The Smart Health Education and Rehab Technology (SmartHEART) Program uses smartphone technologies and telehealth capabilities to deliver cardiac rehabilitation (CR) to Veterans.

What surprised us was how well Veterans embraced the technology.

Our work showed us that it’s feasible to utilize smartphones and digital tools to engage and coach this population effectively.

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The Problem

» Cardiac rehabilitation (CR) is a life-saving cardiovascular risk reduction program that is used by less than 10% of eligible veterans who are some of the highest risk.

» SmartHEART provides an alternative to both in-person CR – which can get costly – and phone appointments – which often limit Veteran engagement. Proving the value of this program was important to continue its expansion at VA.

The Impact

✓ Improved effectiveness of care by increasing patient knowledge & sustainable recovery; 95% Veteran satisfaction reported.

✓ Better efficiency through better quality of care, cost avoidance, and other factors – 2x the number of Veterans served.

✓ Improved equity by helping reduce disparities in cardiac care delivery.

The Resources

» Using the VA-DiMe value-driven framework for evaluating healthcare innovations, we were able to show that SmartHEART yields value by increasing access to specialty care and reducing the digital divide, especially for rural Veterans.

» Over time, SmartHEART will yield value across the care ecosystem by enhancing patient trust, limiting future illness or readmission, and reducing emergency room visits.