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Engaging Patients in Underserved Populations with Health Information Technology (HIT)

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**Problem**
- Healthcare providers must meet Meaningful Use Stage 2 mandates for engaging patients with their healthcare information through technology.
- We need solutions that will work for the population of uninsured and undocumented patients being treated at Community Health Clinics taking into account their mobile technology preferences.
- Hypothesis: Mobile Technologies can be used effectively in underserved populations to improve patient-provider communication and health outcomes.

**Purpose**
- Identify opportunities to increase patient access to health data through mobile phones.
- Characterize patient-provider communication needs in the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) setting to enable the design of effective HIT systems.
- Describe ways in which mobile phones can support underserved patients to make informed health decisions.
- To find solutions to meeting meaningful use Stage 2 requirements of engaging patients with their personal health data.

**Methods**
- Preliminary findings from a survey study of 100 patients over the age of 18 at a FQHC in the Midwest.
- 14 item questionnaire exploring:
  - Typical use of mobile phones, email, and internet.
  - Preferences for future use of mobile technologies for supporting access to health care and communication with their health care providers.
  - Information patients would like between office visits.
  - Chronic health conditions represented by the population.
  - Patient demographics.

**Findings**
- Approximately 20% of the population studied never uses the Internet, email, or text messaging.
- Patient preferences for healthcare communication:
  - Internet or mobile phone (69%)
  - Text message (67%)
  - E-mail (60%)

**Types of medical information patients want to receive from their health care providers:**
- The most common chronic health conditions reported:
  - Hypertension (34.9%)  
  - Diabetes (25.6%)  
  - Arthritis (32.4%)  
  - Pulmonary disease (32.4%)

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**Figure: Self-Reported Technology Use**
- Count (n = 100):
  - Daily: 60
  - Weekly: 35
  - Never: 5

**Figure: Preferences for Technology Mediated Communication**
- Yes: 70
- No: 30

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