## REVIEW

Figure 1. Median frequency for CYP2D6 alleles classified as functional, non-functional and reduced functioning in Caucasians, Asians, Africans and African Americans.



The median frequencies for the functional classes of alleles in Caucasians, Asians, Africans and African Americans are shown. The frequency of functional alleles in Caucasians is predominant (71%), followed by non-functional alleles at 26% (mainly the 2D6\*4 but also the \*5 contributes). The reduced function Asian allele, the 2D6\*10 variants importance has long been known in Asian populations. For both Asian and Black populations, the functional allele class assumes a less dominant role, with scarcely 50% of the variability of the alleles being accounted for. The reduced function alleles in Black populations (both African and African American) may increase in importance if other mutants, like the 2D6\*29, occurring up to 20% in Africans [10] and 7% in African Americans [12] are discovered. The importance of assembling a review of allele frequencies underscores the predictability of drug response, due to the functionality that the allele bestows on the enzyme. The next research programs should include not only larger population studies for accurate assessment of allele frequency but also studies on individual clinical response and predictability of genotype.

CYP: Cytochrome P450.

## MISMATCH MEDICATION AND PHARMACOKINETICS

### Finding

Lower doses of antipsychotics in Asians and Latinos Lin, 1999

Lower doses of antidepressants in Asians and Latinos Lin, 1999

Higher plasma levels African Americans, Asians, some Latinos Lin 1999

### Genotypical Differences

Shift to the Right for African Americans and Asians for CYP2D6  
Fewer Rapid or Poor Metabolizers

More Slow Metabolizers (Bradford, 2000; Mendoza et al, 1999)

Receive more PRM medication

Receive higher doses of psychotropic medication

Receive more different medications

Receive more injections of medication

More likely to receive depot medication

Less likely to receive antidepressants

(Chung et al. 1995; Flaherty & Meagher 1980; Primm and Lawson 2010; Price et al. 1985; Segal et al. 1996; Strakowski et al. 1993)

# Disparities in Drug Research and Testing

- Minority groups have been underrepresented in the drug-developmental process. We need a clearer picture of how different medications may affect subsets of our population.
- Ethnic groups respond to drugs differently
- Protocol for heart failure (isosorbide dinitrate/hydralazine), and hypertension (CCBs, Thiazides) for Blacks differs from whites

1. Hussain-Gambles, M., Atkin, K., & Leese, B. (2004). Why ethnic minority groups are under-represented in clinical trials: a review of the literature. *Health & social care in the community*, 12(5), 382-388.

2. Heller, C., Balls-Berry, J. E., Nery, J. D., Erwin, P. J., Littleton, D., Kim, M., & Kuo, W. P. (2014). Strategies addressing barriers to clinical trial enrollment of underrepresented populations: a systematic review. *Contemporary clinical trials*, 39(2), 169-182.

3. Schmotzer, G. L. (2012). Barriers and facilitators to participation of minorities in clinical trials. *Ethnicity & disease*, 22(2), 226-230.

4. Sheikh, A. (2005). Why are ethnic minorities under-represented in US research studies? *PLoS Med*, 3(2), e49.

# Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male

The trials ended in 1972, and only after a news report exposed the study. The exposure eventually resulted in medical research reforms, a presidential public apology and a financial settlement.



**The**  **to Addressing These Concerns**

**Legislative, Policy, Resources, Education, Clinical Models**



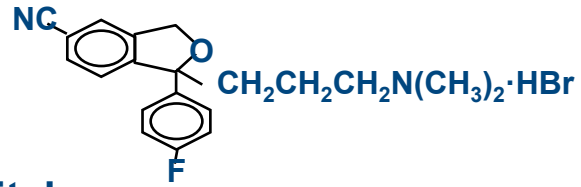
# Treatment Works!!!!



