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 health disparities that African American men face—circumstances that lead to disproportionately higher rates of illness

2. provide recommendations to eliminate these disparities

Systemic racism, discrimination, and social and economic inequities are some of the key factors that contribute to serious health disparities affecting Black men.

What Can Health Care Providers and Practitioners Do?

- Complete monthly diversity, equity, inclusion, and implicit bias training to become or continue to grow as culturally competent organizations.

- Work with African American communities, leaders, and healthcare professional organizations to reduce explicit and implicit bias toward Black men in healthcare systems.

- Research and use evidence-based programs and practices to reduce disparities and eliminate barriers to high-quality healthcare for African American men.

What Can African American Men Do?

- Know your numbers: Find a healthcare provider you can trust and visit regularly to stay aware of your blood pressure, blood sugar levels and other indicators that will keep you informed about your health status.

- Breathe: Black men face racism and discrimination every day, and that kind of stress can have serious effects on your health. Find time to learn and practice healthy coping skills (such as exercise and slow, deep breathing techniques) to relieve some of that stress. If you need to, explore the possibility of using the services of a behavioral health counselor.

What Can Government Do?

Collaborate across sectors (e.g., nonprofit, for-profit, philanthropic) to identify and remedy social and environmental factors that contribute to physical and behavioral health disparities, through formulation and implementation of new and innovative policies.

50% African American men ages 35-64 are 50% more likely than White men to have high blood pressure. And 14 times more likely to develop kidney failure because of hypertension.

60% Black men are 60% more likely than White men to die from stroke. And 30% more likely to die from heart disease.

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)