Lessons Learned from a Street Medicine Vaccination Pilot

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Community and Field Services Division, West LA
Agenda

- Street Medicine Overview
- The People’s First Aid Kit
- Field Vaccination Pilot
- Next Steps
Street Medicine Overview
Coley M. King, DO
Director of Homeless Services, Venice Family Clinic

- Trained in family medicine
- Specialized in homeless and street medicine for the last 12 years
- Values of the old-fashioned family doc (the house call)
- Helped develop model to deliver care on the street
- Mentors and influences: Dr. Terri Brehove, Dr. Jim Withers, Dr. Jim O’Connell
Why focus on people experiencing homelessness?

High Mortality Rate:
- US Life Expectancy: 78
- Diabetes: 70
- Chronic homelessness: 48

Tri-morbidity
- Addiction, mental illness, major medical illness
- Plus trauma

Expensive
- Camden Coalition “hot spotter” study showed 1% of patients account for 1/3 of medical costs
- Estimated annual cost per homeless person on the street: $30,000 - $50,000
  - In supportive housing: about half

Disproportionate Barriers
- Real barriers: transportation, cost, etc.
- Perceived barriers: cost, negative experiences, etc.
Overview of Homeless Program

- Began in the mid-80s
- Trauma-informed care
  - And medically trauma-informed care
- Showers, clothing, food, and transportation vouchers

Locations Served
- Clinic
- Shelter
- Satellite
- Street (Multidisciplinary)
- NEW: Roomkey Hotels and Rec Centers

Primary Care
Mental Health
Substance Abuse Treatment
Health Insurance Enrollment
Case Management
Providing food security
Dental
HIV/Hepatitis C Program
What is Street Medicine?

The Backpack
- diagnostics, bandages, acute care medicines, technology
- “Vital signs are Vital”

Deliver care to patients where they live

Earn their trust

Access to quality primary care – either in clinic or a virtual medical home

Get them housed.
Caring

- Attention
- Warmth
- Confidence
- Thoughtful silence

Recent study
- COMT enzyme – real physiological benefit of caring for patients (Lancet 2010)

Kaptchuk (NYT 2018):
“[T]he placebo effect is a biological response to an act of caring; that somehow the encounter itself calls forth healing and that the more intense and focused it is, the more healing it evokes.”

Non-Verbal Communication
Long-Term Engagement

- 1 second to 18 months
- GEJ’s Story
  - Isaiah Outreach – 2012
  - Amanda – 2012
  - IMHT – 2013
  - Antipsychotics – M&Ms
  - LAIs
  - Fixing his eyes
  - Shelter – 2013-2014
  - Housing May 2019
  - Long term team-based approach
Responding to Needs

- Cut toenails
- One patient at a time
- “you are really just a little fellow, in a wide, wide world after all” Gandalf
MAT in Street Medicine
Long-acting injectable antipsychotics
Homelessness in Venice

- 1,685 people experiencing homelessness in Venice\(^1\)
- 63% of unsheltered living on street, in tents, or in makeshift shelters
  - Remainder in cars, vans, RVs
  - 16 in Emergency Shelters
- Venice is within LA City
- Approximately 40,000 Venice residents\(^2\)

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2. 2008 LA Department of City Planning Estimates
Issues

- Lack of toilets and showers
- Street cleaning processes
  - Harassment
  - Destruction of belongings
  - Scatter people, making it hard for outreach teams to reach them
- Cleanings unannounced
- Contentious relations between housed and unhoused
The People’s First Aid Kit
Coalition Goals

- Overall: To work collaboratively to develop solutions to sanitation issues to promote public health, enhance access to health services, and reduce harassment of people experiencing homelessness.

- 5 Strategies:
  - Expand Toilet, Shower, Storage Options
  - Sanitation Practices and Systems Change
  - Vaccinations
  - Addiction Services
  - Housed/Unhoused Relationships
January 2019: Group process to identify issues and potential solutions.