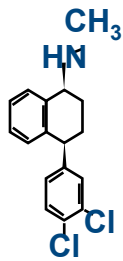


**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Interpersonal  
Insight oriented psychotherapy group, family, or  
network therapy**

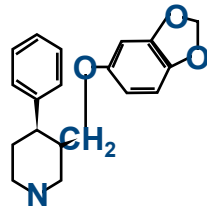
# SSRIs and SNRIs



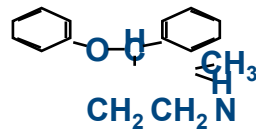
**Citalopram**



**Sertraline**



**Paroxetine**



**Fluoxetine**

# Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS)



# RAISE

- Informed by research studies funded by the federal government which demonstrated good outcomes for people with FEP
- Initial study: NIMH in 2008 launched a large scale research initiative examining different aspects of coordinated specialty treatments in the earliest stages of psychosis. Medication doses were reduced, the likelihood of future episodes of psychosis were reduced, long-term disability was reduced, and people were able to get their lives back on track so they can pursue their goals
- ***This approach was found to be cost effective and SAMHSA and state agencies subsequently funded multiple sites***

**In general, Black men face health disparities in mental health treatment, and are more likely to be incarcerated than treated**

**US jails and prisons hold more people with mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders than most inpatient psychiatric facilities**

# The Good News

We do have the answers!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

# Restorative Justice

- Need to promote a healing and rehabilitative approach to crime
  - For the offender
  - For the victim
  - For the community
- Transition from a Punitive to a Rehabilitative perspective
- Acknowledging the role substance abuse, trauma and mental health have on behavioral outcomes



*Treatment and*



Rehabilitative



Or

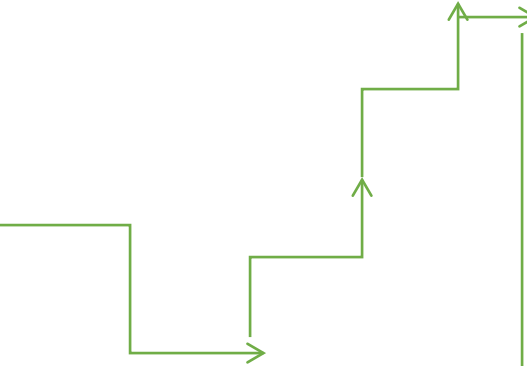
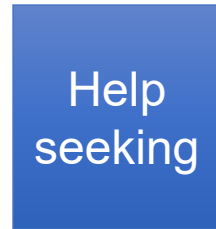


Punitive

# Current System



Stigma  
Lack of Knowledge  
Distrust  
Insidious Onset



Referral from GP  
Lack of Access  
Unaffordability  
and Inefficiency of  
Health Care



