

# IHRISS Contributors

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# Internet and My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet use for Chronic Disease Self-Management

Intervention for Health-Related Internet Search  
Skills (IHRISS)

RRP 09-192, QUERI HIV - HCV

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# Overview

- Background: Internet, EMRs, My Health*e*Vet
- Study Objectives
- Methods: sites, participants, training intervention
- Preliminary results from hepatitis C group
- Conclusions and next steps

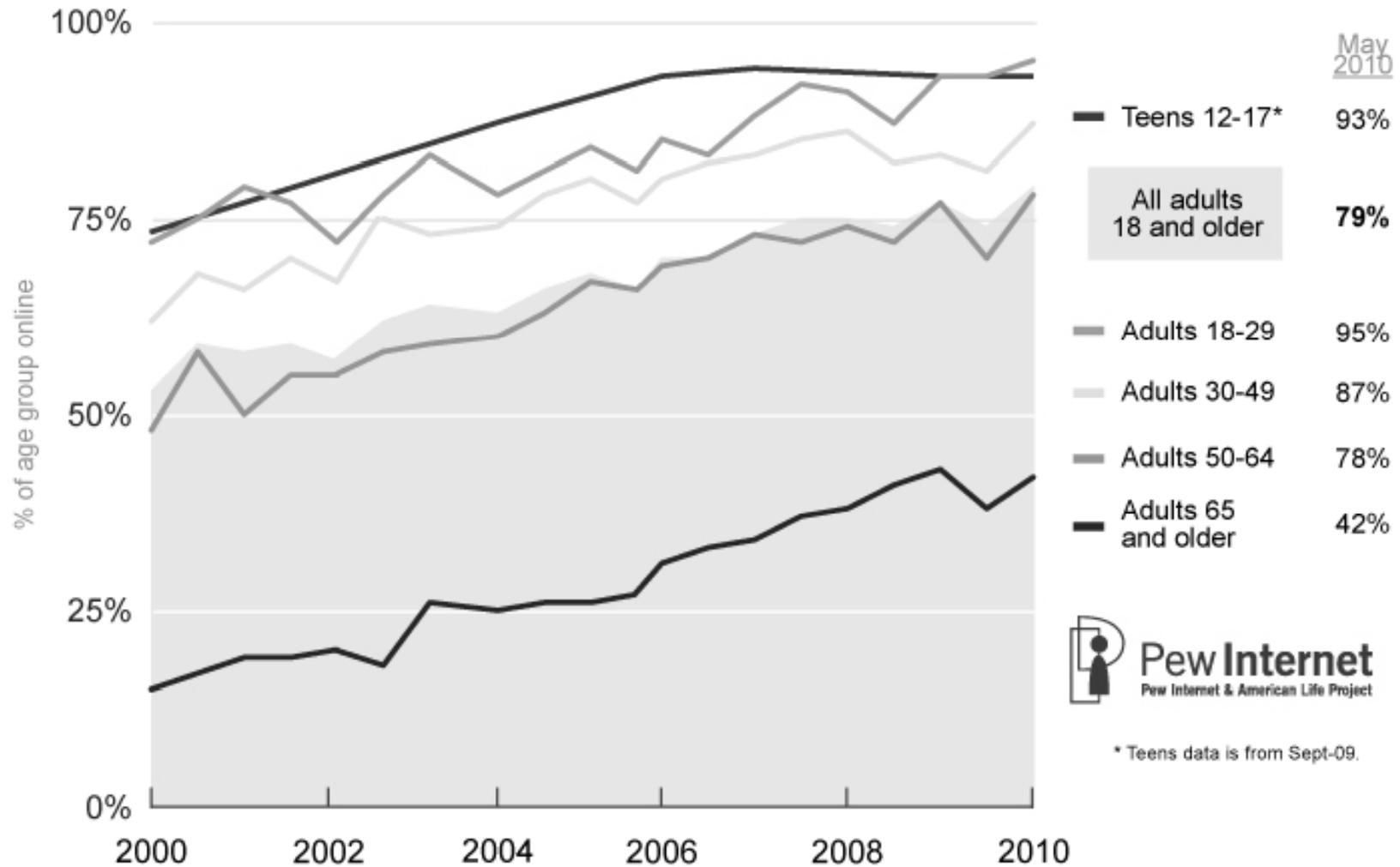
## Audience: Your familiarity with My Health*e*Vet

- Know very little about MHV
- Know medium amount about MHV
- Know a lot about MHV
- My job is in some way connected with MHV

# Audience: How would you describe your work?

- Research, primarily
- Clinical / patient care, primarily
- Other (e.g. operations, management) primarily

# Change in internet use by age, 2000-2010



# 61% of American Adults Look Online for Health Information

Of these “e-patients”, 60% say they (or someone they know) helped by the medical advice/information found on the internet.

- 60% → information found affected a decision about how to treat an illness or condition.
- 56% → changed their overall approach to maintaining their health or the health of someone they care for.
- 53% → led them to ask Dr new questions, or to get a 2nd opinion.
- 49% → changed their thinking on diet, exercise, or stress.
- 38% → affected a decision about whether to see a doctor.
- 38% → changed their coping with a chronic condition or pain.

