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Designing Health Technologies for Low-SES Populations

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“People who live and work in low socioeconomic circumstances are at increased risk for mortality, morbidity, unhealthy behaviors, reduced access to health care, and inadequate quality of care.”

- CDC Health Disparities and Inequalities Report, 2011
Technology Access

- Some rural households can’t get internet or cellphone service to their homes.

Wired Broadband (broadbandmap.gov)
Design Considerations

• Low-SES populations have varying literacy and numeracy skills

21-23%
Unable to locate information in text.

Unable to make low-level inferences using printed materials.

30%
Unable to integrate easily identifiable pieces of information.

Unable to interpret simple percentages
Methods

- Proud to use tech and show it off to others.
  - Helps with adoption
  - Complicates data cleaning
Privacy

- Often lie to their health providers… technology designs should support that.
Ethics

• Ensure technology is not stigmatizing

• Taking away technology at end of a study

• Is technology the best use of resources?
THANK YOU

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