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| **Title of Research Presentation** Rural Black Americans type-2 diabetes self-management behavior: The grocery store gap |
| **Maximum 2500 characters (including spaces but excluding title)****Background/Objectives**Rural minority aging individuals with type-2 diabetes (T2D) face unique barriers to long-term nutritional self-management behavior. Difficulty in assessing large grocery stores increased reliance on smaller food stores may influence food spending behavior resulting in poor dietary behavior and impacting glucose levels. There is a gap in understanding the perceptions of the quality and extent of access to healthy food resources among older rural African Americans (AA) with T2D. The objective of this study is to explore the perception of quality of food, to document the various food choices, and to map the accessibility to healthy foods.**Methods**African Americans (n = 18) diagnosed with T2D were recruited for this pilot study. Descriptive analysis was used to analyse univariate and bivariate variables. Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. Photo documentation was used to capture food choices based on the interviews. GIS mapping was conducted to map food resources.**Results**The average age in the sample was 71 years of age (range, 47 – 92, years; SD = 11.16). The majority of the participants were female (n=14, 77.8%), and diagnosed with type-2 diabetes for 17 years (SD = 13.00). Most participants reported being less than 5 minutes away from the nearest grocery store (n=13, 72.2%); however, they also reported (n=13, 72.2%) being dissatisfied with their neighborhood stores. Qualitative data and photo documentation confirm the dissatisfaction with groceries stores while GIS Mapping found a disconnect between perception and actual distance travelled to food sources.**Discussion**Our findings found that with the high levels of dissatisfaction with quality, and the difficulty in accessing healthy foods, the majority of participants resided in an obesogenic environment characterized by high-density fast food restaurants and low-quality healthy foods. Individuals diagnosed with type-2 diabetes who lived farther from grocery stores and does not have a car to travel, tend to fill the grocery gap with purchases at nearby convenience or dollar stores. This study calls for a systems-thinking approach in the development of environmental interventions for T2D self-management programs within this population.**Keywords****African Americans, type-2 diabetes, grocery stores, self-management behaviors** |