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Nov 30th, 1:30 PM - 2:45 PM

## Breakout Session: "Paths to Obtaining Funding for Community Engaged Research: One Successful Example"

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# Paths to Funding: One Successful Example

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# Background

- Obtaining NIH and other large research grants is more challenging than ever
  - Compelling pilot data is essential
- Taking advantage of opportunities
  - In-kind projects
  - Small, local grants for program implementation

# Purpose of this talk

- To describe important elements of a successful preliminary studies section
- To share a recent example of leveraging a small pilot study and in-kind *on the fly* activities to inform a successful NIH grant application

# What type of pilot data are needed?

- Understanding specific experiences of the target population and setting
- Program development
  - Materials and protocols
- Measurement development and adaptation
- Feasibility
  - Integration of a program within an existing setting
  - Recruitment and retention methods
  - Program attendance and adherence
  - Fidelity of program delivery
- Preliminary effectiveness
- Sample size and power estimates



# Research goal

*To adapt an evidence-based weight loss program that could be successfully implemented for low-income postpartum mothers by the Women Infants and Children Program*



# Collaboration

- **UMMS:**

- Milagros C. Rosal
- Stephenie Lemon
- Barbara Estabrook
- Karen Ronayne
- Linda Olson
- Amy Borg
- Caroline Cranos

- **Trainees:**

Christine David  
Lynn DiTaranto

- **Women, Infant and Children's Program**

- Nelly Driscoll
- Oahn Nguyen
- Other WIC staff

- **Nutritionists:**

Julie Demoracski  
Julia Cassavant

- **Peers:**

Amy Robinson  
Rosa Lima

- **Worcester Youth Center**

- **YWCA**

# Phase I: Understanding Specific Experiences of the Target Population and Setting

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# Needs assessment

- Goal: To understand the socio-demographic profile and prevalence of obesity in the target population

## Method/Source of Data:

- Existing WIC surveillance data

# Target population

Goal: To understand weight-related attitudes, motivations and behaviors, challenges to weight control and potentially useful strategies to promote weight loss

## Methods:

- Focus groups with participants (in-kind, institutional resources)
- Key informant interviews with WIC directors and senior nutritionists (in-kind)

# Target setting

Goal: To understand how an intervention and a research protocol might be developed to fit within the flow of WIC daily business, including:

- Intervention design and format
- Roles and responsibilities
- “Flow”

Method: Key informant interviews with WIC directors and senior nutritionists (in-kind)



# Phase II: Program Development

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# Protocol development

- Goal: To adapt an evidence-based intervention based on information learned in Phase I

## Methods:

- Systematic intervention mapping process (in-kind)
- Focus groups with WIC clients (in-kind; institutional resources)

# Phase III: Measurement Development and Adaptation

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# Evaluation

Goal: To ensure that measures of behaviors and theoretical constructs are appropriate for the target population

Method: Cognitive pre-testing with WIC clients (in-kind)

# Phase IV: Feasibility, Preliminary Effectiveness, Sample Size Estimation

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# Pilot trial

Goal: To establish the feasibility and preliminary effectiveness of the intervention and to generate sample size estimates for a fully powered trial

Method: Single group pre-post test design among 60 women; Systematic tracking system and process evaluation (UMMHC Community Benefits)

# Final “product” and results

- **Recruitment and assessment procedures**
  - All women receive eligibility forms and give permission for contact during routine visits
  - Research staff then assume responsibility
- **Intervention**
  - Group-based
  - Delivered by WIC nutritionists and peer leaders in the evenings
  - Evidence-based content modified to reflect values of new Moms
- **Outcomes**
  - Demonstrated meaningful weight loss outcomes
  - Process was feasible and acceptable to WIC
  - Intervention was well-received by the women

# The next step...

- Recently funded: Randomized controlled trial
  - Modifications based on lessons learned in the preliminary studies
- Funded by the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparity
- Part of the Center for Health Equity Intervention Research