

Interviews with Health Mentor Jon Moore and Nursing Student/ HMP Participant David Kaplan

The Health Mentors Program (HMP) is an 18 month long longitudinal IPE curriculum, designed to provide students the opportunity to learn and work in a collaborative environment. Centered in this collaborative learning experience is the community volunteer (Health Mentor). Health Mentors are paired with a team of students and share their life experiences, helping students learn knowledge and skills that are important to being a good health professional. Jon Moore is one of our generous Health Mentors. He was born, raised, and currently resides in Philadelphia. Jon enjoys cooking, watching movies, shopping, and traveling. David Kaplan is an undergraduate nursing student at Jefferson, who recently participated in the Health Mentors Program; David also shared a reflection with us on the lessons he learned from his Health Mentor during their time together.



**Jon Moore,
Health Mentor**

What was your background, prior to becoming a Health Mentor?

I am a retired transportation employee, and noise was a big thing around me as a mechanic, as it damaged my left ear. I was usually

asked by foremen and assistant managers to fix problems, and was often told "we believe you are the only person who knows how to do it and get things corrected". I tried to be proactive and give my colleagues enough products while I was on vacation, for example. I am also a minister.

How did you get involved with the Health Mentors program at Jefferson?

One of my doctors recommended it to me, and I put my name on the list. I knew a little bit about the program, but I really went into it blindly and open to the opportunity for a new experience. I am in a wheelchair, but I like to be free and be able to function and get around.

What was it like working with your student group for the first time?

I feel like I learned a lot about my students, and how the Health Mentors program really works. I shared my story with the students, since they are working with patients who have chronic diseases, and I wanted them to learn about how we (patients) function in our communities. I also wanted to help them understand how people of faith (of all

faiths) have a different way of functioning, and seeking support through their trials and tribulations.

When the team came to visit my home in-person, a student said they were surprised to see my apartment so clean. I was not sure how to respond to that at first. I feel like my communities are portrayed in a certain way, but I don't take it as a negative. I help students to see what they are seeing and why, so they can look beyond these portrayals. I want to help people to learn that even though you have a disability, don't let it control you. You can overcome it and be able to be a part of society no matter what.

What has your overall experience been like in the Health Mentors Program?

Well last year (2020-21), everything was mostly done virtually. In-person meetings were actually a challenge for me, since I have a problem with hearing in one ear, and the noise can override me trying to hear my team. Last year, I could show them my home virtually, which was a different experience. The student team didn't get to see my full neighborhood, but they could see what my home looked like.

I also live in the area that has the lowest vaccination rate in Philadelphia. When I mention that to the students, it makes them think. In healthcare, they can be a part of something worthwhile, advancing humanity, but they need to start to ask big questions.

What are your takeaways from participating in the 2021 Design Sprint?

I thought it was interesting to be able to share pointers of things I was seeing in the Health Mentors Program. For example, we

are only allowed an hour with the students, but there are so many questions, the time can feel rushed, and like we are not able to think things through. There were also advantages to both virtual and in-person that I was able to discuss, like how seeing my apartment virtually provided students with a different point of view.

How do you engage with your various communities?

I like getting out and meeting with different people in my community. I've learned that if you greet each and every person as you pass by them, they will respond. I am always opening up doorways to develop relationships. I think my ministry background opens the door of communication, for feedback and support of what is going on in the community. I try to encourage others, like when I go to the Y, as it helps me stay mobile and stay physically able, and people say they are glad to see me.

I also work with seniors, and try to engage with the ones who stay at home a lot. I wish we had a real senior center around here where they could go to for activities, as social and physical stimulation are so important. Once a month, I also form a group that goes out to eat together.

I try to share love, as we've forgotten what it really means to love one another.



**David Kaplan, BSN,
Class of 2022**

What were your initial impressions of the Health Mentors Program? How was the start of your experience?

Truthfully, it was a bit overwhelming trying to manage the new course load, learning virtually, and adjusting to the constantly

changing challenges of the pandemic. Despite all of that, I found the Health Mentors Program to be a good primer for learning about the critical importance interprofessional practice plays in the healthcare space, especially achieving better health outcomes for patients.

What did your group learn from your Mentor?

Our group has enjoyed getting to know our Mentor over the course of the program. She has been a true partner and we all have learned a great deal from her. From these conversations we were able to glean several outcomes: 1) the importance of eliminating barriers to care at Jefferson—whether it is proximity or access 2) being an advocate for your patient even if they are health literate 3) cultural factors affecting how society views people with certain health diagnoses and 4) using public policy to improve access to specialized care and advocating change for our patients.

How did you get involved in the Design Sprint and what was it like to participate?

I found the Design Sprint to be a great opportunity to reflect on the HMP in a meaningful and productive forum. I enjoyed exploring, in a collaborative manner, ways

to improve the Health Mentor/community volunteer, as well as student, experience. The Design Sprint provided a unique opportunity to see first-hand what a Design Sprint is, use new technologies, and identify opportunities to strengthen engagement for the students and Health Mentors.

Why is interprofessional education important to you? What intrigued you about programs like Health Mentors and Hotspotting?

At the core, IPE is important because it helps develop interprofessional communication, collaboration, and teamwork. It gave me an opportunity to understand the roles of other health disciplines through a shared experience. Working with an interprofessional team of healthcare professionals is an essential part of providing patient-centered care. Learning the role each specialty can play at an early stage in my career will provide immediate impact in the care that I, as a nurse, will provide on day one as I transition from being a student to a registered nurse. Throughout my previous career, I always valued being part of a high-impact team. Therefore, the Health Mentors and Hotspotting programs provide the opportunity to build and enhance healthcare professionals' ability to work with and learn from peers, develop leadership skills, and hone interprofessional communication skills that are critical to being a successful healthcare professional in the future.

How do you plan to incorporate interprofessional education into your future work as a clinician?

I will certainly seek out opportunities that will allow me to build upon my HMP and Hotspotting experiences, such as continuing education and online learning through the

Interprofessional Education Collaborative.

Throughout my studies at the Jefferson College of Nursing, professors and clinical instructors emphasized the importance of understanding the collaborative care models, being part of interprofessional teams, and the critical role these teams play in providing quality, equitable care. This linkage between interprofessional education and collaborative care models is essential to improve patient outcomes, retain healthcare staff, reduce costs, and provide better quality and safety within the greater healthcare space.

What advice do you have for students who participate in IPE programs?

Utilize every opportunity to advance your knowledge, sharpen your skills, and improve your abilities in working closely with an interdisciplinary team in an educational setting. This allows you to learn from your mistakes and reflect on how you can be a better team player and practitioner with the goal of improving patient lives.

Reach out to and build relationships with your professors and clinical instructors and identify potential mentors to gain deeper insights into the theory and practice of key concepts discussed throughout the IPE programs.

Maintain your relationships with your team beyond the Health Mentors Program, Hotspotting program, or other IPE program. As an aspiring healthcare professional, you have invested time and energy into building a positive working relationship with your team. Although not everyone will remain at Jefferson, or in Philadelphia, you still have a shared experience which you should draw upon after graduating and employ in the professional setting.