HIV Care Continuum Panel June 11, 2023, 13:45-15:00

Impact Innovation: Utilizing mHealth Interventions to Advance Equity in the HIV Care Continuum

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Adherence 2023 • June 11-13 • Puerto Rico

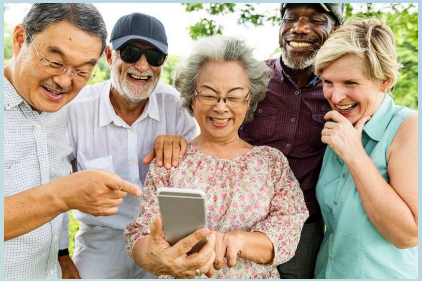
What is mHealth?

- Digital health platforms
  - Prompt behaviors and self-monitoring
  - Provide summaries of behaviors
- Mobile devices (smartphones, tablets)
- Wearables (sensors, watches linked to apps)

Promise of mHealth

- Reach PWH where they are
- Connect PWH to care team or peers
- Enables care anywhere

- Convenient
- Popular
- Accepted
- Provide theory-based, evidence-based tools



Equity

EQUALITY:
Everyone gets the same – regardless if it's needed or right for them.

EQUITY:
Everyone gets what they need – understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.

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Sources of Inequity in Health & mHealth

Social determinants that cause disparities

- Language
- Urban/Rural
- Race & ethnicity
- Country/World Region
- Income & education
- Reliable Internet access
- Cellular/smartphone access
- Continuity of email & phone number

Sources of Inequity in HIV Care

Pervasive STIGMA about:

- Poverty
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- HIV positivity
- Mental Illness
- Substance use
- Addiction
- History of incarceration
- History of being unhoused
- Rurality

Ethical concerns about mHealth interventions

- Could **worsen disparities**
- Typically tested/developed with PWH who are easy to reach
- Few address low literacy, Internet gap areas, and include diverse populations
  - (age group, race, gender, education level, disability, etc.)

Towards equity

- Ensuring access to mHealth
  - Lifeline phones for Medicaid recipients and other affordable connectivity programs with high speed data
  - Providing smartphones
  - Providing stipends for smartphone plans
  - Providing data hotspots in low Internet access areas
  - Training PWH to use the tools with ease

Towards equity

- Nothing about us without us
- From user-centered design to universal design
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance for:
  - Low hearing
  - Low vision
  - Color blindness
  - Need for hands-free devices/ speech based operation

Towards equity

- mHealth innovations in HIV care could increase:
  - Access to care
  - Maintenance in care
  - Enacting self-change
  - Reduction of stigma
  - Connection to care
  - Support to and from peers

Current state:
Towards a more equitable future of mHealth interventions for HIV care

- involvement of diverse subpopulations
- continual testing of features' impact/usage
- including evidence-based features
- ensuring accessibility
- financial support for model mHealth programs

Wish list for the equitable future of mHealth interventions for HIV care

- Addressing every step of the HIV care continuum
- Addressing HIV prevention
- Addressing health promotion with diverse subgroups
- Continual improvement and iteration
- Full inclusion of people with and at risk for HIV
- Adequate financing of dissemination of proven tools
- Integration of tools into all care/prevention programs

Discussion

- What gaps or other needs should be considered for equity in mHealth for HIV?
- What else is working so far?
- What creative steps are being taken?

Thank you! Gracias!

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