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ConfirMED Cards

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ConfirMED Cards

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Statement of the problem:

A significant communication deficit exists in Dallas between Burmese refugees and healthcare professionals. This challenge posed by this deficit may not only decrease the quality of care, but also the quality of life for the refugees and their families, exacerbating an already stressful period of transition.

Of the 1,745 refugees relocated to Dallas in FY 2010, 730 were Burmese, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services 2010. Dr. Brettell and SMU graduate students completed a study in the fall of 2010 which indicates the need for intervention in the area of healthcare for Burmese refugees.

Their study revealed that Burmese refugees are neither unfamiliar with nor afraid of Western biomedicine; nearly all refugees have come from refugee camps where they were exposed to biomedical interventions. However, the study also revealed some of the

constraints associated with the American healthcare system that make seeking health care difficult for Burmese refugee families. Although refugees have access to translation services at Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas, they find them insufficient. Further, they are not familiar with an appointment system. Finally, they have difficulty filling prescriptions or simply buying over the counter medications because they cannot read labels or communicate with anyone in pharmacy settings.

To address this latter issue, we are following through with a recommendation of this study—to develop flash cards that physicians can provide to Burmese patients and that Burmese patients can use when they go to pharmacies. The proposed flashcards will illustrate not only what the medicine packaging looks like, but also how and, if necessary, when (morning or evening) to take the medication.

The advantages are manifold, helping all parties involved. The flashcards will eliminate the need for language in the pharmacy setting. Burmese refugees will be able to obtain the correct medication for themselves and their families without the unnecessary stress of verbal communication. They will be able to show the pharmacist their flashcard in the event they are unable to locate a medication.

In addition, the flashcards will decrease the number of visits Burmese refugees make to the Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas, decreasing costs for both sides. Understanding that certain medication is required for certain symptoms as indicated by a flashcard means going to the pharmacy rather than the doctor.

How we will address the problem:

In order to abate the anxiety and frustration surrounding visits to healthcare facilities, we propose the creation of a set of pictorial pharmacy flashcards, which will be given to Burmese patients in tandem with a diagnosis. The flashcards will indicate not only which medicine to purchase from the pharmacy, but also directions for use, absent words.

We plan to both survey and shadow healthcare professionals at Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas in order to determine which medicines are most frequently prescribed or recommended. We will then create a set of 20 pilot cards to be distributed.

We will follow up with surveys given to pharmacists, healthcare professionals and patients who have used the cards, in order to remedy any potential problems. Finally, we will produce the cards (cost estimate below) and deliver them to Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas.

This program will be initially launched in both the Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas Women's Health Clinic and the Pediatric Health Clinic. Because this concept is language-free, if successful, it has the capacity to help many others across Dallas, and even across Texas.

Tentative Timeline:

Mid-February:	Meet with Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas contacts Establish research/observation and survey methods
March 1-15:	Begin shadowing healthcare professionals

Research health communication and symbols

- March 15-31: Compile results and create flash cards to send to printer
- April 1: Send to printer
- April 15: Distribute cards to Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas
- May 1: Distribute evaluation surveys

Anticipated Budget

Printing and lamination costs (for 20 sets of 100 cards)	<u>\$1200</u>
Research supplies	<u>\$500</u>
Parking costs at hospital	<u>\$500</u>
Total Anticipated Budget	<u>\$2200</u>
Person Responsible for funds:	<u>Jordan Wondrack</u>
Signature of person responsible for funds:	