Voting is Healthcare: Talking Politics With Patients Can Improve Health Outcomes

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INTRODUCTION

• The Voting is Healthcare (VIH) Taskforce acknowledged the gap in voter turnout in Detroit
• The VIH Taskforce called upon medical students, residents, faculty and patients in order to improve voter registration and turnout

METHODS

• The VIH Taskforce and VotER created badge backers for medical students and physicians to wear while seeing patients in clinics and hospitals
• Each badge had a Wayne-specific QR code patients could scan to learn more about the voter registration process
• Training sessions and educational materials were provided to participating students and faculty

GOALS

VIH Taskforce Goals For Patients and Providers:

Communication
• Facilitate open-communication between physicians and healthcare workers about voting

Healthcare
• Declare that voting is healthcare

Future Patient Encounters
• Incorporate open-ended questions about voting within the patient encounter
• Ideally, this would occur during the history taking portion of the encounter

RESULTS

• The VIH Taskforce and participants reached out to patients within the local community. Per VotER records, according to the number of times the QR code was scanned or the Wayne-specific link was visited, the following patient data was collected:
  • 84 patients voted
  • 34 patients were newly registered voters
  • 50 patients voted from home

CONCLUSION

• Physicians can play an active role in increasing civic engagement
• Future research plans include directly comparing voting status to specific health outcomes

REFERENCES