

Memorandum of Understanding

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This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) clarifies the role and responsibilities between Javelin Lawrence and Nicole Monroe to conduct a health promotion pilot program, “Thrive and Rise Above MS,” or session with 10 to 15 adult participants hosted at the Lawrence Nutrition Clinic. This MOU also clarifies the nature of the proposed health promotion program or session that will be offered.

This MOU is in effect from May 21, 2026, until August 14, 2026 .

Background

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic neurological disease that disproportionately affects African Americans, who are typically 1.59 times more likely to develop the disease and have a more aggressive clinical course than other racial groups (Langer-Gould et al., 2013). Given the often more rapid neurological and cognitive decline in this population, culturally appropriate interventions are imperative, and resources must be devoted to them. Addressing these health disparities through targeted health promotion helps to ensure that clinical needs are met within the context of the community's lived experience.

“Thrive and Rise Above MS” can address these challenges by bridging the gap between medical diagnosis and daily lifestyle management. Education is effective as it reframes the focus from passive care to active self-efficacy and is based on the Health Belief Model (HBM) and the PEN-3 Model. Literature indicates that interventions that acknowledge cultural coping strategies and target specific barriers such as nutritional accessibility or stigma around mental health are more

likely to have participants comply with evidence-based dietary and exercise recommendations (Prasad et al., 2017).

Purpose or Overview

The purpose of the Thrive and Rise Above MS program is to determine what educational content, anti-inflammatory nutrition methods, adaptive exercise materials, and holistic behavioral methods will be effective in reducing fatigue, improving physical mobility, and changing specific behaviors that negatively impact the health of African Americans diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Grounded in the approach of Healing Presence, this program holds space for individuals to transition from passive care recipients to active, empowered agents of their own well-being.

Roles and Responsibility

Nicole Monroe agrees to do the following activities:

- Consistently provide physical access to community room at Lawrence Nutrition Clinic (Tuesday evenings 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM) in accordance with facility safety regulations.
- Support the identification and outreach to potential participants from the clinic's existing client network database.
- Coordinate with internal clinic staff to support program activities and seamless integration with daily facility operations.
- Provide input on draft marketing materials, intake assessment questions and curriculum content within 5 business days of receipt.
- Evaluate final program assessment results in terms of long-term community health impacts.

Javelin Lawrence agrees to do the following activities:

- Develop a multi-channel community marketing approach including traditional faith-based spaces, local community centers, municipal health fairs, physical therapy clinics and independent neighborhood events.
- Interview and describe the nature of the Thrive and Rise Above MS program with potential participants during private 15-minute intake interviews to confirm the content meets their unique mobility and dietary restrictions.
- Conduct the health promotion program with 10 to 15 African American adults (ages 22 to 50) with a valid clinical diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis.
- Conduct 8 weekly, 90-minute sessions of the Thrive and Rise Above MS program.
- Complete a post-program survey in session 8 consisting of feedback on materials, teaching methods, and curriculum from participants.
- Provide Nicole Monroe with items to review (i.e., diversified marketing flyers, baseline focus group question guides, the Modified Fatigue Impact Scale tool, and the weekly curriculum lesson plans).
- Provide Nicole Monroe with updates during the period covered by the MOU, consisting of structured bi-weekly status updates delivered via email every alternating Friday by 5:00 PM.

- Final program delivery, evaluation metrics and community health results to be delivered to Nicole Monroe by 8/14/26.

Proposed health education and promotion program

The program, “Thrive and Rise Above MS” is a focused, multi-modal intervention to address the bridge between clinical diagnosis and everyday lifestyle management. Each of the components is described below:

1. A description of your proposed audience (priority population):
The target population is 10 to 15 self-identified African American adults between the ages of 22 to 50, who have a valid clinical diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis, have the functional capacity to participate in seated exercises, and wish to actively change dietary behaviors.
2. Method(s) for assessing their existing knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and educational needs from a holistic perspective:
A mixed-methods baseline assessment will be conducted before the first session, establishing quantitative baselines through the Modified Fatigue Impact Scale (MFIS) and a 3-day dietary recall log, as well as a guided 45-minute qualitative focus group interview to identify systemic cultural barriers to specialized care and localized nutritional access challenges.
3. Student learning objectives and proposed evaluation plan:
By Week 4, 100% of participants will independently identify and execute three distinct anti-inflammatory ingredient substitutions within traditional "Soul Food" recipes (evaluated via weekly verbal food logs and a Week 8 Culinary Intentions Survey). All participants will safely demonstrate a 15-minute session of adaptive chair yoga poses by Week 8 (assessed through an instructor-monitored Physical Mechanics Performance Checklist during Sessions 7 and 8).
4. Proposed course content, including specific topics and methods to be used to teach:
The 8 weekly, 90-minute group sessions will combine cooking demonstrations, experiential movement, and mindful reflection circles. Weeks 1–3 will focus on “Reclaiming the Culture” (chronic inflammation and “Soul Food” modifications), Weeks 4–6 will focus on “Moving with Grace” (adaptive chair yoga pacing strategies and heat sensitivity management), and Weeks 7–8 will focus on “Decompressing the Soul” (destigmatizing mental health and practicing the 4-7-8 Pranayama breathing technique).
5. Marketing plan:
Outreach will utilize a diversified community footprint to reach individuals outside of faith institutions. This will include obtaining booth space at regional wellness events, leaving brochures at local physical therapy clinics, posting educational flyers on public bulletin boards in local municipal libraries and community centers, and supplementing with targeted flyers distributed through neighborhood faith-based leadership group

6. logistics including space, time, fee structure if appropriate, and timeline:
Sessions will be held free of charge (\$0.00) to eliminate financial barriers. They will take place in the onsite community room at the Lawrence Nutrition Clinic on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM. Timeline. The operation will be conducted from May 21 to August 14, 2026. Preparation and marketing: Late May – June 2026 Active execution of 8 sessions: July 1 – August 12, 2026, Data analysis and stakeholder reporting: August 14, 2026.

Agreeing Parties

This Memorandum of Understanding represents a professional commitment to cooperative community wellness and health equity. This agreement may be amended, expanded, or modified at any time through the mutual, written consent of both participating parties.

Javelin Lawrence
(Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Nicole Monroe
(Contact name)

(Signature)

(Date)

References

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