March 2019: Workgroups prioritized focus areas

April 2019: Identified main recommendations for each topic

June 2019: Reviewed Preliminary Community Recommendations

August 2019: Group brainstorming for Vaccination Pilot evaluation, how to approach community meetings

November 2019: Vaccination Pilot, new CARE and CARE+ protocols for LA Sanitation
Assets

- Strong network of community-based organizations
- Street medicine team through Venice Family Clinic
- Participation from people experiencing homelessness
- Local substance use treatment providers
- LA County Measure H/LAHSA
Accomplishments

- Additional toilets and showers
- Vaccination pilot
- Group met regularly (about every 6-8 weeks)
- Improved low-barrier Narcan access
- Input from those with lived experience has been crucial
- Collaboration between agencies
- Networking
- Nice to see something positive happening in Venice
Lessons Learned

- Community group should be face of coalition, not DPH
- Include people who are experiencing homelessness
- Having multiple community partners involved is key to success
  - Many staff from one agency
  - For example, Venice Family Clinic: Needle Exchange, Addiction Services, Street Medicine, Health Insurance and Policy, etc.
Coalition Partners

- Persons Experiencing Homelessness
- Housed Venice Residents
- Catholic Charities
- Clare Matrix
- Department of Health Services - Housing for Health
- Department of Mental Health
- Didi Hirsch Mental Health Center
- Department of Public Health
- LA City Council District 11
- Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
- Safe Place for Youth (SPY)
- St. Joseph Center
- Venice Community Housing
- Venice Family Clinic
Field Vaccination Pilot
Goals
- Offer vaccines near homeless encampments
  - Reduce barriers to preventive care
- Build comfort level of DPH nurses in the field

Structure
- Once a month
- Two Street Outreach Teams
- VFC Street Medicine Team
- DPH Staff: Public Health Nurses, Community Health Workers, Public Health Investigators, Health Program Analyst
- Additional services over time
- Vary vaccinations offered
Collaborating Agencies

- LA County Department of Public Health
- Venice Family Clinic
  - Street Medicine
  - Insurance Enrollment
  - Needle Exchange/Harm Reduction
- Clare Matrix
- St. Joseph Center Outreach Team
- LAHSA Outreach Team
Evaluation

1. Quality Improvement Project
   - Assess each outreach and adjust as needed

2. Rapid Assessment Survey
   - Understand characteristics of those who got vaccinations and those who declined
First Outreach - Wednesday September 25, 2019
Location: Third and Rose
Vaccine Outreach by the Numbers
September 25

Received Vaccination
7 individuals vaccinated
10 doses administered
  5 Pneumonia
  5 Hepatitis A

5 responded to survey (71% response rate)

Declined Vaccination
14 declined vaccination
11 responded to survey (79% response rate)
**Plus/Delta Chart for Vaccine Outreach**
**September 25**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>+</th>
<th>Δ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 doses administered (7 individuals)</td>
<td>White lab coats could be intimidating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses could look up immunization history in CAIR</td>
<td>Add health insurance screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter placement</td>
<td>Commuting traffic was difficult, start later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral/transit to Emergency Room</td>
<td>Offer food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next day appt at VFC</td>
<td>Make sure we’re using simple health terms “pneumonia” instead of “pneumococcal;” “flu” instead of “influenza”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third and Rose - easy to set up, no approval needed</td>
<td>Not much foot traffic at Third and Rose, try Boardwalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many staff present allowed us to meet various needs (ER transport, shelter transport)</td>
<td>Large number of staff may have been intimidating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create sign for canopy with which vaccinations we’re offering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Second Outreach - Wednesday October 30, 2019
Location: 1 Rose Ave Parking Lot/Boardwalk
Vaccine Outreach by the Number
October 30

**Received Vaccination**
14 individuals vaccinated
24 doses administered
  - 10 Pneumonia and Flu
  - 3 Pneumonia Only
  - 1 Flu Only
9 responded to survey (64% response rate)

