Reviewer’s report

Title: Health literacy enhanced intervention for inner-city African Americans with uncontrolled diabetes: A pilot study

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Reviewer: Tracey-Lee Cloete

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PAFS-D-19-00089

General impression

The authors have presented findings for a pilot study that aimed to test the feasibility and preliminary efficacy of a health literacy-enhanced diabetes intervention in inner-city, low-income African Americans with uncontrolled diabetes. The content of the manuscript is very relevant and informative to researchers doing similar work. The manuscript explains the need for culturally-sensitive health education. However, the reasons for disparities among different racial groups could be explored more to further strengthen rationale for study focus.

Line Number/Section Specific comment/issue

Title, Abstract - keywords

Background, page 4, line 58  Appropriate identification as a pilot study in the title.

Content of abstract is generally appropriate. However, in the abstract the authors state that "the purpose of this pilot study was to test the feasibility and preliminary efficacy" of the proposed intervention. Yet in the Background section, the aim is "to evaluate the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary efficacy of the intervention. It is recommended that authors are consistent throughout the manuscript as these are distinct constructs in health research.

Background

Page 4 A community-engaged approach is mentioned but not clearly described. It is suggested that the authors provide a brief description of this approach as it was significant in the development of the proposed intervention.
The aim of the pilot study is clear. However, the conceptual definitions of the constructs of acceptability, feasibility and efficacy would be useful to further clarify the study purpose.

Methods/Design

Methods are generally well-described with pre-specified measurements to address each aspect of the pilot study objective. It's unclear if a definitive study will be conducted and as such there are no pre-specified criteria to determine whether, or how, to proceed with a future definitive trial. It is suggested that the authors state whether a definitive study will be conducted and if so they should indicate how pilot study findings will be used to inform the main study. Consent issues are not adequately addressed. Additionally, the potential reactivity effects are not adequately considered in the study procedure.

Discussion

Page 9, line 6

Page 10, from line 20 The authors mention the importance of community stakeholders in developing the intervention components, improving the credibility and perhaps contextual relevance of the intervention. This is an important point as a thorough understanding of the context will not only strengthen the credibility but could also improve the uptake of intervention. It is suggested that this point be emphasized as part of the rationale for the study. Stakeholders' role/involvement should also be clearly described in Methods section.

Transportation barriers are highlighted as a reason for the 58% retention rate. Other potential contributing factors should also be considered.

General comment

The paper is logically and clearly structured. Appropriate editorial care is taken.

Level of interest

Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
**Quality of written English**

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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