# Obstacles to Care:
An Analysis of Barriers of Transportation Among Low-Income Patients of the Sister Maura Brannick, CSC, Health Center

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The Sister Maura Brannick, CSC, Health Center

- Clinic for uninsured of St. Joseph County
  - Individuals below 150% of the poverty line
- Services
  - Primary and specialty care

- Volunteer since sophomore year
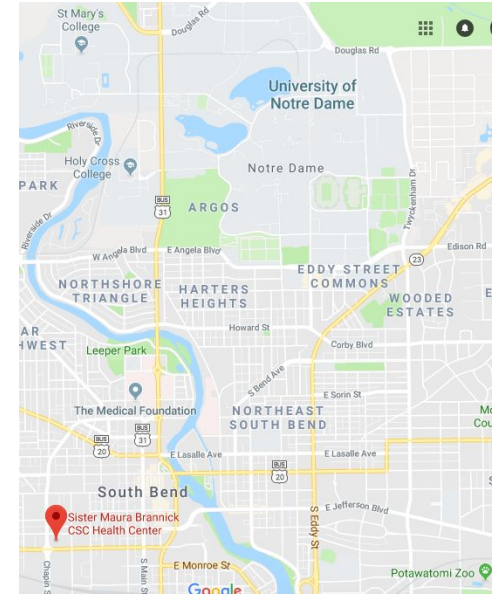
- Jan-June 2017
  - 21.5% missed appointments
  - 6.1% missed three or more - concern

Introduction to the Study

- No-show appointments
  - Poor continuity of care
  - Poor utilization of medical resources
  - Lost opportunities to treat patients

- Causes
  - Community context
  - Most commonly cited barriers:
    - health insurance coverage, high costs of services, communication issues with patients and providers, legal status/discrimination and transportation

Methods

- Survey – entire patient population
  - Came into clinic: written survey
  - No appointments in June-Aug: phone survey

- 423 active patients, 26 NSC
(No Show Concern = 3 or more missed appointments in past 6 months)
  - 185 written surveys completed; 12 declined
  - 317 patients were called called; 226 no answer
  - 11 NSC responses total

- 44% general participation; 42% NSC participation

Survey Instrument

- Developed under advisement from English and Spanish speakers at the clinic

Understanding Challenges with Getting to and from Appointments

All responses will be kept completely anonymous. By taking part in this survey, I indicate my voluntary consent.

1. How do you normally get to and from your appointments at the clinic? Please circle one below.

   Bus   Car   Bike   Walking

   Other (please specify): _____

2. Do you encounter any problems with getting to and from your appointments? (Mark all that apply.)
   - ☐ I don't have a car
   - ☐ The clinic is too far away
   - ☐ My driver is unreliable
   - ☐ The bus takes too long
   - ☐ The bus costs too much
   - ☐ The bus route does not take me to the clinic
   - ☐ The bus route does not pick me up close enough to home
   - ☐ It is hard for me to walk/take the bus because of physical limitations

3. Besides potential transportation problems, are there any other things that get in the way of you making your appointments? (Such as changing or unpredictable work schedule, lack of childcare, limited clinic hours, etc.)

4. Do you ever feel nervous/scared to come into the clinic?   Yes   No

   If yes, why?

5. If Sister Maura's gave you a voucher to ride the bus for free to your appointment, on a scale of 1-5, 1 being very unlikely and 5 being very likely, how likely would you be to use one?

   1   2   3   4   5

6. If Sister Maura's offered a reliable van service to come pick you up and bring you to your appointment then take you back home, on a scale of 1-5, how likely would you be to use the service?

   1   2   3   4   5

Thank you for your participation with this survey.

