



## Self-Care Interventions for Black Women with Type 2 Diabetes

In the course of her research work, YSN Professor and Associate Co-Director of the Center for Self and Family Illness Management, Dr. Gail Melkus has implemented intervention studies aimed at improving control and decreasing the complications associated with type 2 diabetes mellitus (DM) in culturally diverse populations. She is currently funded by the National Institutes of Health and National Institute of Nursing Research to test an intervention aimed at improving the care provided to community-based African American women, by supporting their efforts at self-management.

According to Dr. Melkus, black women experience one of the highest rates of type 2 diabetes and suffer disproportionately from diabetes related complications. Diabetes is now the second leading cause of death

Dr. Melkus with her team, back row left to right; Pamela Galasso, Vanessa Jefferson, Jen Balukonis, Kathy Mass, Glenda Insabella, Margraet Grey, Apinya Siripitayakunkit. Seated; Susan Langerman, Gail Melkus and Crystal Willoughby.

among black women. This can be attributed to poor diabetes control often due to sub-standard diabetes care and lack of diabetes education and self-management skills.

In a comparison of preliminary data, Dr. Melkus and her research team report, "After the coping skills training that the women in our study receive, they are doing better in terms of psycho-social outcomes and are experiencing less emotional distress and anxiety and fewer mental health problems."

She explains how she believes these preliminary results were achieved, "By helping patients rethink issues they confront in their lives and teaching them how they might reframe their responses to the things that may interfere with their ability to take care of their health, coping skills training empowers women with the knowledge and skills necessary to assume self-management."

It is hoped that as a result of Dr. Melkus's research, health care settings, particularly primary care centers, will benefit from a tested, model intervention of diabetes care that will improve diabetes outcomes and contribute to decreasing the personal and public health burden of the disease.



### Kelley Newlin

#### The Contribution of Religious, Spiritual, and Psychosocial Factors to Physiological Outcomes in Black American Women with Type 2 Diabetes

According to Kelley, there is beginning evidence that religion and spirituality may be related to physical health outcomes in black American women with type 2 diabetes. Kelley's research quantitatively explores how coping, social, and mental health factors may link religion and spirituality to diabetes-related health outcomes in this understudied population.



### Allison Amend

#### Socioeconomic Status, Self-efficacy, Social Support, and Diet in Black Women with Diabetes

According to Allison, dietary intake is a major component of the management of Type 2 Diabetes; however, also may require significant behavior change. Allison will be using both quantitative data and interviews with black women to determine the influence these factors may have on their dietary intake. The results have potential implications for diabetes education, self-management research, and patient care.



#### Dr. Margaret Grey with Agnieszka Trzcinska, RN, MSc, Faculty of Health Sciences Poznan University of Medical Sciences, Poznan, Poland

As an International Visiting Scholar to YSN this past summer, Agnes participated in research related to the care of children and adolescents with type 2 diabetes under the direction of Dr. Margaret Grey.