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RMATRIX Collaboration Pilot Projects Program Award, 2011 “PILI ‘?ina Project: Partnerships to Overcome Obesity Disparities in Hawai‘i”

RESEARCH AREAS

- Translational Behavioral Scientist
- Health Equity for Indigenous Communities
- Improving Social and Cultural
- Determinants of Health
- Clinical and Translational Research Capacity Building

SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS

- First Native Hawaiian elected to the National Academy of Medicine
- Pioneering evidence-based interventions using Indigenous cultural values and practices to improve cardiovascular, diabetes, and obesity disparities for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders
- K?HOLO Project – Randomized controlled trial utilizing hula that resulted in improved blood pressure management
- PILI ‘Ohana Project – Community-based trial of a culturally-tailored diabetes prevention program to address excess body weight and improve diabetes mellitus management

FUNDING

RCMI Funding: U54MD007584 – RMATRIX- PILI ‘?ina Project

RCMI Funding: Ola HAWAII U54MD007601



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SCIENTIFIC ADVANCE

A Cultural Dance Program Improves Hypertension Control and Cardiovascular Disease Risk in Native Hawaiians: A Randomized Controlled Trial

Journal: Annals of Behavioral Medicine (2021) PMID: 33677520 PMCID: PMC8489304

DOI: 10.1093/abm/kaaa127

Native Hawaiians have higher hypertension (HTN) and cardiovascular disease (CVD) rates than non-Hispanic whites, calling for culturally responsive interventions to close this gap.

People in the cultural dance program had bigger drops in their blood pressure compared to those who only got health education. After 6 months, nearly half (43%) of the people in the dance program reached healthy blood pressure levels (under 130/80), compared to just 21% in the control group. Their risk of heart disease over the next 10 years was also cut in half compared to the control group. Even better, these health improvements lasted for at least a year.

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