The Price is Your Right: A Design Challenge

PICK Design Brief

demo treatment to breakdown price of: GP sinus infection treatment

1. Description of your team's objective

1.1 Who is your target audience (e.g. age, gender, individuals with specific conditions) and why did you choose this group?

Our target audience is undergraduate college students from Massachusetts, from the approximate ages of 18 to 23. This target includes students of all demographics, experiencing any health conditions. For the wireframe of this app, we have focused on the most common ailments that this age group experiences.

We chose this group because with so many different healthcare options, prices, and locations, it can be especially difficult for college students to decide what is the best, most cost-effective, option for them. Furthermore, since many students are still under their parents' healthcare plans, they tend to have little previous knowledge of the processes involved in understanding and accessing healthcare.

1.2.   Are you designing a mobile app or website and why?

To focus on streamlining the complex information surrounding and related to healthcare, we decided that a mobile app would be the most convenient platform for students to access the specific healthcare information they need from wherever they are. We also believe that our target market's familiarity with technology would make a mobile app the most viable option.

A well-designed app will allow students to easily select filters on the price and location of the type of healthcare or service they need to get. By inputting various personal information such as age, insurance information, location, and ailment, students will be able to access direct and simplified information about the services they may need.

1.3.   In what situations do you think this mobile app or website would come in handy?

This app will come in handy when students experience a sudden illness or injury and need to access information quickly. It will also be useful when students are experiencing an illness they have not previously had, and need to find out what costs are associated with treatment. This app will help ease the transition and quell feelings of anxiety about navigating the plethora of health cost information as students transition from living with their parents to making health decisions for themselves.

2. Description of mobile app or website.

2.1. What information would a user need to input (if any) to retrieve the data that is of most interest to them?

- Age, sex, gender, preferred treatment location
- Insurance information
- Treatment/service

2.2. What pieces of information does your mobile app or website provide to help the user decide where/when/to whom to go for care? (e.g. cost per procedure, plus ability to filter data by healthcare provider, insurance provider, plan type, location, consumer ratings, accessibility, quality ratings)

      a. List out the data fields that you'd pull in from the MA or NH cost datasets
1. Service type
2. Provider information
    a. Location of provider
    b. Provider name
    c. Practice state
    d. Zip code
    e. Insurance accepted
3. Taxonomy type
4. Cost Estimate

      b. List out the data elements that you'd pull in from other data sources. What are some existing sources that you could retrieve this data from?
1. Most common illnesses in this age range, found at : statista.com
2. Other health apps (e.g. Zocdoc) to fill in basic provider information when not directly available

2.3. How does this data enable users to be better healthcare consumers?

A consumer's most powerful tool is information about the subject of consumption. For many people in our target customer base of younger adults, healthcare decisions are made primarily by necessity. Whether this is due to lack of full information or financial constraints, having the breakdown of facts about potential care can make a difference in what consumers decide to do. Our presumption is that more consumers decide to proceed with elective care because of price transparency; it will eliminate the uncertainty that acts as a barrier to care for more vulnerable consumers.

Healthcare consumers may also choose to be more selective with their providers when the price is shown up front. When consumers are being given honest information about which providers are effective and how various providers charge for services across the industry, they are more likely to choose providers best suited for their needs. In general, having full price transparency,

down to the specific provider and the procedure(s) being done, will allow consumers to make informed decisions about the care they are choosing to receive, and will put them in full control over their medical care.

2.4.   Why do you think your design would appeal to your target audience?

Our design is simple, clean, and easy to use for consumers with even the most basic understanding of mobile apps. Because of our target market, we expect a certain level of technology literacy within our users. We intentionally made the interface of the design span several screens to try and break the flow of the user experience into more manageable pieces. Instead of filling out what feels like another medical form, our users will be able to see exactly how the data they input will affect the output of healthcare providers and service prices.

2.5.   How would you make the language and design accessible to people with different levels of health and numerical literacy?

The form portion of this app is written in plain enough wording that we intend to have auto-translate options enabled, with an automatic option for setting it to English, Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin, and Hatian Creole upon opening the app. These languages were chosen for their prevalence in the Boston area. For languages beyond this scope, we will allow an auto-translate extension similar to Google Translate to work within the app.

In terms of numerical understanding, the price-breakdown diagram is intentionally simplified so that users can understand exactly where each dollar amount is drawn from and how and why they are being charged that amount.

3. Description of what's needed to bring your design to life.

3.1.   How would you keep the information in your mobile app or website up-to-date?

This app will be kept up to date in two ways. Primarily, it will be the responsibility of the healthcare providers to keep their information about prices and insurance practices up to date. As mentioned above, we hope that the potential benefits to healthcare providers in terms of new and returning clients gained will encourage these providers to add-in and update information to the app regularly. In addition, student users will have the option to "log" visits with the treatment date, kind of treatment, insurance type, out-of-pocket cost, and any other pertinent information that will help patients requiring similar treatment in the future continue to make informed treatment choices.

3.2.   What are the challenges of providing this information via a mobile app or website? What are some limitations associated with using your selected platform to deliver this information?

As with any mobile experience, there is always the potential for technical difficulties to impact the function of the app. In addition, the sensitive nature of the searching features on this app will require an emphasis on the behind-the-scenes security.

In addition, this platform can only be as functional as the data that is put into it, meaning that especially in the initial app phases, every single potential reason for seeing a healthcare provider will not be included. However, over time between patient and healthcare provider inputs, we hope that the spread of information will be almost all-inclusive.

4. Description of your marketing strategy.

4.1. How would you promote your mobile app or website? Discuss some strategies that may be well-suited to your target audience. Please cite sources where appropriate.

There are many ways we can promote this app. Like most mobile apps, we want to target users who are already using their phones. Advertising on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to students in our age demographic is likely to grab the attention of users who are open to new technology. Using these ad services also will allow for us to cross-reference our advertising targeting with users who have recently been searching for healthcare services so that we can approach people who are most likely to use our services.

Additional promotion can definitely be done through partnering with other stakeholders in this app. Because we hope to enable more students getting healthcare from more providers using this price transparency, there are strong incentives both for healthcare providers and universities to get their networks onto this app. By gaining legitimacy from being recommended by respected offices and colleges, we hope that our university student demographic will respond to these partnerships by downloading and sharing our app.

Finally, word-of-mouth referrals is going to be an important tool for this demographic of students between 18 and 25 years old. College students are usually influenced by what they see other peers/friends are doing. If they see other friends are downloading the app they will probably be curious about the app too. This makes it important for our app to be functional and helpful, especially at its inception, so that we can attract and retain users.