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Anthony K. Wutoh, Ph.D., R.Ph. is the Interim Dean and Professor of Clinical and Administrative Pharmacy Sciences at Howard University, College of Pharmacy. He is also the Principal Investigator and Director of the Center for Minority Health Services Research (AHRQ Funded), and Co-Director of the Center of Excellence (HRSA Funded) at Howard University. Dr. Wutoh received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biochemistry from the University of Maryland Baltimore County in 1987. He then completed a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy, and Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmacy Administration (Pharmacoepidemiology) at the University Of Maryland School Of Pharmacy. Dr. Wutoh has varied research interests including pharmacoepidemiology, health services/outcomes research, and evaluation of large population databases, particularly in the area of AIDS and HIV infection in older patients. Dr. Wutoh has received over \$20 million dollars in grant funding from several sources including; NIH, CDC, HRSA, AHRQ and foundations, and has published numerous research articles on HIV disease, medication adherence, disease state management, and various other topics in respected research journals.

Dr. Wutoh has been a practicing pharmacist in Maryland since 1990 and has worked in various settings including hospital, retail, consulting, and community pharmacy. In 1993, He served as a policy intern with the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging where he was directed with evaluation of the economic impact of health care reform on the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. His other areas of interest and expertise include minority access to novel medical therapies, medication compliance, post-marketing assessment, clinical trial protocol and evaluation, survival analyses, and the role of stress in the functioning of health care professionals. He is also the recipient of various awards and acclamations including the 1998 Excellence Award for Professor in the Division of Pharmacy, College of Pharmacy, Nursing, and Allied Health Sciences, and the 2007 Distinguished Faculty Award from the Howard University Pharmacy Alumni Association

Abstract:

A pilot study was conducted in anticipation of implementation of a larger project to assess HIV risk behaviors among older African Americans. A cross-sectional methodology was employed including 33 African Americans over age 50 in the metropolitan Washington DC area. The average age of the participants was 66 years old with an age range from 51 to 86. Data was collected utilizing previously validated instruments which were administered using an Audio Computer Assisted Survey Instrument (ACASI) format. The instrument assessed individuals HIV knowledge, risk behaviors, perceptions, demographic characteristics, and role of spirituality. There was a relatively high knowledge regarding HIV, with female participants scoring significantly higher in knowledge compared to male participants ($p = 0.003$). Another specific finding of the preliminary study was the association between higher levels of spirituality and lower levels of HIV sexual risk behaviors (Spearman's correlation = -0.369 , $p = 0.035$).

Results of this pilot study suggest that older African American females may be more knowledgeable regarding HIV than older African American males. This may suggest that educational and behavioral interventions developed for this group may need to be structured based upon the targeted gender of the audience. The association between increased spirituality and decreased risk behaviors may suggest that spiritually-based interventions may provide some benefit regarding reduction of HIV risk behaviors in this population. However, the small number of participants in this pilot study warrants caution in the conclusions, and highlights the need for additional further research in this population of individuals.

The application of these preliminary results in the context of India may suggest that spirituality may play a role in HIV risk behaviors, and interventions to prevent HIV should consider how to apply spirituality in prevention messages and interventions in a targeted manner.