Data Analysis

- Two Groups Compared

    - General patient population
        - 0-2 missed appointments in the past 6 months

    - NSC Group
        - 3 or more missed appointments in the past 6 months

Findings

- *Most commonly cited problems*

  ◦ Transportation

  ◦ Childcare

  ◦ Nervousness

  ◦ Restrictive/Unpredictable work hours

Findings

Table 1: Patients Citing Transportation Problems

	General Patient Population	NSC group
Number citing transportation problems	54	5
Total population	186 responses	11 responses
Percentage citing transportation problems	29%	45%

Table 2: Patients Citing Non-Transportation Problems

Reason	Work Hours	Childcare	Physical Limitations	Nervous
Responses	16	13	7	18
NSC	1	1	1	1

Table 3: Percentage of NSC Patients Citing Problems

	Work hours	Childcare	Physical Limitations	Nervous	Bus problems	Unreliable driver
% of NSC that cited problem	9%	9%	9%	9%	18%	36%

Question 5: Bus Voucher

Table 6: Bus Voucher Responses

Question 5 Response	0-2 Missed	3+ missed (NSC)
1 (highly unlikely to use)	45	2
2	15	2
3	13	0
4	16	0
5 (highly likely to use)	67	3
Total Responders	**156**	**7**

Table 7: Responses Among NSC Group – Bus Voucher

Question 5 Response	NSC %
1 (highly unlikely to use)	18%
2	18%
3	0%
4	0%
5 (highly likely to use)	36%
N/A	28%

Chart 1: Question 5 (Bus Voucher)
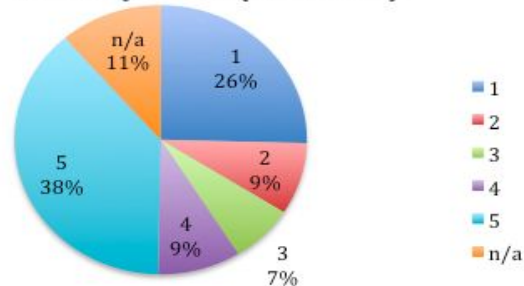
Question 6: Van Service

Table 8: Van Service Responses

Question 6 Response	0-2 Missed	3+ Missed (NSC)
1 (highly unlikely to use service)	33	0
2	11	0
3	17	1
4	10	1
5 (highly likely to use service)	88	7
Total Responses	**159**	**9**

Table 9: Responses Among NSC Group – Van Service

Question Response	% NSC
1	0%
2	0%
3	9%
4	9%
5	63%
N/A	18%

Chart 2
Question 6: Van Service

- 1 — 18%
- 2 — 6%
- 3 — 10%
- 4 — 6%
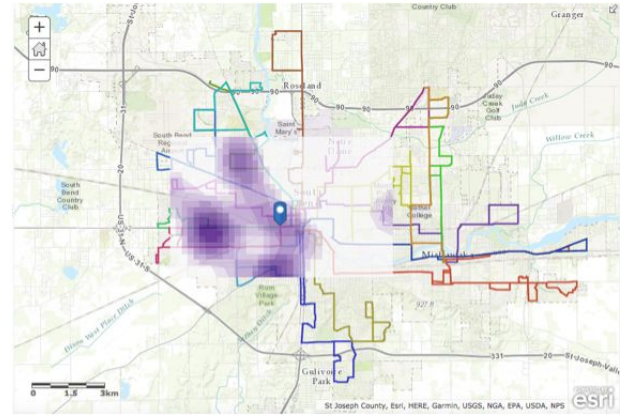- 5 — 52%
- n/a — 8%
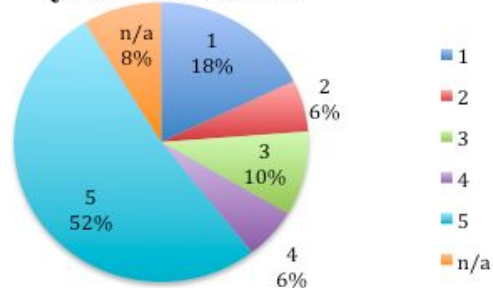
Data Maps

