June was Men’s Health Month. The African American Behavioral Health Center of Excellence wants to take the time to:

1. bring awareness to the behavioral health disparities that African American men face and circumstances that lead to disproportionately higher rates of illness; as well as
2. provide recommendations to eliminate these disparities

African Americans are less likely to seek behavioral health treatment, less likely to receive guideline-consistent behavioral healthcare, and less-likely to receive accurate diagnoses and treatment, compared to non-Hispanic whites.

What Can Health Care Providers and Practitioners Do?

- Work with African American faith communities, leaders, and other behavioral healthcare professional organizations to reduce the stigma surrounding behavioral healthcare.
- Collaborate with health insurance providers to explore the possibility of incentivizing behavioral health visits for black men (reduction in fees, free gym membership, etc.)

What Can African American Men Do?

- Reduce the stigma: Normalize conversations about behavioral health and receiving behavioral healthcare services. It is ok to not feel ok. Seek the services of a behavioral health practitioner to help ease burdens.
- Explore resources: Explore behavioral health resources for black men. Please visit: African Americans | NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness for more resources on behavioral health and behavioral health services.

What Can Government Do?

- Encourage cross-sector collaboration (e.g., nonprofit, private, philanthropic, faith-based communities) to identify and remedy social and environmental factors that contribute to physical and behavioral health disparities, through formulation and implementation of new, innovative policies and collaborative governance efforts.
- Expand Medicaid eligibility and implement a health insurance campaign to insure black people of lower socioeconomic status, black people who are underinsured or uninsured, and black residents in poverty-stricken areas.

- Nearly 90% of Black people over the age of 12 with a substance use disorder did not receive any treatment.
- African American men are four times more likely to die by suicide than African American women are.
- In 2018, 58.2% of Black people with serious mental illness aged 18-25.
  And 50.1% of Black people with mental illness between the ages of 26-49 did not receive treatment.

Suicide is ranked as the third leading cause of death in black men ages 15-24.

To view the supplemental article or for more information on cultural competence and bias-eliminating practices, visit our website at AABH CoE - Home (africanamericanbehavioralhealth.org)

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