Pew Internet & American Life Project (June 2009)

# Electronic Medical Records (EMR)

Less than 20% of ambulatory care physicians have an electronic medical record (DesRoches 2008 NEJM)

Less than 20% of US hospitals have an electronic medical record system. (Jha 2009 NEJM)

# EMRs enable Personal Health Records (PHRs)

- Kaiser Permanente
- Group Health Cooperative
- VA's My HealthVet (MHV)

# What is My HealtheVet (MHV)

- Keep health journals
- View VA medication list
- Order refills of VA medications
- Receive reminders (e.g. screening)
- Secure messaging (at selected VAs)
- VA appointments (early 2011)
- “Blue Button”

# Factual/Clarification Questions on MHV?



# Intervention for Health-Related Internet Search Skills (IHRISS)

## Specific Aims

1. Group training on MHV and Internet for health, with Veterans with HIV or hepatitis C (HCV).
2. Increase Veteran self-management in health through skills in MHV & Internet.
3. Develop more efficient and flexible means of delivering this training.

# Methods

- VA medical centers: 1 urban, 1 suburban, and 1 rural
  - Recruitment over 6 week period; Incentives provided
  - 4 sessions in computer training room
  - Groups of 6-8 Veterans with either HIV or hep C

# Methods

- Evaluation
  - Questionnaires pre & post
  - Focus group
  - semi-structured interview
  - Ethnographic observation
- Measures
  - Frequency of Internet & MHV use.
  - Knowledge of HCV / HIV
  - Self-efficacy for information seeking and Internet use (NCI/HINTS)
  - Engagement in care (patient activation measure, PAM)
  - Information, Motivation, Behavioral Skills (IMB model)

# Methods

## Content:

1. Search
2. Evaluate
3. Transact
4. Communicate

## Training methods

- Single and in pairs
- Team building
- Role plays
- Homework

Curriculum modeled after Kalichman et al. 2006 J Cons Clin Psychology.

# Training Content – ‘P-I-L-O-T’

**Purpose** (What is the website for?):

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**Information** (Good information? Do you trust it?):

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**Links** (Does it have good links? Any you want to go to or remember for later?)

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**Originator** (Who made this site? Name of company, organization or person)

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**Timeliness** (Has it been updated in last 1-2 years? Do you think it is missing recent information?)

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# Factual/Clarification Questions about Intervention?



# Preliminary Results

# Participant Characteristics

- 8 veterans with HCV
- All White
- 7 male, 1 female
- Ages 48-65
- 5 high school; 3 with some college
- Low household income (most <\$12,000)
- 5 unstably housed
- Wide range of computer skills

(similar demographics for HIV+ group)

# IPA Results

- 7 out of 8 IPA'd in group one (HCV)
- 5 of 6 IPA'd in group two (HIV)

# Self-Efficacy Results (n=8)

## Information Seeking and Internet Use (7-items)

- *How confident are you that you can...*
  - *Find information about HCV treatments*
  - *Discuss treatments with your doctor*
  - *Use internet to find health information*
- Increase from 6.3 to 8.5, on a 0 to 10 scale (SD=2.03, p=.02)

[adapted from NCI – HINTS study]

# Patient Activation (“engagement”)

13 PAM items. Examples:

- *I am confident I can help prevent or reduce problems associated with my health.*
- *I know what each of my prescribed medications does.*
- *I am confident that I can tell a doctor concerns I have even when he or she does not ask.*

No change from baseline to post-training measure (both mean=3.6, St Dev = 0.3)

(PAM from Hibbard et al. 2004 HSR)

# Interview Results

- Viewing & Refilling medications easy and popular
- Impressed with variety of websites devoted to HCV research
- Felt more informed about their health
- Felt more informed as patients

Bringing information from MHV/internet to the doctor's appointment...

***"...helped the doctor view me as an informed patient".***

Another felt:

***"...a sense of knowing something instead of being totally blank".***

# Interview Results: Information Found On the Web

“ I went to the website of one of the colleges in California. I think it was Berkeley, and, they just had a wealth of information for Hep C which was the reason why I took this class to begin with, you know, because of the diagnosis and ... it's just a wealth of information. There was so much out there. It was just absolutely amazing.”

# Observation Results - Challenges

- Getting group together same place & same time
- Password & IPA challenges
- Pitching the training to different skill levels
- Surfing versus learning

# Observation Results - Strengths

- Group dynamic was positive
- Comfortable being in group where HCV or HIV status was known
- Networking: VA, resources, health, housing
- Helping each other: peer internet “experts”

# Conclusions

1) A group training program helped Veterans...

- Gain Internet and MHV skills
- Feel more confident about interacting with the VA clinicians, and
- Take care of health care needs online (e.g. medication refills).

2) Resource intensive intervention; Significant time commitment from participants

3) This approach to increasing self-management, via MHV and Internet, may be especially useful for Veterans who face actual or perceived barriers to VA health care and to health-related information.

- Stigmatized conditions
- Rural veterans

4) Need to find right mix of in-person meetings for those with fewer skills and less confidence; and remote learning techniques for others.

# Next Steps

- Completion of rural group; Analysis
- Try on larger scale, with less intensive intervention
- Expand the emphasis on self-management tools

# Acknowledgements

- Carla Azersky
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# Audience: Impact of MHV

Which of the following aspects of MHV do you think will have the largest positive impact on Veterans' health care experience in the VA?

- Appointment views
- Viewing and refilling VA medications
- Secure messaging with VA providers
- Viewing VA laboratory results
- None of these will have much impact

# Questions?

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