Map 1: Population Density – Entire Patient Population
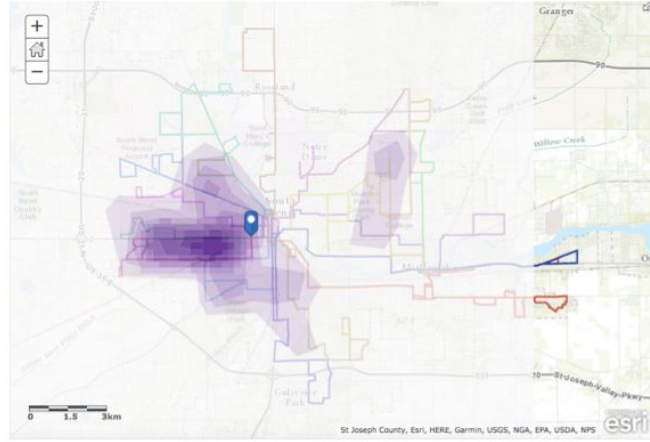
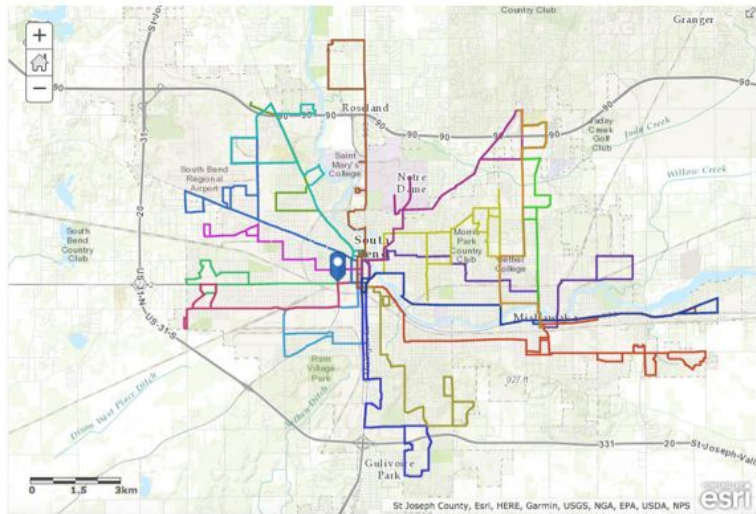Map 2: Population Density – Patients with one or more missed appointments
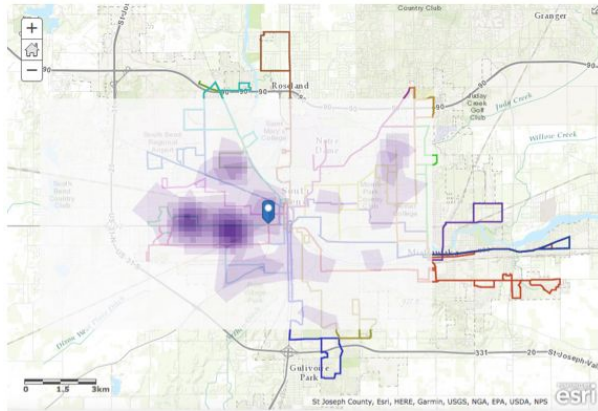
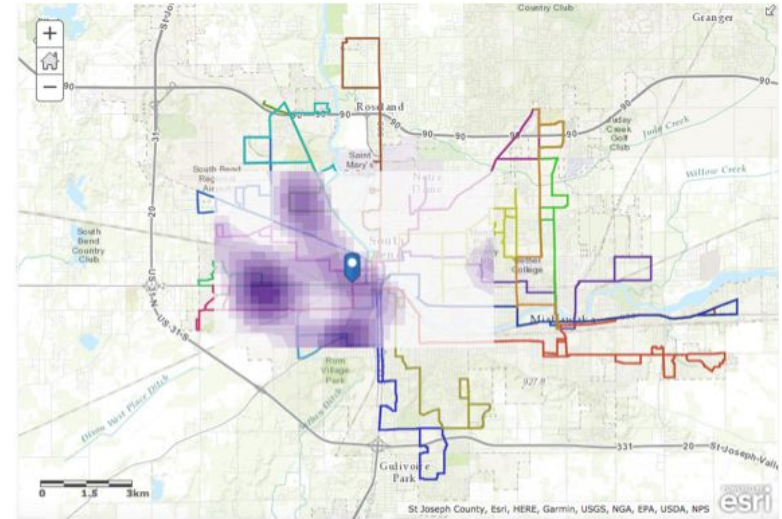Map 3: Population Density – NSC group
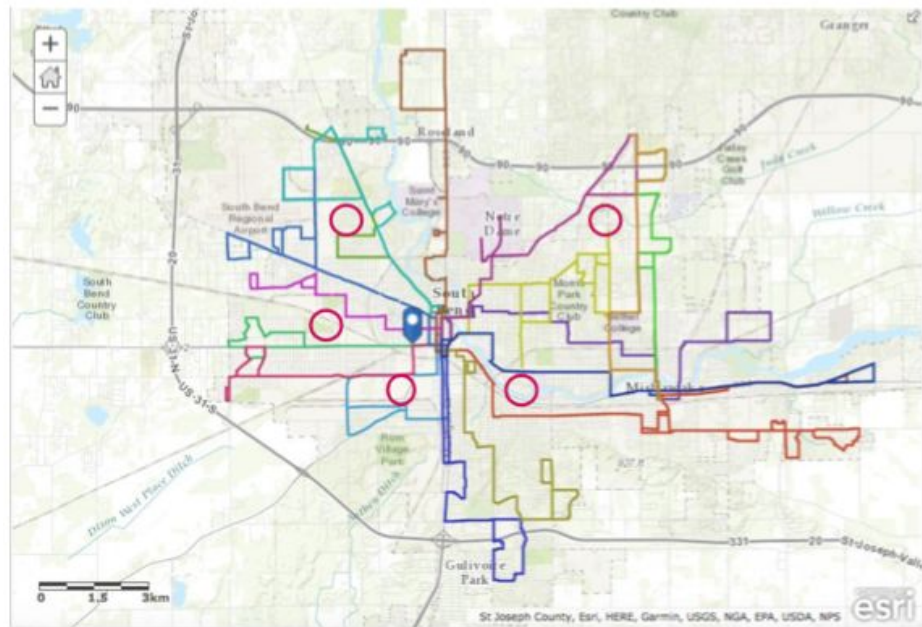
Data Maps

