



Axess to Healthcare

Nate Fleischli, Brenden Koo, Madhurima Mahajan

“

50–60% of people in my age group have A-fib... What do they do when they can't access medication? How do we fix that system to allow elderly people to get medication easily?

Gladys

Meet the Team!



Brenden Koo
'23
Sunnyvale, CA

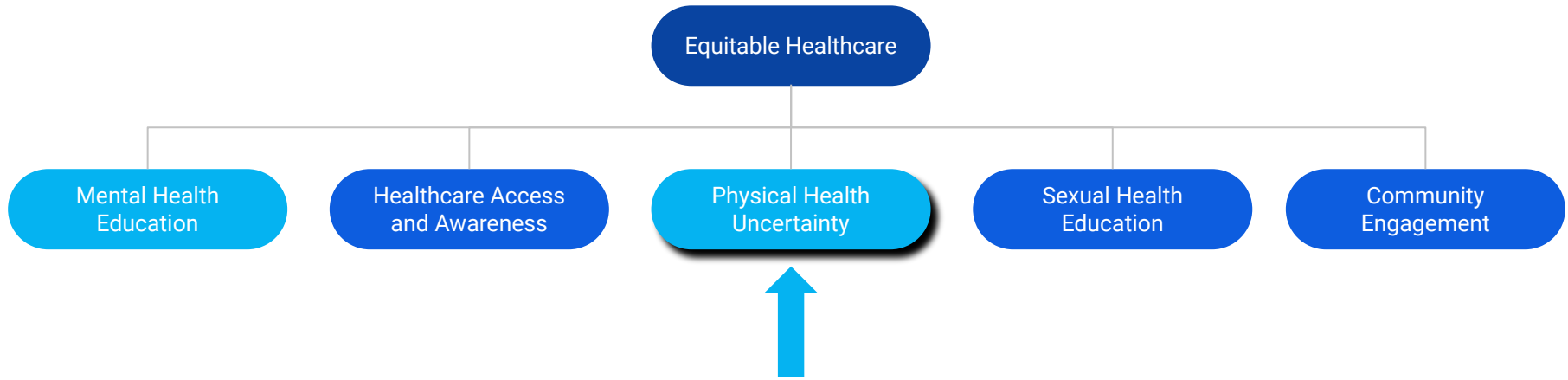


Nate Fleischli
'23
Menlo Park, CA



Madhurima Mahajan
'23
Mumbai, India

Domain Selection:



Some things we were wondering:

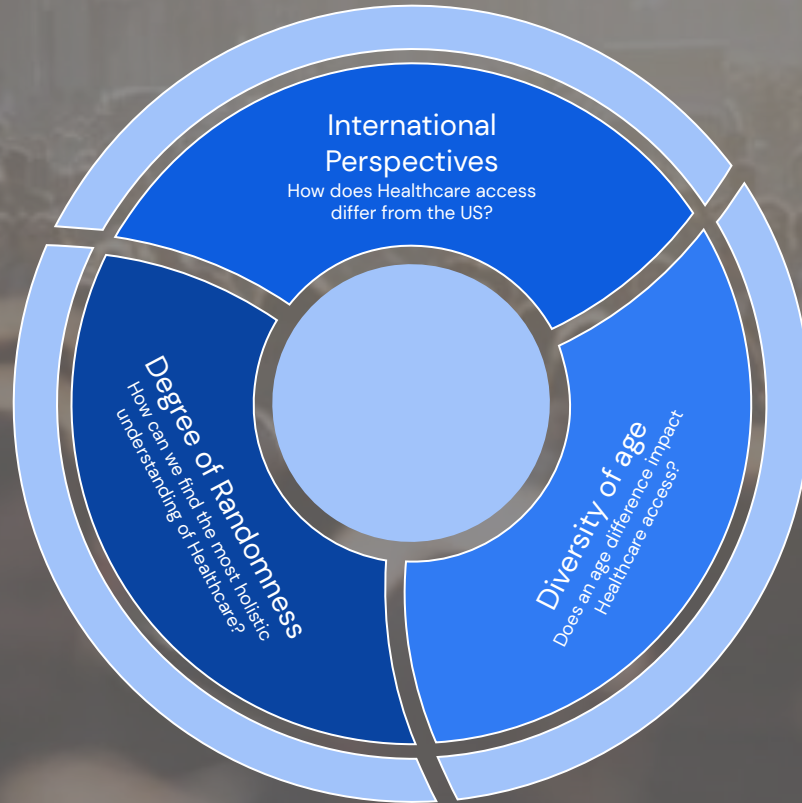
- What are the greatest barriers to accessing healthcare?
- How honest are people about their health?
- How do people respond to uncertainties about their health?

