Motivational interviewing (MI) is a behavioral counseling strategy designed to increase patients’ motivation to engage in health and illness-related self-care behaviors. Counselor competency in the use of recommended MI strategies is crucial to effectively promote behavior change. Fidelity ratings are used to assess an interventionist’s level of competence and
adherence in the delivery of an intervention protocol. The purpose of this presentation is to describe interventionist training in MI counseling for an intervention study that aims to improve adherence to diabetes self-care in African American adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus. Findings related to interventionist fidelity to MI are reported.

**Method(s):** The interventionist received intensive MI training in a variety of settings. Formal training consisted of four 3-hour sessions in a classroom setting with the entire research team. Role-playing was conducted with the MI trainer and members of the research team, which provided an opportunity for feedback on the use of recommended MI strategies. Following rehearsal with the MI research team, the interventionist provided MI counseling in 4 simulated patient encounters using standardized patients. These simulated encounters were audiotaped for the purposes of rating fidelity to the MI intervention. Fidelity was rated by the trainer and 3 members of the research team using the Motivation Interviewing Treatment Integrity scale.

**Results:** Following intensive training, the interventionist achieved 90% fidelity to the MI intervention. Fidelity was highest in the use of MI adherent strategies (simple reflections and asking questions), and avoiding the use of MI non-adherent strategies (confrontation, advising, and directing). The global rating of interventionist adherence to the spirit of MI was rated 6 on a 1-7 Likert scale, indicating high fidelity.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** Intensive training is required to achieve interventionist competency in MI behavioral counseling. Use of standardized patients in simulated clinical encounters appears to be an effective strategy for learning and practicing MI. Ongoing research will determine the degree to which the interventionist sustains the use of effective MI strategies with study participants over time.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

**Financial Disclosure:**
No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.

**FDA Disclosure:**
I will not be describing any pharmaceutical and/or medical device.

**Non-Exclusive License:**

**Submitted by:**
p0elma01@louisville.edu