POSITION: Part-Time Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION: Columbia University Irving Medical Center

Study Description

Dr. Olajide Williams and Dr. Sidney Hankerson’s research team employs a community-based participatory research approach (CBPR) to engage African American churches and study participants to increase colorectal cancer screening among African Americans.

The Community Health Workers United to Reduce Colorectal and Cardiovascular Disease among people at Higher Risk (CHURCH) Study is a five-year study funded by the National Institute of Health.

This study employs church-based Community Health Workers (CHWs) trained by Columbia University’s Wellness Center Training Institute called ‘InTOuCH’ to compare the effect of Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) vs. Enhanced Usual Care (EUC) on colorectal cancer screening. The study aims to partner with 22 Black churches to compare the effect of the SBIRT Intervention to Referral As Usual (RAU) (Usual Care) on guideline-concordant CRC Screening uptake; and to evaluate the effect of a culturally adapted ALIVE! Program (CAP) incorporated into the intervention arm on the dietary inflammatory score (DIS) Approach.

Research Assistant Job Description:

We are providing a research assistant position for students who are passionate about undoing structural racism and promoting health equity. The CHURCH study partners with Black Churches in New York City to identify community members who are at risk for colorectal cancer and connect them with colorectal cancer screening options. Working alongside community health workers, the study seeks to reduce health system mistrust and build health promotion capacity in the church and broader community. The study intervention follows the SBIRT model (screening, brief intervention, and referral to treat) with a two-part intervention involving motivational interviewing and the utilization of a culturally adapted web-based lifestyle coaching platform known as ALIVE!.

Responsibilities and activities:

As a research assistant, you will primarily work to support the CHURCH Study:

1. Training & Preparation: Become familiar with study protocols, research strategies, readings, and assessments. Additionally, participate in study related training including a study introduction training, study measures overview, practical skills training, etc.

2. Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR):
   - Attend church specific Colorectal cancer screening events
   - Conduct baseline, 6month, and 12month assessments and input data into REDCap
   - Follow up with participant on their colorectal cancer screening status at 6 months
   - Support the conduct of a Culturally adapted ALIVE! program-a lifestyle coaching web-based platform
• Support study measures and data collection (e.g., conduct screening using REDCap at baseline, 6 months and 1-year for participants who are deemed eligible for the study)
• Collect BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar measures (finger stick)
• Assist Community Health Workers (CHW’s)
• Support drafting of study documents
• Provide general research support including conducting literature reviews, etc.
• Additional responsibilities may be required at the request of the Project Manager.

Requirements:
Due to the extensive training and community connection, our work requires RAs to commit one year to the project.

Preferred skills:
✓ Qualitative research experience, including relevant coursework and/or competency using qualitative analysis software; previous qualitative fieldwork preferred.
✓ Comfortable working with people of different racial / ethnic, cultural, sexual, and religious backgrounds
✓ Have patience and enjoy utilizing principles of Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)
✓ Have a warm and personable approach in providing services to our community
✓ Someone who is flexible to meet the shifting needs of our target community
✓ Enjoy working in teams
✓ Interest in community, health equity, health disparities.
✓ An independent worker who also likes working with a team of colleagues.

Great applicants will possess:
• Knowledge of the socio-cultural factors (e.g., racism) that contribute to health disparities, with a specific focus on African Americans
• Strong writing skills and experience/interest conducting literature reviews
• Strong communication skills
• Flexibility in hours (i.e., may work some evenings and weekends)
• Ability to work with organizations of differing religious faiths (e.g., Christian and Muslim)
• Comfort and experience/interest in community outreach
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

**How to apply:**

Email Tina Ting, MPH ([tyt2108@cumc.columbia.edu](mailto:tyt2108@cumc.columbia.edu)) with your resume and cover letter.