Team Larry the Porcupine

Project Abstract

We want to improve access to quality and meaningful healthcare by improving basic healthcare and health insurance literacy, educating patients on the significance of empathy in healthcare, and ultimately enabling them to find and select doctors they can trust.

In our literature review, we discovered that healthcare/health insurance literacy plays a direct role in health costs and patient outcomes. Lower literacy is associated with higher rates of avoidable hospital visits and long-term health complications, with specific demographics at higher risks due to cultural/socio-economic disparities and a lack of educational resources. We also found that empathy is critical for improved patient mental health, health outcomes, and long term patient-provider relationships. Even so, patients struggle to find doctors they can trust due to how inaccessible healthcare can feel, and are deterred from finding the right doctor due to a lack of awareness of options they have and the importance of personalized primary care.

In our comparative review, we found a range of products and services that focused on certain aspects of our subject. For example, there were many websites which offered help in navigating healthcare providers. There were elements from many of these products which we felt may be useful and can be improved upon. Many products had comprehensive information on healthcare/doctors/insurance providers with intuitive navigation, but were not interactive or would not be attractive for young adults. Others focused on engagement and teaching empathy, but were not directed to our target audience, young adult patients, or did not focus on healthcare literacy.

Our needfinding will explore young adults' current relationship with their healthcare. This includes their current sources of medical knowledge, relationships with their doctors, and knowledge of their health insurance options.