Developing a race dialogue tool to support advance care planning among people of color with serious illness: an experience-based co-design process

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**BACKGROUND**

- Racism is a societal issue with profound public health consequences.
- Historical and personal experiences of bias and discrimination impact healthcare interactions and decision-making for people of color, contributing to disparities in healthcare experience and outcomes.
- Conversations about race and racism among individuals holding different racial identities (“Race Dialogues”) help have been shown to improve relationships in clinical and non-clinical settings.

**OBJECTIVE**

- Our objective was to develop a tool to support meaningful, authentic conversations about racism between clinicians and patients of color.
- We theorize that race dialogues may help improve the patient experience, support advance care planning and other decision-making processes, and improve healthcare outcomes for those affected by serious illness.

**PROJECT DESIGN**

- Our co-design process brought together researchers, patients, caregivers, patient advocates, clinicians, and an interprofessional advisory board.

**PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS**

Insights from patients of color and clinicians:

1. Patients of color want high quality, equitable, and culturally appropriate healthcare. They want to have authentic interactions with their clinicians.
2. Clinicians want to participate in conversations about how racism affects their patients. They feel insecure about how to do so because they A) don’t know how to start the conversation and B) don’t want to appear racist or cause patients further harm.
3. Cultivating rapport with patients of color enables open conversations about racism.

What did patients think of the TRACE tool?

- Received the tool well, envisioning it building trust
- Open to engaging in these conversations
- Expressed hopes of getting the best care possible
- Offered ideas for preparing clinicians for these conversations

**PATIENT/COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- Experiences of racism are common among people of color in healthcare settings.
- The TRACE tool offers structure and patient-tested language for clinicians who want to address racism with their patients and improve health equity and outcomes, but struggle to find the words to do so.
- Early patient testing suggests that the TRACE tool may provide an acceptable approach to discussing racism in clinical settings.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Would you engage in a conversation like this?

How can we build trust and facilitate authentic, healing relationships between patients of color and clinicians?

How can we best know and care for each patient as a whole person?