**Declined Vaccination**
Many declined vaccination
5 responded to survey
  - “I don’t like flu shot”
  - Bad experience in the past
  - Concerned about possible side effects
  - “I don’t trust the flu shot but I trust other vaccinations.”
  - Doesn’t trust vaccinations, doesn’t want to get sick
## Changes made for October 30 Outreach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Δ from September 25</th>
<th>Implemented for October 30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White lab coats could be intimidating</td>
<td>No lab coats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add health insurance screening</td>
<td>Added health insurance screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic was difficult, start later</td>
<td>Started at 9 instead of 8:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer food</td>
<td>Offered granola bars and water bottles for anyone who wanted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make sure we’re using simple health terms “pneumonia” instead of “pneumococcal;”</td>
<td>Did this for outreach teams and signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“flu” instead of “influenza”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much foot traffic at Third and Rose, try Boardwalk</td>
<td>Moved to Boardwalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large number of staff may have been intimidating</td>
<td>Had about the same number of staff, more spread out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create sign for canopy with which vaccinations we’re offering</td>
<td>Sign was at front of canopy (used “flu” and “pneumonia”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Vaccination Outreaches by the Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Vaccinations Offered</th>
<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Doses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 2019</td>
<td>3rd and Rose</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hep A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2019</td>
<td>Boardwalk</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2019</td>
<td>Homeless Service Center</td>
<td>Hep A</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2020</td>
<td>Boardwalk</td>
<td>Hep A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2020</td>
<td>Boardwalk</td>
<td>Flu</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tdap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hep A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>55</strong></td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Adjustments

- Total 5 outreaches (September, October, November, January, February)
- Incentives:
  - Outreach staff: Providing food builds trust and good will
  - Person experiencing homelessness: “Do you have anything softer?”

- Services Offered:
  - Outreach 1: Vaccinations and Street Medicine
  - Outreach 2 & 3: Added Health Insurance Enrollment
  - Outreach 4: Added Narcan Distribution
  - Outreach 5: Added Needle Exchange
Two Surveys - Received vs. Declined Vaccination

VACCINATION SURVEY

We are from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. Today, we are offering vaccinations that can help prevent the spread of communicable diseases. We are asking for just a few minutes of your time to answer a short 15-question confidential survey about vaccinations. Your participation is voluntary and appreciated.

1) Which vaccination(s) are you receiving today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccination</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Pneumonia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Influenza (Flu)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) Which vaccination(s) have you received in the past?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccination</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Pneumonia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Influenza (Flu)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) Have you received any vaccines in the past 4 weeks, not including today?
   - Yes
   - No
   - I don’t know

4) Do you have any long-term or chronic health problems including: heart disease, lung disease, asthma, kidney disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, cancer or some other medical disease, blood disorder or weakened immune system?
   - Yes
   - No
   - I don’t know

5) When was the last time you saw a doctor or medical provider?
   - Less than 30 days ago
   - 31 to 3 months ago
   - 4 to 6 months ago
   - 7 to 12 months ago
   - Over 1 year ago
   - I don’t know

6) Which gender do you most identify with? (Check one)
   - Male
   - Female
   - Transgender Male
   - Transgender Female
   - Gender Non-Conforming/Non-Binary
   - Other
   - Prefer not to say

7) What is your age in years?
   - 18-20
   - 21-30
   - 31-40
   - 41-50
   - 51-60
   - 60-64
   - 65 or older
Two Surveys - Received vs. Declined Vaccination

Field Vaccination Outreach in Venice - Service Planning Area 5

DECLINED VACCINE SURVEY

We are from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. Today, we are offering vaccinations that can help prevent the spread of communicable diseases. We are asking for just five minutes of your time to answer a short 13-question confidential survey about vaccinations. Your participation is voluntary and appreciated.

1) Why were you choosing to not get vaccinated today? (Check all that apply)
   ☐ I don’t need it since I don’t get sick
   ☐ I have already received the vaccination(s) offered today
   ☐ I have had a bad experience with a vaccination in the past (e.g., reactions or, get sick afterwards)
   ☐ I don’t like getting shots
   ☐ I don’t trust medical workers, doctors, or other health professionals about vaccinations
   ☐ I have a health condition that prevents me from getting vaccinations (e.g., Immune suppression, allergies)
   ☐ I am concerned about the possible side effects (e.g., getting sick from a vaccination)
   ☐ Other: ____________________________

2) What vaccination(s) have you received in the past?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccination</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis A</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetanus</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) Have you received any vaccines in the past 6 weeks, not including today?
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ I don’t know

4) Do you have any long-term or chronic health problems including heart disease, lung disease, asthma, kidney disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, cancer or some other reversible chronic disease, blood disorder or an unbalanced immune system?
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ I don’t know

5) When was the last time you saw a doctor or medical provider?
   ☐ Less than 6 months ago
   ☐ 6 to 11 months ago
   ☐ 12 months ago
   ☐ Over 1 year ago  ☐ I don’t know

