The Georgia Department of Public Health (GA DPH) developed a pilot project to provide pharmacist-led hypertension counseling, in conjunction with medication therapy management (MTM), to barbershop patrons in DeKalb County modeled after the Los Angeles Barbershop Blood Pressure Study. As part of program planning, the GA DPH collected key characteristics of their target community and engaged a multidisciplinary team of partners including:

- Physicians Care Clinic in DeKalb County, a safety net provider for men’s health services,
- GA Pharmacy Association (GPhA),
- Mercer University College of Pharmacy,
- DeKalb County Board of Health (DCBOH), and
- two potential barbershops.

Working together, the partners assessed readiness and developed a model Collaborative Practice Agreement (CPA) for pharmacist-led hypertension management in a barbershop setting. In conjunction with the DCBOH, potential barbershops were identified and prioritized based on their community’s high cardiovascular disease burden as well as established relationships with a health educator from DCBOH. With the onset of COVID-19, GA DPH reached out to local primary care physicians in the pilot area to assess the implications of COVID-19 on their practices and patients as well as conducted a landscape analysis of the local barbershops to assess implications of COVID-19 on their businesses and needs.

While cessation of in-person services caused unavoidable delays in implementing the pilot, Mercer University College of Pharmacy presented a seminar on the LA Barbershop Blood Pressure Study. The presentation reviewed:

- benefits of MTM and use of CPAs to manage hypertension;
- study protocol;
- data on improved blood pressure control and medication adherence in Black men enrolled in the study; and
- follow-up studies.

The partners continue to work together to tailor the intervention to meet community needs by identifying gaps in care, connecting men to care during the pandemic, and incorporating telehealth at the barbershop site. Future plans include engaging more barbershops and community pharmacists to participate in the intervention and developing strategies to engage payers.