We Are Here: Lowering Barriers with Mobile Health
Discussion Guide

Possible Objectives for a Discussion Session:

1. Consider Mobile Health as a model for lowering barriers to quality healthcare.
2. Explore the rationale and risks of Mobile Health interventions.
3. Examine best practices for community-university partnerships to enhance the reach and effectiveness of health initiatives that aim to lower barriers for traditionally underserved communities.

Audience:

This Discussion Guide aims to prepare participants to share the documentary and foster discussions about Mobile Health and health justice movements with their respective institutions.

Mobile Health is a growing model that lowers barriers to healthcare faced by underserved and marginalized communities. The University of Minnesota (UMN) Mobile Health Initiative (MHI) stands out in this movement, bridging the gap between healthcare providers and community members needing services by developing community organization partnerships. Chris Newberry's new documentary, "***We Are Here: Lowering Barriers with Mobile Health***," documents MHI's experience and can be used to encourage discussion and expansion of Mobile Health services by other academic or community-based institutions.

We Are Here: Lowering Barriers with Mobile Health is a documentary produced and directed by Chris Newberry, a Minnesota-based filmmaker. This documentary follows the University of Minnesota Mobile Health Initiative explaining how mobile healthcare can be used to disrupt current models of healthcare that often intervenes too late and sees people once they are very ill and in need of hospitalization.

How to Use this Guide

- ***Who can use this Guide?*** Any pre- or professional healthcare programs that want to learn more about Mobile Health and different forms of health delivery
- ***When Should the Discussion Take Place?*** These discussion topics are designed to be used either throughout the screening or during a post-screening discussion.
- ***Panel Discussion or Group Activity?*** This discussion guide can be used by a moderator to float topics to a panel of experts, or it can be used to open up a discussion amongst a group audience, large or small.
- ***Choose Discussion Topics.*** You can prepare a discussion by choosing discussion topics that best suit your interests or your audience. The topics on Pages 3 - 11 include some suggested questions to get the ball rolling.

Theme: Mobile Health as a Growing Movement (1:00-2:15)

Observations:

In *We Are Here*, the documentary opens with a migrant family that faces barriers to care including language and not knowing how to navigate the healthcare system, such as “taking care of a payment or a prescription.”

Dr. Jonathan Kirsch, clinical director of the Mobile Health Initiative (MHI), notes that the vast majority of patients that he sees in the hospital had “some condition that could have been found earlier than it was.” He also states how healthcare on the preclinical side, before patients enter into the health system, is most effective through portable care that brings care to where people are.

Discussion Questions:

1. Traditional healthcare models
    a. What models of healthcare are currently available?
    b. What are the benefits and disadvantages of each?
2. Think about a time you or a loved one was experiencing a health crisis - how did those interactions impact your view of the healthcare system?

Theme: Understanding & Grappling with Healthcare Barriers (2:30-4:00)

Observation:

In *We Are Here*, Dr. Jonathan Kirsch states how barriers prevent patients from going to the hospital or clinics. When people are seen at a safety net hospital they are often seen when things have already "fallen apart." He emphasizes the effectiveness of creating a low-barrier resource outside of the traditional brick-and-mortar hospital and clinic.

Discussion Questions:

1. What barriers may prevent people from accessing healthcare?
2. In your state, who is most affected by these barriers?
3. In what ways does Mobile Health address these barriers?

Observation:

Community Engagement Nurse, Adrienne Thayer, states how, as an ER nurse, she has witnessed severed relationships because patients do not trust doctors from previous negative experiences.

Discussion Questions:

4. What causes patients to lose trust in healthcare institutions and providers?
5. How can we facilitate trust in patients who have not lost trust in the healthcare system and providers?

Theme: Preventative Care (5:30-9:30)

Observations:

Dr. Kirsch makes the point that catching early signs of illness is one of the best ways to make a difference - particularly common conditions that are not symptomatic until very late stages. Many of the services that MHI provides center around the idea of preventative care, including cardiovascular health, vision, dental, and diabetes screenings.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the value of preventative care?
2. What is a ‘low hanging’ change that can be improved in Mobile Health?
3. What are the benefits and risks of providing intermittent care?
4. What opportunities are there for interprofessional collaboration?

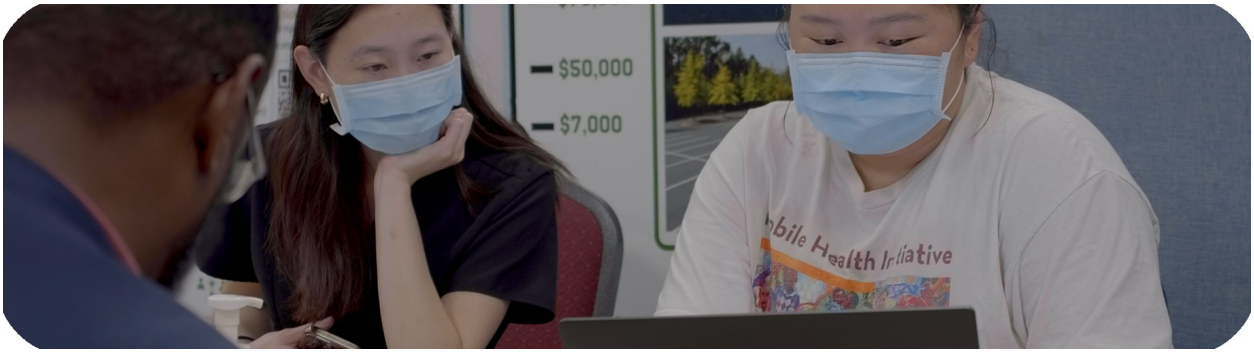
Theme: Engaging Volunteers (13:30 - 16:45, 19:00 - 20:30)