6) Which gender(s) do you most identify with? (Check one or more)
   ☐ Male  ☐ Female  ☐ Transgender Male  ☐ Transgender Female
   ☐ Gender Non-Conforming/Non-Binary  ☐ Other  ☐ Prefer not to say

7) What is your age in years?
   ☐ 18-29  ☐ 30-44  ☐ 45-59  ☐ 60-84  ☐ 85 or older

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Field Vaccination Outreach in Venice - Service Planning Area 5

11) How long has it been since you lived in permanent, stable housing?
   ☐ In the past month
   ☐ 1 to 3 months ago
   ☐ 3 to 6 months ago
   ☐ 6 to 12 months ago
   ☐ Over 1 year ago  ☐ I don’t know

Comments? Please use the space below to share any feedback about this topic or survey.

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Thank you again for your participation. Have a great day!
Survey Results

- Over 5 months, 55 people were vaccinated
- 36/55 responded to vaccination survey (75% response rate)
- 36/40 of those who declined vaccination responded to the survey (90% response rate)
Survey Results - Race/Ethnicity

Received Vaccination

- White: 58%
- Black/African American: 17%
- Hispanic/Latino: 14%
- Multi-racial (2+): 6%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 3%
- Refused: 3%

N = 36

Declined Vaccination

- White: 33%
- Black/African American: 22%
- Hispanic/Latino: 17%
- Multi-racial (2+): 14%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 8%
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 3%
- Refused: 3%
- No Response: 22%

N = 36
Survey Results - Insurance Status

Received Vaccination
- Medi-Cal/Medicaid: 3%
- Medicare: 19%
- No Insurance: 3%
- Other Insurance: 75%
N = 36

Declined Vaccination
- Medi-Cal/Medicaid: 6%
- Medicare: 8%
- Private Insurance: 6%
- Other Insurance: 6%
- No Insurance: 6%
- Don't know: 8%
N = 35
Survey Results - Vaccinations Received

Vaccinations Received

- Hepatitis A: 53%
- Pneumococcal: 44%
- Influenza: 61%

N = 36
Survey Results - How long has it been since you’ve lived in permanent, stable housing?

**Received Vaccination**
- Past month: 68% (N = 36)
- 1-3 months: 13%
- 3-6 months: 3%
- 7-12 months: 3%
- More than a year: 10%
- Don’t know: 3%

**Declined Vaccination**
- Past month: 44% (N = 29)
- 1-3 months: 11%
- 3-6 months: 6%
- 7-12 months: 8%
- More than a year: 11%
- Don’t know: 0%
Survey Results - Where do you sleep?

Received Vaccination
- 81% Outdoors
- 10% Shelters
- 6% Car/Van/RV
- 3% Other
N = 36

Declined Vaccination
- 75% Outdoors
- 14% Transitional Housing
- 3% Car/Van/RV
- 3% Other
N = 34
Survey Results - Why are you choosing not to get vaccinated today?

Reasons for Declining Vaccination

- I don’t need it since I don’t get sick: 22%
- I have already received the vaccinations offered today: 33%
- I have had a bad experience with a vaccination in the past: 14%
- I don’t like getting shots: 8%
- I don’t think that vaccines are safe: 6%
- I don’t trust nurses, doctors, or other health professionals: 3%
- I have a health condition that prevents me from getting vaccinations: 3%
- I am concerned about the possible side effects: 14%
- Other: 28%

N = 36
Survey Results - Why are you choosing to not get vaccinated today?

Other:
- I don’t like exposing my body to unnecessary antibodies
- I don’t trust vaccinations
- I don’t want to put it in my body
- Everyone I know has been very sick after vaccination (grandkids)
- I don’t trust the flu shot, but trust vaccinations
- Never did, never will
- No needles
Lessons Learned & Take-Aways

- We reached people who had been homeless for over a year and live outdoors
- Those who want vaccinations are grateful
- Many are opposed; not trying to convince them
- Lack of toilets and shower services continues to be an issue
- Continued collaboration and partnership between DPH, VFC, LAHSA, St. Joseph Center is crucial to the success of this effort
- Evaluation support from DPH Epidemiology team
Next Steps

- Six-month pilot was cut short by COVID-19
- Built infrastructure to deliver public health services in the field
- Current DPH COVID-19 response includes testing at homeless encampments
- Eventually, when there is a COVID vaccine, we have systems and relationships in place to deliver it to this vulnerable group
Thank you!