



# Understanding Lay Pastoral Care Facilitator Training and Support Needs through Qualitative Engagement

*Lessons from a Focus Group for the ACTS 2 Project*

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*African-American Alzheimer's  
Caregiver Training & Support*



# Disclosures

- **A.C.H. Nowakowski** has no significant financial interests or other potential conflicts of interest to disclose for either this presentation or the corresponding research.
- **N.M. Lampe** has no conflicts of interest.
- **N. Desai** has no conflicts of interest.
- **T. Norton-Brown** has no conflicts of interest.
- **R.L. Glueckauf** has no conflicts of interest.



# ACTS 2 Project Basics

- Helping African American dementia caregivers achieve their self-identified skills-building and support goals
  - Relaxation, coping, problem-solving, faith walk
- Facilitated by lay pastoral care facilitators
  - Faith community workers receive 30 hours of preparatory training followed by weekly consultation with supervisors (i.e., consultation partners).
- Ecumenical spiritual approach welcoming all
- Caregivers have multiple ways to receive training and support
  - 12-week, telephone-based skills-building and support program
  - Brief problem-solving intervention
  - Informal counseling
  - Referrals to community resources and services



# Background

- ***Rationale***

- To provide ongoing education and support to facilitators, the ACTS 2 team needed information about the specific kinds of training and dementia care resources from which facilitators would benefit.

- ***Purpose***

- Examine ACTS 2 program facilitators' opinions about and recommendations for supplementary audiovisual and written training materials to optimize group process and collaborative goal-setting and goal-implementation skills.



# Research Questions

***What are African American lay pastoral care facilitators' perceptions of the strengths and weakness of their preparatory training program?***

***What are facilitators' recommendations for continuing education and training to enhance their intervention skills?***



# Study Methods

- ***Study Team***

- ACTS 2 program evaluators, core staff members, and a medical student research assistant

- ***Data Collection***

- Telephone-based focus group with n = 9 of 13 active lay pastoral care facilitators

- ***Analytic Techniques***

- Qualitative content analysis exploring facilitators' needs / recommendations / experiences in using current training materials



# Participants

**Table 1: ACTS 2 Facilitator Demographic Characteristics ( $N = 9$ )**

| Broad Demographic Category | Specific Demographic Identification | Number of Facilitators | Percentage of Facilitators |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Race                       | African American*                   | 9                      | 100.0%                     |
| Sex                        | Female*                             | 8                      | 88.9%                      |
|                            | Male                                | 1                      | 11.1%                      |
| Years of Age               | 30-39                               | 1                      | 11.1%                      |
|                            | 40-49                               | 0                      | 0.0%                       |
|                            | 50-59                               | 3                      | 33.3%                      |
|                            | 60-69*                              | 4                      | 44.5%                      |
|                            | 70-79                               | 1                      | 11.1%                      |
| Years of Formal Education  | 12-13                               | 1                      | 11.1%                      |
|                            | 14-15                               | 1                      | 11.1%                      |
|                            | 16-17*                              | 5                      | 55.6%                      |
|                            | 18-19                               | 2                      | 22.2%                      |
|                            | Years in Faith Ministry             | 10-14*                 | 3                          |
|                            | 15-20                               | 2                      | 22.2%                      |
|                            | Not Reported                        | 4                      | 44.5%                      |

\* Modal category for each demographic measure



# Findings

- Facilitators contributed reflections on...
  - (1) their roles and responsibilities
  - (2) their satisfaction with existing written materials
  - (3) their desire for supplementary audiovisual training materials
  - (4) their desire for additional training on data management and reporting
  - (5) the importance of peer support in their work
  - (6) fostering a faith-integrated culture within the program





# Discussion

- Findings underscored importance of direct engagement of lay pastoral care facilitators in evaluating benefits and limitations of their training
- Responses provided the foundation for designing supplementary educational offerings
- Specific recommendations from participants included
  - (a) supplementary audiovisual educational materials
  - (b) training on data management and reporting
  - (c) formal facilitator peer support services
  - (d) additional training to maintain a non-judgmental approach with caregivers from different faith traditions or those without a specific faith orientation



# Developing New Materials

- We are currently in the process of developing supplementary audiovisual materials that reflect the training priorities of lay pastoral care facilitators
- **First priority = creating videos of role play scenarios**
  - Conducting a brief problem history
  - Analyzing common caregiving and self-care issues
- Examples include video-recorded presentations on managing stressful caregiving problems
  - Refusing to bathe or take medications
  - Accessing day care services for loved ones with dementia
  - Struggling with meals and nutrition



# Assessing Program Fidelity

- “Are our sessions being delivered as intended?”
  - Using qualitative data elements from fidelity checklists
  - 2 coders → developed internal thematic coding scheme
- **Multi-step coding process for rigor → 18 stages!**
  - Initial coding using NVivo then multiple review rounds
  - New themes developed *a priori* and adjusted
  - Current running agreement percentages:  
**92.86% (Theme 1) | 78.57% (Theme 2) | 85.71% (Overall)**
- Focusing on caregiver mutual support:
  - Sharing ideas with each other
  - Practicing what they’re learning in the sessions



# Training + Support Actions

1. Evaluating facilitators' perceptions of the clarity and usefulness of the video roleplay series
2. Identifying additional skills-training needs related to the performance of the 12-session caregiver faith-integrated skills-building and support program
3. Identifying specific strategies for building support among facilitators
4. Identifying specific strategies for ensuring ongoing follow-up between facilitators and caregivers who have completed the 12-session program



# Connect with Our Team

- Caregivers and community stakeholders can learn more about ACTS 2 via:
  - Toll-Free Telephone: 1-866-778-2724
  - Local Telephone: 1-850-274-4945
  - Email: [tnnorton@fsu.edu](mailto:tnnorton@fsu.edu)
  - Website: [www.ACTS2Project.org](http://www.ACTS2Project.org)
  - Social: <https://facebook.com/SupportACTS2/>



# Find Us in TQR

- ***Citation:***

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- ***Open Access Link:***

- <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol27/iss2/2/>



**Questions?**