

Concurrent Conversation #3: Technology and Health Disparities

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Practical Actions to help ensure that mobile technology decreases health disparities:

- “Edutainment” (aka Gamification)
- Tailor messaging to caregivers
- Font size, font colors, etc. for ease of reading and digesting information
- Educate patients that navigators might be calling from other area codes so that they feel comfortable answering calls from numbers they don’t recognize (decrease suspicion of telemarketers)
- Meet people where they are
 - o Is the technology appropriate for demographic?
 - o Cultural sensitivity throughout the design process of the technology used
- Group memberships (the people we identify with and spend time with) shape how we use and create technology
 - o Remember: even though healthcare providers are using technology, they are still dealing with people

Health Disparities:

- For this discussion, health disparities refers to unequal and less access to health and health care
 - o Including: older people, racial and ethnic minority groups, low socioeconomic class, rural residents, LGBTQ, blind and deaf

Digital Divide:

- Some groups in our country have more access to technology while others have less
 - o Not just access, knowledge
 - o Culturally appropriate content
 - o Digital medium: laptops v. cellphones
 - o Ability to navigate technology, lack of interest in technology

Examples of Mobile Technology:

- Mobile phones, tablets, sensors like glucose sensors, blood pressure monitors, personal fitness trackers, SMART watch

Brainstorm ways we see the use of mobile technology in health info and health care:

- Telehealth gives access to specialists and increases the number of people with access
 - o For example: nursing homes, doctors on call 24 hours
 - o Telehealth allows patients to seek real-time medical assistance even if they don't have the ability to travel
- WhatsApp used for certain populations who are familiar with using it to communicate with family members outside of the U.S.
- Talking FIT Kit instructions card (e.g. singing birthday card)
 - o Could be translated into additional languages
 - o Uses very basic language
- Using mobile technology for reminders
 - o Using text message reminders for patients
 - o A lot of patients forget about scheduled appointments
 - o However, use of burner phones make it hard to track patients
- Radios (e.g. Alaska)
 - o There are many remote areas without cell phone coverage, and residents may use radios as a form of communication. There are rural areas that may not be able to accommodate the same types of technology as a major city
- Gamification
 - o Create interactive digital games to reach patients in a new way. Games would teach people of all ages when to get screened, how to get screened, remind them to make appointments, etc.
- Design education using English Second Language resources

What are your personal or professional experiences with these uses of mobile technology for health information and health care?

- Virtual messaging in waiting rooms, gyms, etc.
 - o Reminders and messages about important health information are often digitally displayed where people might see them (as opposed to brochures left in waiting rooms)
- Collaboration with employment agencies to get reminders and referrals
- "MIYO" (Make It Your Own) website
 - o Tool for health care providers to create their own content for distribution
 - o Does not have many rural images and many of the people who use this tool are from rural areas. Having photos and content that your audience can relate to would be helpful when trying to appeal to them

Brainstorm lessons we've learned, about helping to decrease health disparities with 'old technology' like billboards, written materials, group sessions, videos...

- Age 50+ population like to receive information through TV ads and radio (dislike email)
- Storytelling- using pictures, voices of people you are trying to reach

What practical actions can be taken to help ensure that mobile technology decreases health disparities?

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