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Needfinding Methodology

Who did we Interview, and what did we ask?

Looking for participants, we focused on



We spoke to...



"Gladys"

Redondo Beach, CA
Retired Surgical Nurse
Retired Flight Attendant

Interviewed by Brenden,
Transcribed by Nate



"Chris"

Santa Clara, CA
30s, Freelance
photographer | Teacher

Interviewed by Nate,
Transcribed by Brenden



"John"

Mountain View, CA
25, Wildseed employee

Interviewed by Nate,
Transcribed by Madhu



"Anjana"

Mysore, India
26, Stanford Graduate
Student from India

Interviewed by Madhu,
Transcribed by Brenden

We spoke to...



"Gladys"

Redondo Beach, CA
Retired Surgical Nurse
Retired Flight Attendant
Interviewed by Brenden,
Transcribed by Nate

Gladys is a retired surgical nurse who has an understanding of medical symptoms and medicare access, but also experience numerous complications due to her diagnosis of Atrial Fibrillation, or a-fib

Anjana is a Stanford student from India who has experience searching for healthcare access both in India and in the United States.



"Anjana"

Mysore, India
26, Stanford Graduate Student from India
Interviewed by Madhu,
Transcribed by Brenden

Some Questions We Asked...

“What was the hardest part of transitioning off of your parents’ healthcare plan and onto your own plan?”

“Have you or a loved one ever been hospitalized for serious medical conditions? At what point did you/your loved one seek medical attention?”

“What’s the first thing that you do when you notice symptoms of physical illness?”

“How frequently do you go to your doctor for a routine check-up?”

“How soon do you visit the doctor once you notice any symptoms of physical illness?”

“What would you predict to be the biggest barrier for accessing healthcare?”

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Interview Results & Analysis

What did we find out?

Gladys, 70s



"If you're feeling well, why aren't you doing well?"

"I had to concentrate on having a job to keep the family. My kids were my number one, my job was second, and I was the last priority."

"when the water gets too deep, the fire gets too hot, you bail."

SAY

"If you're feeling fine, don't have the procedure"

"I'll be on blood thinners for the rest of my life"

"If you're feeling well, aren't you doing well?"

"If I had the [ablation] today and live a long life, I'd likely have to have the procedure again"

"When I thought I had COVID, it was one day to the next to get tested"

"my kids are my first priority"

"Time is something that helped in my life"

"Everyone is tested with what ifs, look at the worst case scenario"

"I want to know everything before I go into the [doctor's] office"

"knowledge is power"

"In my younger years, I was not in so much of a rush to get to a doctor"

"I need to have a good relationship with my doctor"

"I have nursing experience"

"As a surgical nurse and flight attendant, I have a quick response time"

"I monitor my heart rate, blood pressure, all of that"

"I got a new Apple watch to track my steps, EKG"

"I have nothing but time"

"50-60% of people in my age group have A-Fib"

"I know when I don't feel well"

"Bedside manners are most important"

"As a surgical nurse and flight attendant, I have a quick response time"

"Part of the research is what are we doing for ALL healthcare"

"I have a high tolerance to pain"

"I prioritized my health during the last two years, during retirement"

"What do people do when they can't access medication?"

"How do we fix that system to allow elderly people to get medication easily?"

