



# Health Care Access for Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Patients

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## Disclosures

We have no actual or potential conflicts of interest in relation to this presentation.

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# Agenda

1. U.S. Deaf Community
2. Common Healthcare Barriers
3. Development of the *Vital Signs* film
4. Film showing!
5. Discussion/Q&A

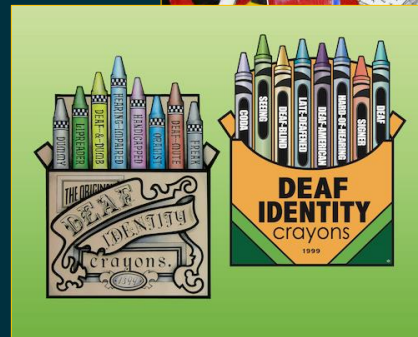
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# U.S. Deaf Community

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# U.S. Deaf Community

- 500,000+ individuals who communicate using American Sign Language (ASL)
- Cultural view of embracing **Deafhood** versus medical view of curing/fixing **deafness**



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# U.S. Deaf Community

- History of **oppression** within majority hearing world, especially around freedom to use ASL



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# Social Determinants of Health

- Compared to hearing populations, Deaf people experience higher rates of:
  - Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
  - Under- and unemployment
  - Public insurance or lack of insurance
  - Limited educational attainment

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# Common Healthcare Barriers

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# Language

- Deaf clients' **primary language = ASL**
  - Limited number of ASL-fluent professionals
  - Limited access to, willingness to provide, or funds to support certified ASL interpreters
  - English (written) is acquired as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language
- Many Deaf individuals have also been impacted by early **language deprivation**

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# Health Literacy

- Many Deaf clients also present with **fund of information deficits** and **low health literacy**:
- Health-related vocabulary among Deaf ASL users parallels non-English-speaking U.S. immigrants
- “Many adults deaf since birth or early childhood do not know their own family medical history, having never overheard their hearing parents discussing this with their doctor” (Barnett et al., 2011)

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# Mistrust

- Most healthcare providers and researchers are hearing and, therefore, represent the majority oppressor group
- History of medical oppression has led to:
  - Increased *mistrust* and fear
  - *Reduced cooperation and collaboration* with hearing healthcare providers and clinical researchers
  - Complete *avoidance* of the healthcare system and the research world

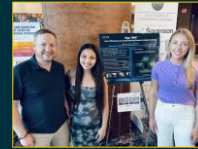
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## Development of *Vital Signs* Film

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# Team Development

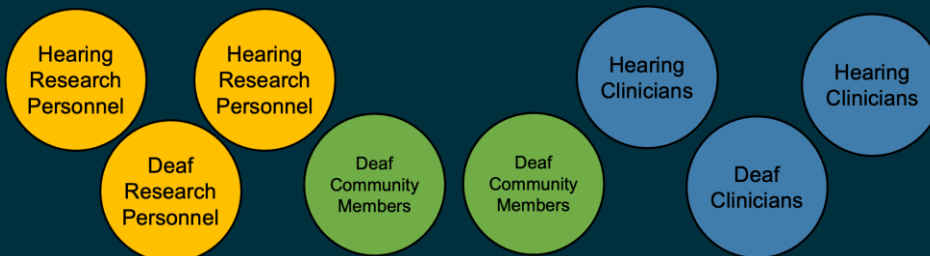
- 2 Deaf Co-Investigators
- 4 Deaf Community Advisors
- Hearing team members
  - “Right attitude”
- Collaboration as a guiding value



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# Focus Groups

- 8 virtual focus groups in fall 2021/spring 2022



- Transcription/captioning for hearing focus groups
- Analyzed data together as a team (while working remotely)

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## Major Themes

- Show clinical scenarios in varied settings; aim for authenticity and real-world feel
- Include diverse characters with a wide range of d/Deaf identities
- Make the tone of scenarios serious (like *ER*)
- Include concrete information about how to obtain and work with interpreters
- Aim for short length – 15 to 20 minutes

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## Intervention Development

- Deaf director
- ASL-fluent filmmaker
- Script writing process
- Casting call and auditions
- Script translation process
- Filmmaking process

**Deaf YES: Center for Deaf Empowerment and Recovery**  
Published by Jessica Carter-Moore · October 6 at 1:40 PM · 🌐

**CASTING CALL FOR DEAF, DEAFBLIND, HARD OF HEARING, AND SIGNING ACTORS!**

**IMAGE DESCRIPTION:**  
A white flier with black text. At the top right there is a design element that looks like a film clapboard.... [See more](#)

