



# USING A MOBILE APP IN MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH COURSEWORK

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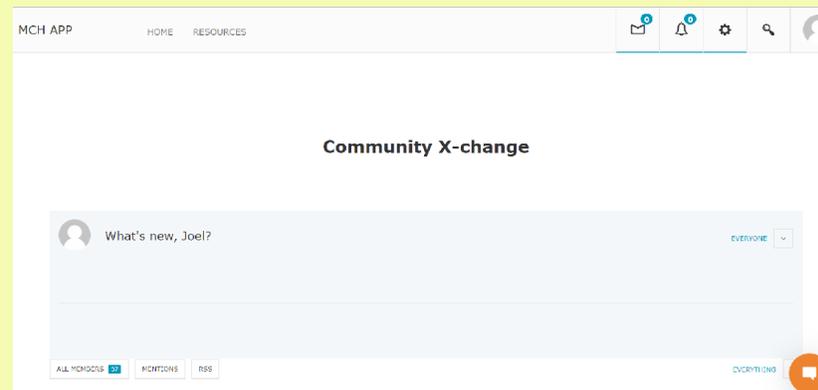
## Issue

The importance of effective communication in Maternal and Child Health (MCH) education through scientific writing, public speaking, and advocacy is well known.<sup>1,2</sup> However, the emerging professional use of mobile apps and social media necessitate advanced communication training. A mobile app was designed in 2016 for MCH trainees completing field experiences in an introductory MCH course. The app included a field experience checklist, web-based self assessments, and cultural competency trainings and assessments. An important app feature provided the opportunity for trainees to share their experiences with peers. This feature was not utilized at the expected rate. Initial student feedback suggested students lacked confidence in professional sharing capabilities.

## Description

To increase professional information sharing competencies, a professional developer and a community manager worked with the research team to modify the app, increase engagement, facilitate peer mentoring, and build sense of community. A more user-friendly interface was created and self-contained app training modules on professional sharing strategies were developed. The app is not public, allowing students to practice sharing information in a safe space. The updated app also allows students to receive more consistent feedback on their posts to further develop their sharing abilities.

## Screenshots of App



## Evaluation

The modified app will be tested this spring by 12-15 students participating in global MCH research through the Dornsife Global Development Scholars Program. Analysis measures will include pre- and post-test data and the frequency and quality of shared posts resulting from prompts made by the community manager and program director.

## Next Steps

- Continue to explore integration of the app into MCH coursework and field experiences at Drexel University.
- Create an Open Education Resource based on the app training to be shared among the MCH training programs.

## References

1. Grason H, Kavanagh L, Dooley S, Partelow J, Sharkey A, Bradley K J, et al. Findings from an assessment of state Title V workforce development needs. 2012. MCH Journal, 16(1), 7-20.
2. Shlafer R, McRee A, Gower A, and Beringer L. Better Communication for Better Public Health: Perspectives From an Interdisciplinary Training Program. Health Promot Pract. 2016 Mar; 17(2): 165-168.