"I tolerate [pain] just long enough until I have to say 'I have to find out more'"

DO

Is proactive about physical health and well-being

Avoids going to the ER unless absolutely necessary or in immense amounts of pain

Worked as a surgical nurse and flight attendant

Researches / knows context of medical history in order to have full understanding of medical condition

Goes to the gym

Takes edoxaban for A-fib

Is taking blood thinners rest of her life

Follows doctor's directions when doctor has empathy

Monitors A-fib closely and follows standard procedures to prevent complications

Uses background understanding from experience as surgical nurse before consulting doctors

Does not let age nor medical condition bar her from day-to-day life

Monitoring steps, heart rate, blood pressure, going to the gym

Seeks out multiple different doctors to find doctors that are beneficial/fit properly

Definitely respond truthfully when asked how doing

THINK

The healthcare system needs to be improved for elder care

I know a lot more about myself than doctors would

If I am feeling well, I don't need to worry about my health

I need to have the knowledge to inform myself of my medical care

For me, money is not a main limiting factor of accessing healthcare

Healthcare needs to be more affordable and accessible

I know my body and can probably assess when there is a sinister situation

Doctors cannot be incompetent or rude

Doctors can be rude if they are brilliant

Family and family health is important to me

My personal physical is important to me and has become increasingly so in the past few years

Highly value credibility in medical professionals

Every stage of healthcare is an opportunity to learn more and remain informed

Don't do things just for the sake of doing them

A sense of relief with A-fib status, laissez-faire

FEEL

Frustrated when doctor is incompetent

Disheartened when doctor has bad bedside manners

As though the healthcare process can be streamlined with unified communication

relieved that she does not need to undergo the ablation right now

nothing beats personal connections

Medical field is subjective

The healthcare system is flawed

Experience with healthcare professionals strictly rely on knowing you for years, doesn't it? mean that we're not Male

Values independence and autonomy in accessing healthcare


At ease about current state of health

Barriers to healthcare: educating our medical field to be kind to those are just not as fortunate to have access

that she needs to be the one communicating to the doctor about her own needs, next steps and best practices

She knows best

Gladys's Empathy Map



The background of the slide is an Empathy Map for Gladys, a doctor. It is divided into four quadrants: top-left (light blue), top-right (light pink), bottom-left (dark blue), and bottom-right (dark grey). Each quadrant is filled with numerous colorful sticky notes of various colors (green, yellow, pink, blue, white) containing text related to Gladys's experiences and needs. Four white callout boxes are overlaid on the map, each containing a specific insight. The top-left callout box contains the text: "A good doctor is a kind and empathic one". The top-right callout box contains: "Handles most of her diagnoses herself". The bottom-left callout box contains: "If a doctor cannot suit her needs, then she can be her own doctor". The bottom-right callout box contains: "Feels she needs to retain autonomy in order to maintain health".

"A good doctor is a kind and empathic one"

Handles most of her diagnoses herself

If a doctor cannot suit her needs, then she can be her own doctor

Feels she needs to retain autonomy in order to maintain health

Chris, 30s



"I wish I had more options for mental health therapists"

"Good therapists are too expensive."

"I'm not sure about my current plans' coverage, I should look into it but its a pain to go through"

SAY

"I do have a primary care doctor"

"I've never had to go to the ER"

"I just got new benefits"

"I used to have medicare"

"the language is too convoluted"

"I'm willing to go to the most available doctor to feel better"

"if 5/10 pain lingers I will see a doctor"

"I've never not been able to pay my bill"

"specialized / good mental health resources are too expensive"

"people don't prioritize mental health coverage"

"I'm not certain if my old plan still covers me"

"my old plan covered everything i needed"

"all my fees and copays were covered under medicare"

"I'm uncertain what my new plan covers"

"I was assigned a random plan because I missed the deadline"

"Obamacare made the transition to independent plan easy"

"I wish I had access to better mental health specialists"

"I've seen the doc a lot recently"

"I have a stomach digestion issue"

"I should know what my current plan covers"

"It's a pain to read policy details"

"I wish there was a rep to explain it"

"I am open to telehealth, but I prefer the personal connection"

