Working to Prevent Domestic Violence Using Technology
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Background

- Domestic violence (DV) victims are already in extremely tense situations, even without a worldwide pandemic
- Now, victims are stuck at home with their abusers, with no way to seek help
- Increase in violence, and 3x the number of victims needing DV services (Jarvis, 2021)
- *"While many people are safe in their homes, home is not a safe place for everyone"* - Journey Center
- VirA project: a secure technology that would activate upon a trigger word from a person in danger. It could prevent harm, with settings tailored to the user's preferences
- Could also record evidence for legal purposes

Population:

- People experiencing domestic violence, during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, as well as those helping them

Learning objectives:

1. Examine how various forms of technology can prevent domestic violence
2. Learn to appropriately interview different stakeholders
3. Investigate how surveillance can be applied to non-biomedical conditions

Activities and Methods:

- Literature review: Done on domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, health surveillance, and social registries
- Meeting with an interdisciplinary group (law, biomedical engineering, computer science, and social work) weekly
- Meeting with the public health team weekly
- CITI trainings
- Development of Semi-Structured Interviews for different groups
- Conducting interviews with domestic violence advocates on their opinions on VirA (to use for grant proposals)

Results and Deliverables:

- Results and next steps:
  - Further developing the VirA technology
  - Reaching out to more domestic violence centers in Cleveland to conduct focus groups with advocates and survivors
  - Reaching out to legal representatives to conduct focus groups
  - Submitting proposals for grants to secure funding
- Deliverables:
  - Semi-structured interviews for domestic violence advocates, domestic violence survivors, surveillance experts, and legal representatives
  - Letters of intent to DV centers for IRB approval
  - Fact sheet on VirA to use during interviews
  - Information gained from interviews on VirA

Lessons Learned:

1. Health surveillance for non-biomedical conditions, such as domestic violence, should be utilized
2. How interdisciplinary groups can work together to achieve a common goal
3. Developing technology is not a linear process - there are several security and legal implications

Public Health Implications:

- Public health surveillance has the potential to be used for other non-biomedical conditions
- Technology can be used to help those in vulnerable conditions, and make aid more accessible
- Further research and explanations are explored in my capstone

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Presentation link:

References:

- Jarvis, Jade. "Ohio Domestic Violence Programs Report Increase in Calls for Service in 2020." WEWS, WEWS, 7 Feb. 2021, www.news5cleveland.com/news/continuing-coverage/coronavirus/ohio-domestic-violence-programs-report-increase-in-calls-for-service-in-2020.