**CASTING CALL FOR FILM**

**PAID JOB**  
**FOR NEW ENGLAND/ NEW YORK BASED ACTORS**

- **Deaf/Blind or low vision Deaf Person**
  - ASL/PTASL User
  - Age 20-65
- **Deaf Immigrant/Refugee**
  - Knows their native sign language & ASL
  - Age 40-50
- **New-Biking or Trans-Identified Hard of Hearing Person**
  - Spoken English & ASL User
  - Age 18-25
- **Deaf Senior Citizen**
  - ASL User
  - Age 65-85
- **Hearing actors for Hearing Health Care Provider & Interpreter Roles**
  - ASL/English User
  - Age 20-85

**WHERE** Central & Western Massachusetts

producing an educational film for Health Providers

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# Film Showing!

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## Discussion / Q & A

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# Discussion Question 1

What were your **initial reactions** to the *Vital Signs* film?

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# Discussion Question 2

What was your **“Aha!” moment** when you saw the film?

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## Discussion Question 3

What suggestions do you have for using *Vital Signs* to educate healthcare interpreters, professionals and students?

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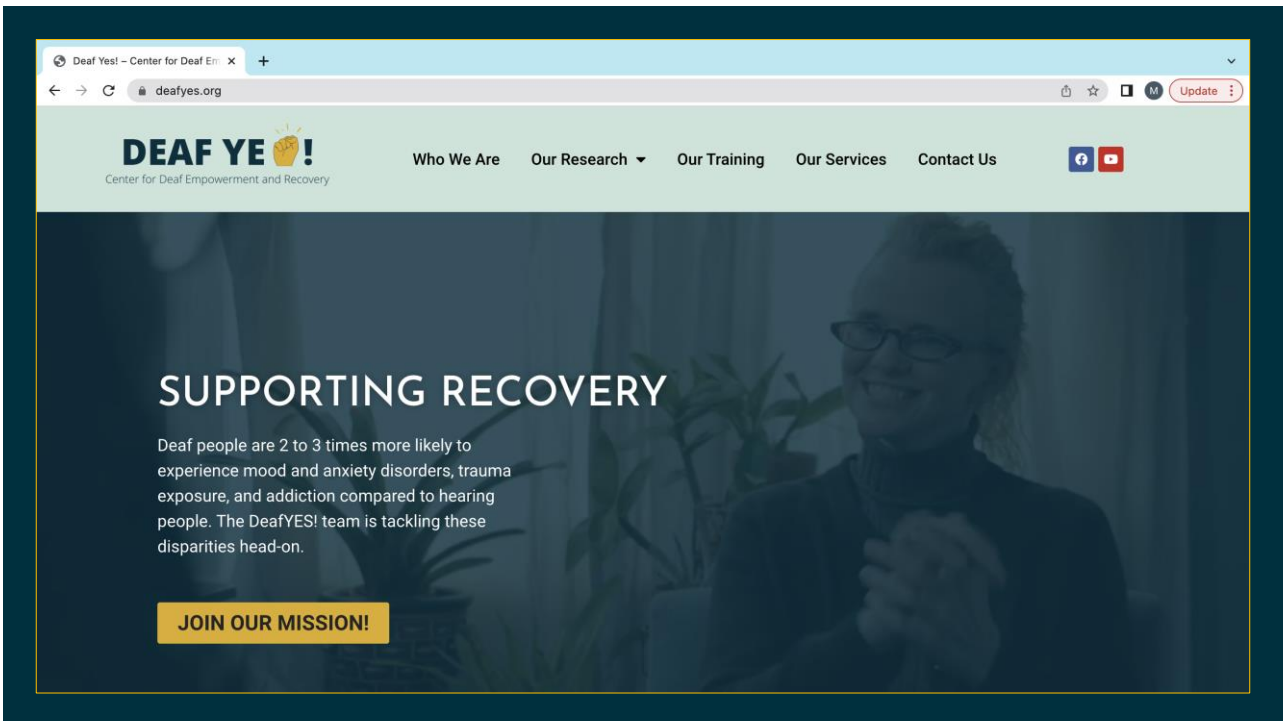
## Discussion Question 4

How do you plan to share this film with your own network?

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