DO

scheduled routine appointments

visited doctor frequently

got a job with good benefits

waited a certain amount of time before seeing doctor

stayed away from ER

took care of physical symptoms

prioritized health

utilized government resources

did not look over current plan

wouldn't see doctor if symptoms weren't bad

take antibiotics

THINK

my coverage is really good

i can afford to see the doctor

telehealth is good but not great

healthcare policy is too confusing to understand

I wish I had more time to choose my plan

emergency rooms are too expensive

I can tolerate a decent amount of pain

I should have more help choosing my plan

i value accessible care

stanford mental health resources are too standardized

I need to be careful with my condition

Obamacare is clutch

good mental healthcare is really important

FEEL

who your employer is matters

confident in old coverage

uncertain of coverage

nothing beats personal connections

angry at language used in policy details

his mental health is important

at risk for further complications

cautious

concerned for health risks

disappointed at timeline to choose plans

The image displays an Empathy Map for a user named Chris, divided into four quadrants. Each quadrant has a background color and contains numerous colorful sticky notes representing user pain points. The quadrants are: top-left (blue background), top-right (pink background), bottom-left (dark blue background), and bottom-right (dark grey background). Each quadrant has a white callout box with a speech bubble shape pointing to the notes.

"It's a pain to read policy details"

Avoids looking through options

Language is too complicated to understand quickly

Feels he is not getting the best care for what I need

John, 25



"I'll usually wait a week to see if I feel better before making a doctor's appointment"

"Had I known I could have purchased private health insurance, I would have"

"i've never had to wait to see a doctor"

"I've never had to go to the ER"

"just got my benefits"

"I was under my mom's plan"

"I have an unstable shoulder"

searched for a job with benefits

did not do physical activity

stay away from activities he likes

waited a certain amount of time before seeing doctor

"i'll wait a week to see if I feel better"

"i wouldn't see a doctor without insurance"

SAY

"I had to pop it back in"

"I didn't know what was going on"

"I didn't know I could get private insurance"

"I wanted a job with good benefits"

"it's not good to wait too long to fix a shoulder"

"I've never been shocked by a medical bill"

moved to Colorado and back

pop shoulder back in by himself

DO

get and MRI of his shoulder

stayed away from ER

wouldn't see doctor if symptoms weren't bad

seeing a doctor without insurance is too expensive

physical activity is too dangerous

I am at risk of getting really hurt

I have to be employed to have health insurance

need a job to have benefits

THINK

emergency rooms are too expensive

I am running out of time to find health insurance to fix my shoulder

i can shake off this injury

This is not a serious problem

Finding health insurance as a young adult is hard

scared if unemployed

uncertain

frantic

like he should be able to stay on mom's plan

cautious

bold

FEEL

angry at employer's benefits

depressed from not doing fun activities

stressed about financials

healthy enough to shake off symptoms

"If my symptoms lasted longer than a week I would see a doctor"

Avoid physical activity

Seeing a doctor without insurance is too expensive

Stressed about hurting himself

Anjana, 26



"I believe I have a very high pain tolerance. The only time I would seek medical attention is when the pain is intolerable"

"Most of the time, my symptoms are not serious. 70% of the time home remedies work"

"Sometimes I'm not feeling great and I think the other person doesn't want to hear that...50% of the time, I am not good. In such situations, I say, 'I'm ok'"



Anjana's Empathy Map

"Most of the symptoms I get could be hereditary"

She'll wait for symptoms to subside on its own and won't take pills until then

Getting a medical appointment in US is time-consuming process; one has to wait!

Wants healthy lifestyle but it's difficult to manage because of her busy schedule

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Summary and Key Findings

What's Next?

Insights into what people need...