***May not receive treatment for a decade  
after diagnosis***

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# New Vision



Help  
seeking

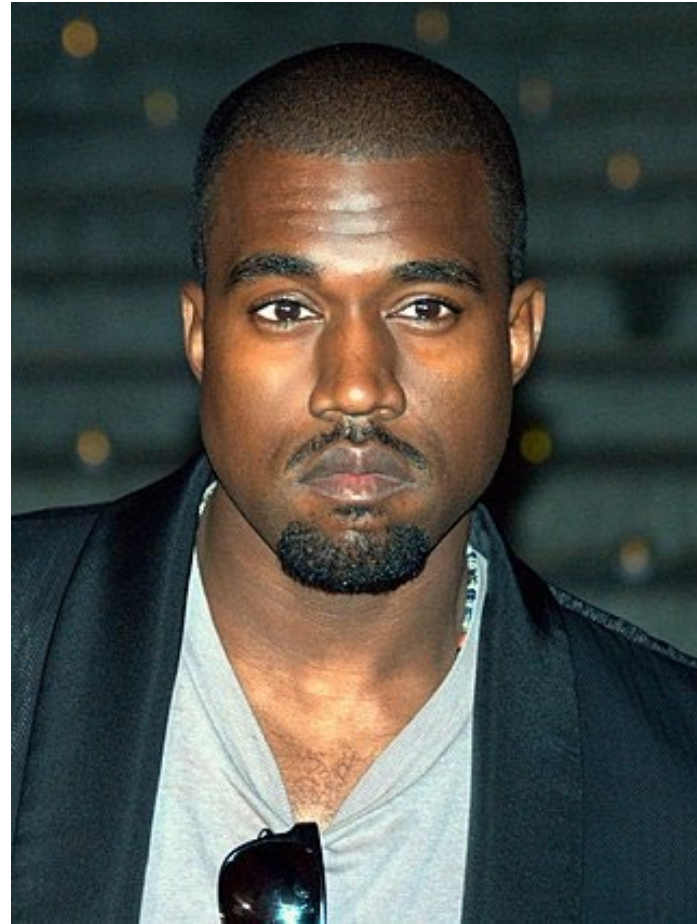


Special Early  
Intervention  
Services

# Willing to Disclose



Alvin Ailey

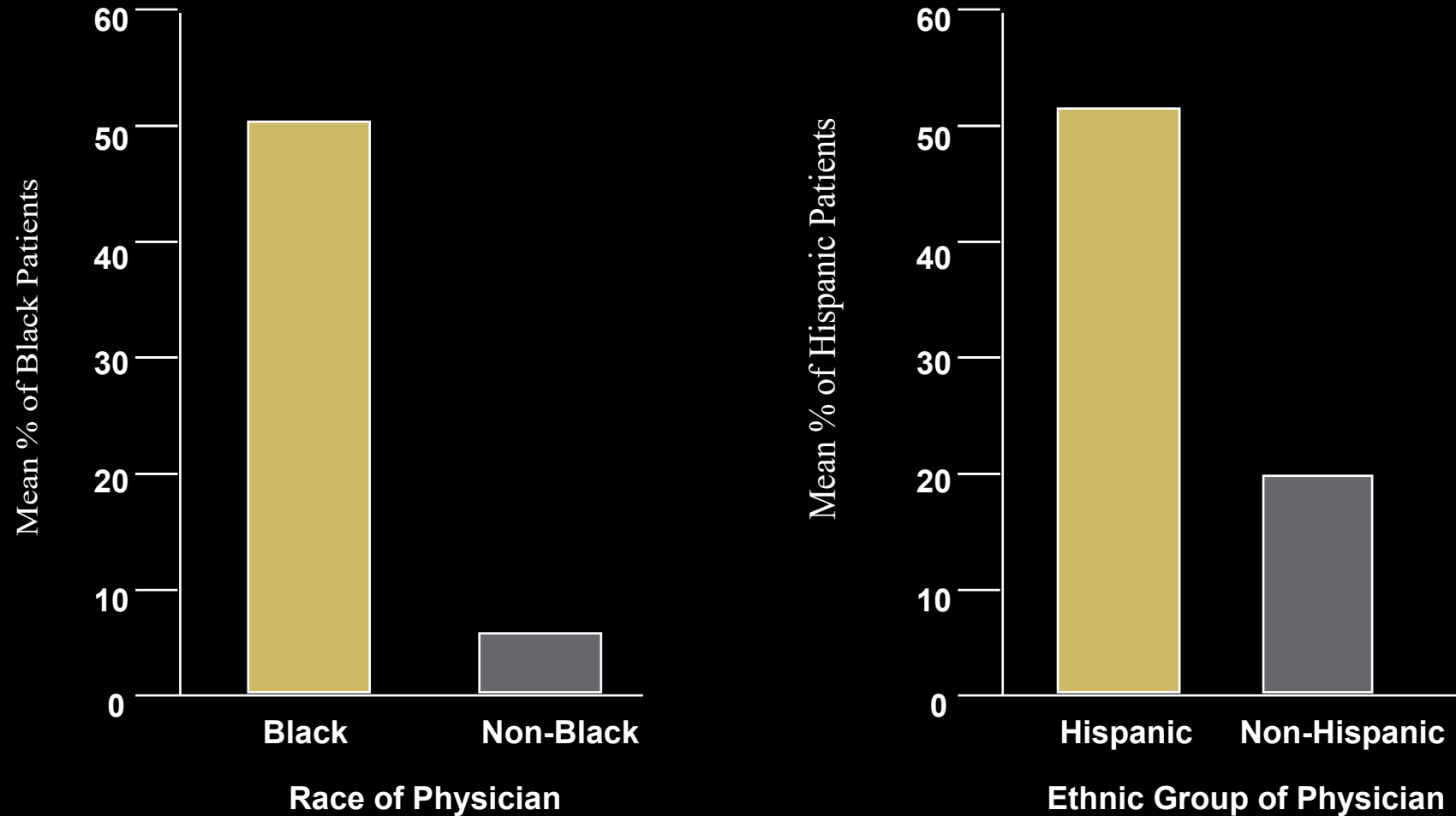


Kanye  
West

In 2016, the rapper Kid Cudi openly talked about his depression on social media, as reported by The Good Men Project, after which the hashtag #YouGoodMan quickly began to trend on Twitter to encourage Black men to share more about mental health issues.

In 2018, the music mogul Jay-Z added to the conversation in an interview with Van Jones on CNN in which he discussed his own experience with therapy and “the ridiculousness of the stigma” attached to mental health issues; he openly advocated for therapy in schools.

# Relation of the Race or Ethnic Group of Physicians to Patients in Their-Practices



Source: *New England Journal of Medicine*, May 16, 1996, p. 1308

Progress in making the mental health workforce more diverse and in better representing racial-ethnic minority groups in randomized intervention trials since the U.S. Surgeon General's 2001 Report *Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity*

Between 1999 and 2006, professionals from racial-ethnic minority groups increased from 17.6% to 21.4% in psychiatry, from 8.2% to 12.9% in social work, and from 6.6% to 7.8% in psychology

Reporting race-ethnicity in clinical trials has improved from 54% in 2001 to 89% in 75 studies of similar disorders published by 2010, although few ethnic-specific analyses are being conducted

***Progress in Improving Mental Health Services for Racial-Ethnic Minority Groups: A Ten-Year Perspective***

Catherine DeCarlo Santiago, Ph.D.; Jeanne Miranda, Ph.D.

*Psychiatric Services* 2014; doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.201200517

