WYZ

WYZ: Technology Designed To Connect Youth Living with HIV

Aim

HIV can be a confusing, frightening and isolating condition. A critical aspect of treatment for newly diagnosed youth is to keep them connected to the community while also maintaining personal privacy. SOM Tech partnered with the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS) Assistant Professor Dr. Parya Saberi to develop WYZ (pronounced "Wise"), a mobile health app that helps patients keep track of their medications, simplifies communication with their providers, and strengthens their connections to the community.

Approach

SOM Tech worked iteratively through a tiered design and development approach over the project's duration. SOM Tech's human-centered design workshops with youth living with HIV helped the team prioritize the app's features, including:

- Medication reminders
- Adherence and refill tracking
- Lab result and healthcare team access
- Community resources identification
- Social networking functions

Solutions

SOM Tech was able to partner with Dr. Saberi across the project's life cycle. SOM Tech kept costs lower by partnering with external partners including outsourcing some of the iOS and Android design and build and leveraging a large number of internal tools like REDCap and Salesforce.

Partners

Dr. Parya Saberi (CAPS), UCSF Enterprise IT— Academic Research Systems (ARS)

More Information

With new funding from the National Institute of Mental Health, WYZ now offers additional community and resource features, as well as an upgraded database and new Android version.

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Health Within Reach

Developing technology to help Asian American communities fight hepatitis B and C

Aim

About half of the 2 million Americans chronically infected with the hepatitis B virus are of Asian ancestry. In most cases, they or their parents were born in Asian countries where hepatitis B infection is common. Another 3 million people in the United States are chronically infected with hepatitis C, which can also cause liver cancer. Asian Americans may fail to undergo screening for hepatitis B and C because they don't realize that they are at higher risk than the rest of the population—and because their doctors don't suggest it.

SOM Tech helped researchers from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) develop and test an interactive app aimed at encouraging a greater percentage of the Bay Area Asian American community to be screened.

Approach

SOM Tech worked with the PCORI-funded team on a research project designed to determine whether an app can help increase the number of Asian Americans choosing to undergo hepatitis B and C screening. The team is conducting a trial with 416 Asian Americans who have not had a hepatitis screening test, working closely with community organizations, focus groups, and two patient advisory councils in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Solutions

"It's actually very hard to develop an app that's informative, interesting, and short," says Dr. Tung Nguyen, Professor of Clinical Medicine at UCSF. SOM Tech's team made the process easier by facilitating design groups with patients and PCORI's researchers and gathering user feedback on everything from the tablet-based mobile app's questions to colors and shapes of its graphics.

Partners

Tung Nguyen MD, UCSF School of Medicine; Mandana Khalili, MD, San Francisco General Hospital; Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute

More Information

Results suggest participants like the app and find it easy to use. Nguyen hopes the project will foster better understanding of how mobile health technologies can help people with limited English skills improve communication with their doctors.

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We Are Family

Technology helps marginalized communities put HIV prevention center stage

Aim

The House Ball Community (HBC), made up of "houses" and the elaborate balls they perform in, exists across the United States, including the Bay Area. Often taking their names from fashion icons (Mizrahi, Revlon, Balenciaga), the houses of ballroom culture offer their "children" a sense of belonging, as well as mentors who can provide advice and guidance—making individual houses excellent potential mechanisms for promoting regular HIV testing and strengthening engagement with African American Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (AAGBT) youth. The California HIV/AIDS Research Program's (CHRP) team for We Are Family is charged with developing and conducting a preliminary test of an intervention for AAGBT youth involved in the Bay Area HBC.

Approach

The study's specific aim is to leverage existing LGBTQ "family" and "house" networks to increase the flow of information, reduce stigma, and ultimately motivate community members to reduce their sexual risk behavior, seek HIV testing at least every six months, and if they are HIV-positive, engage in and maintain care and treatment.

Solutions

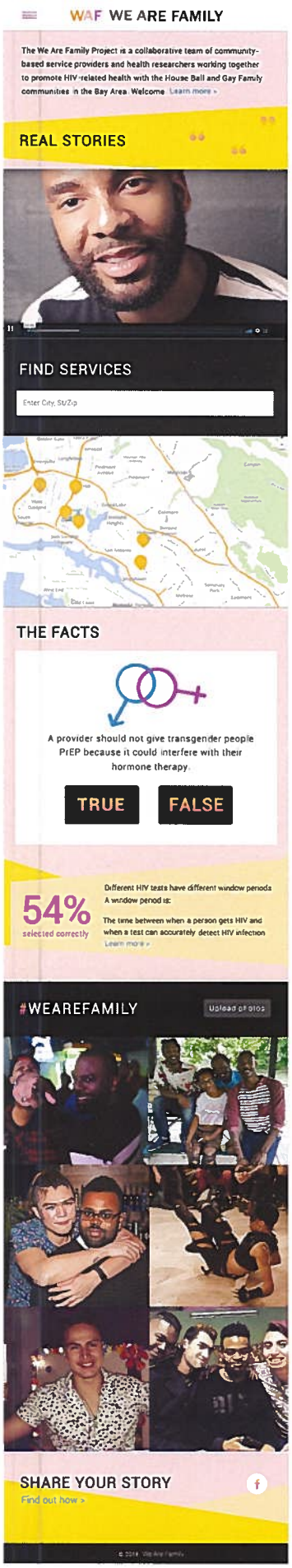
SOM Tech employed participatory design methods to work iteratively directly with the community to scope, design and develop the tool. SOM Tech helped CHRP researchers design a tool that used videos, images and quizzes to make it easy for participants to engage with content and find services — successfully helping the team build community and reinforce the study's messages.

Partners

Emily Arnold, Principal Investigator, California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) and The California Prostitutes Education Project (Cal PEP)

More Information

CHRP will use the data collected through We Are Family to assess behavioral outcomes and theoretically based mechanisms of change and document best practices for an efficacy trial.



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