Observation:

Following the community partnerships that enrich MHI, the documentary then focuses on the engine of the initiative – its volunteers. Faculty, staff, and students can sign up in one centralized site while receiving appropriate cultural and procedural training.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the Mobile Health Initiative utilize volunteers to raise awareness and provide care for its events?
2. What are the impacts of engaging learners in Mobile Health efforts?
3. What are the tangible impacts of involving learners in Mobile Health initiatives on both the learners and the communities they serve?
4. How do learners and volunteers contribute to the success of Mobile Health efforts?
5. How does participation in Mobile Health initiatives empower future healthcare providers to serve patients beyond traditional healthcare models?



Theme: Developing Alternative Documentation & Respecting Patient Privacy (17:30 - 19:15)

Observations:

This excerpt underscores the impact of administrative burden, particularly documentation required to bill for healthcare services, on the patient-provider interaction. Widely accepted methods of data collection act as barriers to care, especially for vulnerable populations. MHI use of REDCap (a HIPPA approved/secured database), however, strives to collect the necessary information while also prioritizing a patient-focused approach to care.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did the Mobile Health Initiative create a low-cost documentation that is HIPAA compliant?
    a. What are the elements in brick & mortar healthcare documentation that leads to slow down and high costs?
2. How do you balance the collection of information to ensure prompt follow up, while also respecting a patient's concerns about privacy?
3. What documentation challenges can arise while working with non-English speaking communities?

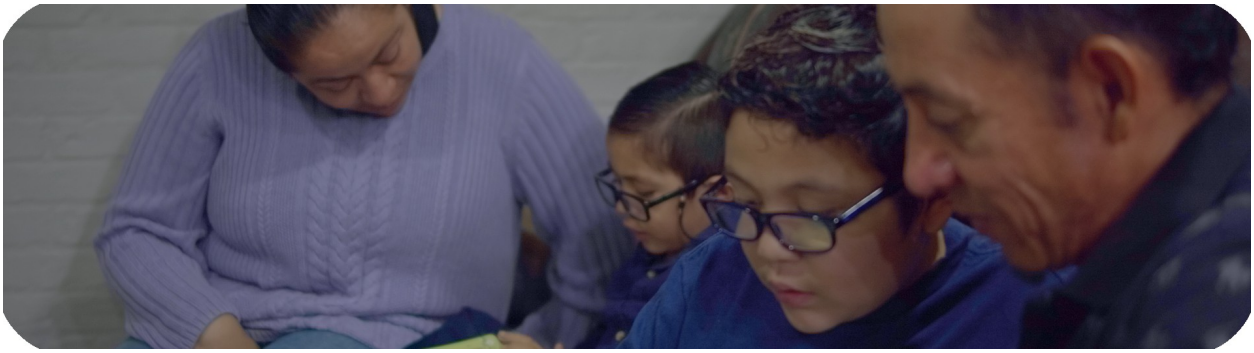
Theme: Developing Partnerships with Trusted Community Organizations and Centering Community in Mobile Health Efforts (20:30-22:00)

Observations:

Partnering with community organizations is essential for effective Mobile Health movements. By collaborating with trusted groups, they can reach more people who may be skeptical of the healthcare system.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the value of community partnerships?
2. Why is centering community important in developing safe spaces for people to access medical care?
3. How can health initiatives maintain cultural sensitivity and relevance to the communities they serve?
4. What are the benefits and challenges of involving community organizations in health efforts?
5. How does mobile health establish follow-up care? How does that impact community health?



Final Reflections:

1. What can you/healthcare workers do to amplify the impacts of Mobile Health?
2. What are the challenges faced by Mobile Health care?
3. What other areas/communities can you identify that would benefit from Mobile Health?
4. How can mobile health be adapted for other regions/universities/nations?
5. What contributes to the isolation of refugee/migrant/immigrant communities?
6. What are some key ideas or reflections that you are taking away from this documentary?

Further Discussion Topics

- *Thinking Globally:*
    - How does the use of Mobile Health differ in the United States compared to the rest of the world?
    - What countries would benefit from establishing/strengthening its mobile healthcare infrastructure?
    - What other forms of mobile healthcare have been established in other nations?
- *Thinking Sustainably:*
    - How can Mobile Health be sustainably funded and supported with current or future healthcare infrastructure?
    - What can increase the growth of mobile healthcare and its offerings?
    - How does the public view of healthcare impact the sustainability and growth of Mobile Health?
- *Thinking Specialties*:
    - Beyond ophthalmology and primary care, what other services may be expanded in Mobile Health?
    - How can technology/AI improve Mobile Health?

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the Leon Lowenstein Foundation and the University of Minnesota Foundation. Without their support this project would not be possible.

Additionally, thank you to our community partners featured, Tri-Valley Opportunity Council and Power of People Leadership Institute, for their collaboration and dedication to improving the lives and communities of Minnesotans.