# Workforce Challenges



## Percentage of Doctors Who Are Black Barely Changed in 120 Years<sup>[a]</sup>

*“The percentage of physicians in the United States who are Black has increased only 4% in the past 120 years, and the number of Black male doctors has not changed at all since 1940, according to a new study.”<sup>[b]</sup>*



# MUCH NEEDS TO BE DONE

To address mental health concerns among African American men, it is essential to promote awareness, reduce stigma, and foster culturally competent approaches to mental healthcare. This includes encouraging open dialogue, educating communities about mental health, providing access to affordable and quality mental health services, and promoting mental wellness through self-care practices, support networks, and community resources.

It's important to remember that mental health is a universal issue, and individuals of all backgrounds deserve support, understanding, and access to appropriate care.

# Resources

## [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

- Peer to peer support; as well as family support (available via Zoom)

[Mental Health America \(MHA\)](#): Mental Health Assessment available online to understand tools and resources available

## Telehealth Services

[MDLIVE](#)

[Talk Space](#)

## Professional Organizations

Black Psychiatrists of America

Association of Black Psychologists

Association of Black Social Workers

# MUCH NEEDS TO BE DONE

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BUT THE PROMISED LAND IS IN SIGHT!

# Questions





# Contact Us



Central East (HHS Region 3)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

*a program managed by*



[Central East MHTTC website](#)

[Oscar Morgan, Project Director](#)

[Danya Institute website](#)

[Email](#)

240-645-1145

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