Map 4: Bus Routes

Map 3: Population Density – NSC group

Map 5: Proposed Van Service Locations

Conclusion

- Many patients face obstacles with getting to and from appointments
  - General patient population: ⅓ cite transportation problems
  - NSC group: nearly ½ cite transportation problems
  - Most common: unreliable driver

- Opportunity to make a difference

- First step is identifying problems

Further Direction

- Van service system
  - Focus on areas circled in map
    - High density of patients and NSC patients especially
    - Limited bus options

- Trial program

Map 5: Proposed Van Service Locations
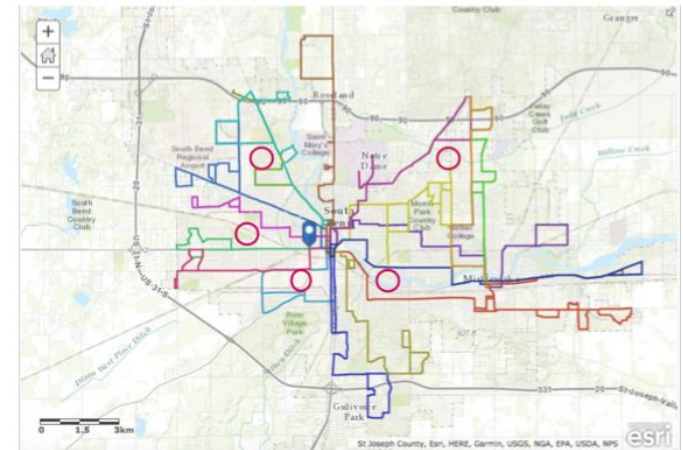
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