Better **understanding** of health insurance coverage and options

Empathy from medical professionals regarding facilitating access to healthcare

Cheaper care to address uncertainty of symptoms without having insurance

More **affordable** good mental health specialists / resources

Knowledge about health in order to have **Agency** to take action when faced with medical complications

Quick and **easy** access to healthcare

Simplicity

Understanding

Empathy

Independence

Agency

Accessibility

Medical Prescription Form

Name Next Steps! Age _____

Address _____ Date _____

R_x

- Expand our interview scope to more people who might have had experiences with **medical bills** or **health complications**
- Continue **synthesizing** data
- Narrow down our understanding of **problems with access to healthcare**
- **HMW Statements** and **experience prototypes**

Signature

Refill 0 1 2 3 4 5 PRN

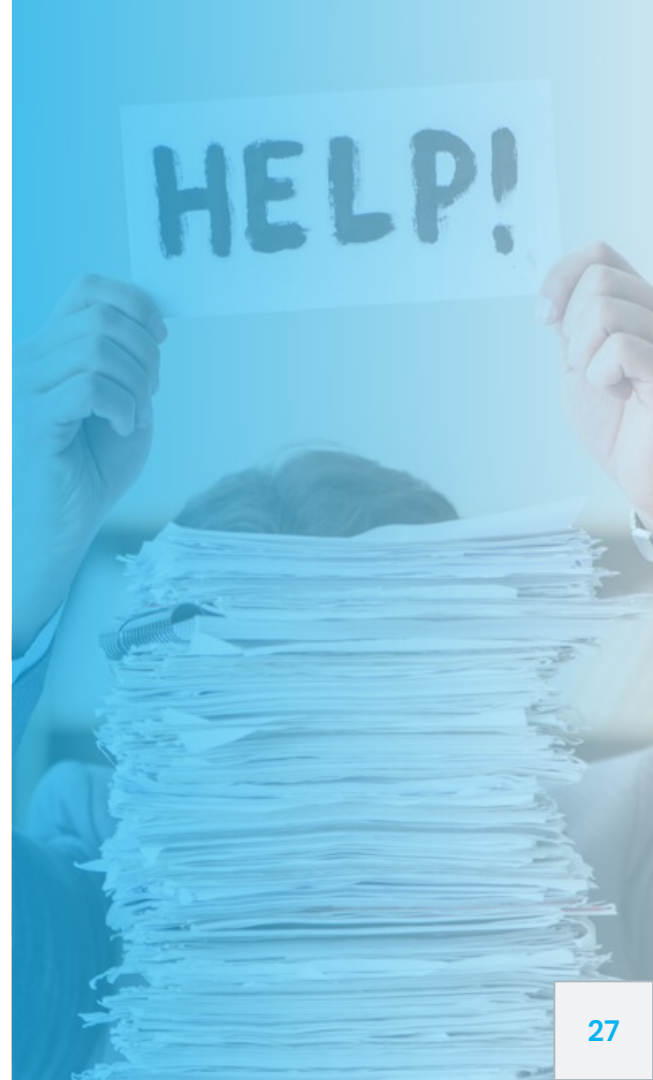
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Appendix

Insights and Needs

Insight: The sheer **convoluted** nature of the healthcare plans hinders people from **understanding their coverage**, which influences the **frequency** at which they visit the doctor

People need a better understanding of health insurance coverage and options



Insights and Needs

Insight: if people **do not feel a sense of connection** or **rapport** with their doctor, this actually correlates with **how likely they are to self-diagnose symptoms** and self-treat illnesses with at-home remedies

People need **empathy** and **trust** from medical professionals regarding facilitating access to healthcare



Insights and Needs

Insight: when healthcare plans are too **expensive**, people are also likely to **suppress pain** and leverage **pain tolerance** to avoid visiting the doctor

People need **cheaper care** to address **uncertainty of symptoms** without having **insurance**



Insights and Needs

Insight: When seeking **mental health resources**, one of the greatest limitations in access exists in a **lack of diverse and specialized** help

People need more **affordable** good **mental health specialists / resources**



Insights and Needs

Insight: When faced with **emergency situations**, people like to be **feel fully informed (whether accurate)**, and will seek out information if necessary and by **any means**

People **need knowledge** about health in order to have **agency to take action** when faced with medical complications



Insights and Needs

Insight: Healthcare system in US is **not easy**. **Lot of steps** are involved and it's **difficult to get an appointment** quickly. This prevents people from seeking medical attention and they rely on home remedies.

People want **quick and easy access** to healthcare

