



# PORTLAND STREET MEDICINE

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# What is Street Medicine?

- Basic healthcare to unsheltered neighbors
- The emphasis is on the “rough sleeper”
- Origins: India, Latin America, Pittsburgh
- Models are on a spectrum
- Meeting people on their own terms



# Our Examining Room

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# WHY STREET MEDICINE?

- 4,177 people experiencing homelessness in Portland (2017 Point-In-Time count)
- High burden of chronic illness
- Life expectancy 40-50 years old
- High financial burden to healthcare systems
- Survival: eating and shelter take priority over healthcare





# The International Street Medicine Movement

## Lessons Learned

1. People are the experts in their own lives
2. People are the owners of their decisions
3. Change will only occur through self-empowerment
4. Harm reduction
5. Success is defined 1 person at a time
6. Tragedy will be witnessed



Homelessness vs houselessness?

# Our Practice

- Basic first aid
- Management of:
  - Common conditions
  - Chronic conditions (temporary)
- Decipher medical confusion
- Case management
- Collaboration
- We show up





What does Street  
Medicine look like in  
Portland?

- M-W-F
- All volunteer
- Route determined by community cries for help, rechecks and hubs
- Providers vetted
- 1-2 shift/month requirement

# The Team

- The patient is captain
- MD-RN-LCSW-community member
- Every team member has a voice
- It's okay to question and it's okay to disagree
- Ongoing education, supervision and debriefs



## How are we doing?

- For 2018, we served over 500.
- We're anticipating 1600 encounters in 2019
- We provided over 110 Flu shots on the streets and in the shelters



# Additional communities

Service and outreach workers

Safety net clinics

Hospital systems

Medical providers

Academia

General public

Social justice



# Success stories

- Our first procedure: “Boss”
- Ruptured appendicitis
- Dying indoors
- One signature away from housing: treating the public
- Not going blind
- Establishing street creds
- Gratitude from within a tent





## A New Medical Practice: The Ethics of Street Medicine

- What constitutes a “patient”?
- Consent
- Privacy
- Public health on the streets
- End of life care
- Sharing our findings
- Working without a boss: self-regulation
- Funding and sustainability

# Three Principles of Non-profit Work



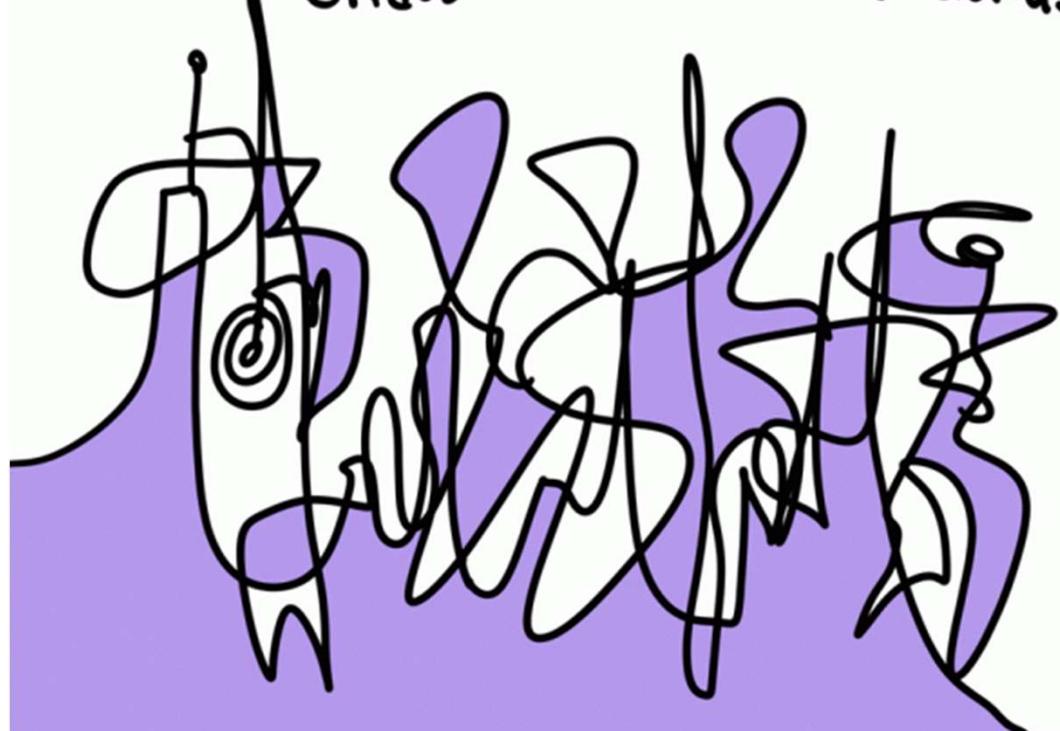
#1: Creativity is  
the remedy for  
road blocks

#2: Without data,  
it's just an  
opinion



# Quantifying a Qualitative Experience

chaos is the new standard.



#3: Charity and Social Justice Exist on a Spectrum





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*Yesterday  
is gone.  
Tomorrow has  
not yet come.  
We have  
only today.  
Let us begin.*

*— Mother Teresa*

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HASTA LA VICTORIA  
**SIEMPRE**

Jé



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Just do the work!



That's All Folks

- Questions? / Reactions? / Reflections?
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