SUMMARY

This session highlighted a successful, real-world example of improving hypertension control through **self-measured blood pressure monitoring (SMBP)** and a **patient-centered, systems-level approach**. Crystal Decuir, Chief Nursing Officer at the Southwest Louisiana Center for Health Services, detailed how her clinic overcame significant barriers—including hurricanes, digital inequities, and staffing challenges—to achieve and sustain a dramatic improvement in blood pressure control rates. Dr. Celeste Philip helped unpack how this model of collaboration, planning, and resilience can be replicated in other communities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Integrated, Multidisciplinary Implementation

- Initiated in **2022**, the SMBP program used an **interdisciplinary team**:
    - Chief Medical and Nursing Officers
    - Pharmacists
    - Outreach and clinical staff
- Employed **Target: BP protocols** and AHA tools to guide implementation.

2. "Sound the Alarm" Campaign

- Pre-launch campaign to raise urgency:
    - Placed **flyers outside patient rooms** identifying elevated BP ranges (≥138/90).
    - Made hypertension **visible and unavoidable** for staff and providers.

3. Community-Based Solutions

- **Food insecurity and medication access** were tackled through partnerships:
    - Local mayor's office and **Second Harvest** for fresh food access.
    - Launched a **community garden**.
    - Delivered medications to patients' homes to address transportation barriers.

4. Measurable Impact

- Initial BP control: **45%**
- One year later: **70%**

- Maintained: **~69%**, with a participant pool of 700 (500 remained engaged)
- Demonstrated **impact across UDS scores** and patient outcomes

5. Workflow Redesign and Staff Training

- Training occurred in **phases** across 10 sites:
    - **Pilot model** first, then scaled.
    - Used **AHA videos**, **lunch-and-learns**, **huddles**, and **webinars**.
- Clinical flags and consistent messaging helped hardwire changes.

6. Technology and Device Integration

- Challenge: **Limited Wi-Fi/internet access** post-hurricanes.
- Solution:
    - Used **cellular-enabled BP monitors**.
    - Partnered with a vendor to integrate readings into the **EHR**.
    - Emphasized **IT collaboration** and **data hygiene**.
- Importance of using **validated monitors** and ensuring future **interoperability**.

7. Patient Empowerment and Retention

- **Nutrition counseling** and co-disease management (e.g., diabetes) were key.
- Celebrated small wins with patients, encouraging **ongoing engagement**.
- Focused on **behavior change without restriction**, framing improved health as gain, not loss.

STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

From Crystal Decuir

- **"We had a battle plan."**
    - Planning and leadership buy-in were foundational.
- **“Put the patient at the center.”**
    - Tailored all interventions to real-world patient needs.

- **“If it doesn’t work, we’ll try something else.”**
    - Adaptive leadership and willingness to iterate were key.

From Dr. Celeste Philip

- **“Planning in partnership with the community is really the key first step.”**
- Encouraged public health leaders to **leverage pandemic-era partnerships** for hypertension and chronic disease management.
- Framed the work as building on hardship to create long-term resilience and health infrastructure.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR REPLICATION

1. **Start with Leadership Engagement**
    - Involve CNOs, CMOs, and pharmacy early in planning.
2. **Conduct a Workflow Audit**
    - Identify opportunities to embed SMBP into routine care.
3. **Launch a Visibility Campaign**
    - Use visual cues (like BP flags on doors) to prompt clinical action.
4. **Address Social Determinants**
    - Nutrition, transportation, and housing must be factored in for real impact.
5. **Invest in Staff Training**
    - Blend in-person, asynchronous, and reinforcement strategies.
6. **Select Appropriate Devices**
    - Prioritize interoperability and cellular options when internet access is limited.
7. **Celebrate Progress**
    - Recognize and reinforce patient milestones to build engagement.