

Clarkston Community Health Clinic Project

The goal of this project is to help aid in communication between patients and medical professionals in situations where language and hearing barriers impact medical care. Differences in language can prevent patients from getting proper treatment and understanding their medications in both verbal and written forms. These challenges are especially prevalent in areas with a diverse population and many languages spoken, including cities like Atlanta. For the past several semesters, our project team has created a pill card format and an accompanying icon library to help patients understand their prescribed medications in terms of side effects and administration through iconography and visuals.

Throughout our research and design process, we aim to create solutions with the patient perspective in mind. One of the best ways to use human-centered design is to involve the end users in the design and testing process. One of our goals this semester was to develop a testing plan to evaluate our designs with users in local clinics that experience language and hearing barriers. Speaking with both the medical professionals and the patients ensures that the features we include are focused on the patient and clinic needs. We also hope to test the iconography for patient understanding to check comprehension across different languages and test the digital prototypes for usability.

In the upcoming semesters, we plan to design a digital mobile or web-based application that provides patients with information regarding their prescribed medications in a non-verbal/language-independent format. While the pill cards are a helpful tool, a mobile application will allow for greater flexibility and expansion of the project. In order to begin development, we must conduct research within the clinics to find which platforms are the most accessible to the patients as well as which symbols patients find the most intuitive to indicate medical information. A secondary goal is to continue updating our current icon library to include the more common over-the-counter medications.

Through our project, we hope to overcome these challenges and assist clinics that have large populations of those experiencing language and/or hearing barriers to facilitate better communication between doctors and patients. With thorough testing and user-centered design methods, this solution could greatly improve the healthcare environment.

Prospective students are recommended to have an interest/background in improving healthcare/medical practices, communication studies, app development, or UI/UX design. Programming skills or a willingness to learn programming are also highly encouraged, but not required. For anyone with questions regarding the Clarkston Community Health Clinic VIP please feel to contact us at sburger8@gatech.edu.