Community engagement is an effective method to generate locally-relevant research questions about **loneliness**.

Tackling Loneliness in Communities through Community-Based Partnerships

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INTRO

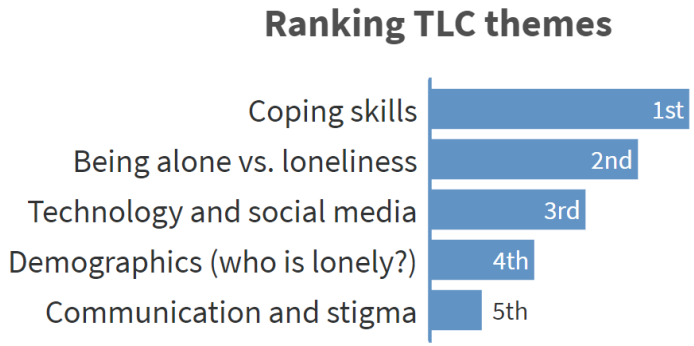
- Little is known about loneliness in rural areas
- Partnerships between academic researchers and community members can generate relevant translational research questions
- Objective: Establish an academic-community partnership to develop a community-generated research question about loneliness

METHODS

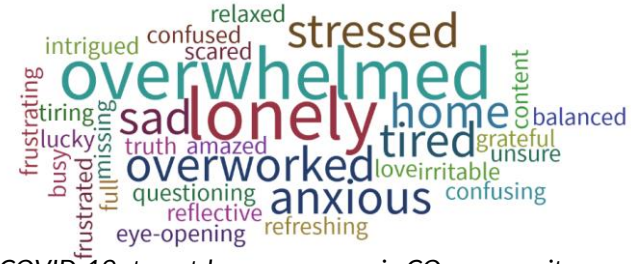
- Population: Eastern CO community members and a University-based physician researcher
- Intervention: A series of work meetings were conducted to iteratively identify community members' thoughts, experiences, and questions about loneliness in rural CO
- Outcome measures: Description of partners; Number of meetings and calls; Priority areas related to loneliness determined from thematic analysis of meeting notes

RESULTS

- 13 members of the High Plains Research Network Community Advisory Council (CAC) participated
- Three in-person and five workgroup phone meetings were co-led by a CAC member and researcher
- Five priority areas about loneliness emerged from meetings, which CAC members ranked in order of importance:



- Final research question developed: ***How do Eastern CO community members successfully cope with loneliness?***



During the COVID-19 stay-at-home measures in CO, community members shared "one word" to describe their personal experience with loneliness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSIONS

- Community-engaged research can be utilized to cultivate equitable partnerships between academic and community groups and develop locally-relevant research questions

NEXT STEPS

- The partnership will apply for a pilot grant to estimate loneliness in rural eastern CO and utilize Appreciative Inquiry to learn about successful coping strategies for loneliness

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