Social Work and VotER

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Welcome!

• **Goal**: Learn more about VotER’s new Healthy Democracy Voter Registration Kit and how to use it in multiple settings to help people, especially the disenfranchised, register and vote.

• “Vote like our health depends on it!”

Alberto Cifuentes, Jr., LMSW
Why Should Social Workers Get Involved with VotER?

- Social workers inspired the creation of VotER!
- My experience as a member of the VotER Core Team
- Possible impact of COVID-19 on voter registration and participation
- Importance of civic engagement, especially digital organizing during the pandemic
- Healthy Democracy Voter Registration Kit promotes empowerment, health equity, and social justice!

By engaging in VotER, we’re voting for our clients and a better healthcare system.
THE NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK VOTER MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGN

• Voting: *The Most Basic Right in our Democracy*
• The Voter Suppression Problem
• The National Social Work Voter Mobilization Campaign ("Voting is Social Work") partners with *VotER* to Provide Fast and Easy Voter Registration
  – About the Campaign
  – Benefits of Voting for Individuals, Communities, and the Social Work Profession
  – Voter Registration and Social Work’s Strong Civic Engagement Tradition
• COVID-19 Ups The Ante.

*Be Part of History!*
✓ Join the National Social Work Voter Mobilization Campaign.
✓ Learn how to use the Health Democracy Voter Registration Tool Kit.
✓ Order your kits, and join as we make democracy work again!

Organizational endorsements include: CSWE • North American Network of Field Educators and Directors (NANFED) • National Association of Deans & Directors (NADD) • Special Commission to Advance Macro Practice in Social Work • Association for Community Organization & Social Action (ACOSA) • #MacroSWNetwork for Social Work Management (NSWM) • Influencing Social Policy (ISP) • National Rural Social Work Caucus
Health Care-Based Voter Registration

Confidential
My Patient
Social Work to the Rescue
“I DIDN’T KNOW I COULD...

NO ONE HAS EVER ASKED ME IF I WANTED TO BE REGISTERED TO VOTE BEFORE.”
51 Million =

Unregistered Voters in the United States

Entire Pop. of Spain

Source: Pew Research Survey
Have you been asked to vote in any of the following ways?

- Asked by a candidate or political group: 5% (Dark), 10% (Light)
- Asked by a religious group: 3% (Dark), 4% (Light)
- Asked by a civic organization or another group that was not political or religious: 5% (Dark), 8% (Light)
- Asked by a friend or family member: 14% (Dark), 10% (Light)
- Asked by an official at a motor vehicle agency, social service agency, or other government office: 16% (Dark), 18% (Light)
- Asked at school or as part of a class: 6% (Dark), 7% (Light)
- I have never been asked to register: 62% (Dark), 61% (Light)

Source: Pew Research Survey
WHO ARE THE UNREGISTERED?

The Young

41% of young adults (age 18-24) are unregistered

Low-Income

50% of people who were unregistered had a family income of less than $30,000

People of color

43% of eligible Latinos are unregistered

31% of eligible African Americans are unregistered

Source: Voter Participation Center, Pew Research Survey
WHO ARE THE 'LOW ACUITY' PRESENTERS TO THE ER AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS?

The Young

Young adults were 2x as likely to have non-urgent ER visits compared to older adults.

Low Income

Low-income patients are more likely to make non-urgent ER visits.

People of color

African American patients are more likely than white patients to make non-urgent ER visits.

Source: Deciding to Visit the Emergency Department for Non-Urgent Conditions: A Systematic Review of the Literature
DEMOGRAPHIC OVERLAP

Opportunity to offer voter registration

Powered by VoterER

Powered by TurboVote
Three Mechanisms

- Site-based
- Healthy Democracy
- Digital/Telehealth

Pre-COVID19

Post-COVID19
Site Based: Pre-COVID19

Kiosks

- Prominently displayed in main waiting rooms
- In low acuity waiting areas
- Captive audience with novel distraction and high engagement
- Capacity to have staff (e.g. medical students) do guided voter registration using kiosk

Text to Register Posters

Discharge Papers Handout
Site based: Numbers to date

1-3% Conversion Rate. If done at scale in every ER and community health center, this would equate to 2.4 - 2.8 million newly registered voters per year.

51 Pipeline. Hospitals that are currently in the pipeline to onboard pending funding.

20 Current Partners. Hospitals, Community Health Centers, Children’s Hospitals who currently have the VotER platform.

4 Current States. Our partners are all in 4 key states.
VotER and Social Work

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Dr. Mimi Abramovitz

Tanya Rhodes Smith, MSW

Deona Hooper, MSW

Alberto Cifuentes, LMSW

Dr. Terry Mizrahi
VotER and Social Work

A new tool to help your clients/patients

• A broader perspective than just hospital-based -- widely applicable to most client scenarios
• Healthy Democracy Kit (HDK) for Social Workers
• Telehealth Applications
What is in the Health Democracy Kit?

Voter Registration lanyard and badge backer

Video on how to use the kit to prompt patients...

- to register to vote OR
- to request their vote-from-home ballot

Invitation to join a national Healthy Democracy Community

Posters templates that can be used to post in clinics widely
EVERYDAY FEELS LIKE GROUNDHOG DAY...

START THE DAY
You wake up each day ready to support those who need your help.

YOU DO YOUR PART
You provide care and treatment to those most impacted by COVID-19.

BUT STILL NOTHING CHANGES
You do your best to help those who need it most, but still your clients and patients go homeless, lack access to housing, food deserts, and essential medical triage — with no voice to push for change.

STOP
Before you break this seal... Take this short video to prepare for the journey.

Thank you for joining our community of guardians!

How to get started:
1. Take a photo of this video and post it to two friends. You can be ready to be transparent.
2. Start this video and post it to two friends. You can be ready to be transparent.

How to respond when a patient asks about your lanyard or badge:

Patient: What's up with your lanyard?

Your Response:
Great question! We want you to be able to vote in the upcoming election in a safe and healthy way. You can use your phone right now to check your voter registration and set up your ballot to vote from home. For more info, all you have to do is plug in your phone and the QR code on your badge will guide you through the process.

Patient: Who are you voting for?

Your Response:
I'm voting for you — and your health. In fact, I'm voting for all of my patients, I would love if you could support me and my colleagues in healthcare by making sure to vote this fall!

Follow us and like us on Twitter and Instagram: @guardians_project.ch_2020
Kit: Lanyards and badgebackers

- Free
- Track # of registrations as provider type
  - Social workers, physicians, medical students
- Track overall number of mail-in ballots requested
Kit: Lanyards and badgebackers

How it works

Client: I noticed your badge says get ready to vote. What's that about?

Social Worker: Yep. You can get registered to vote or get your mail in ballot to vote at home right on your phone. All you have to do is take your phone out and point your phone at this QR code (showing badgebacker) or you can text this number. The site will walk you through all the steps. Do you want to take a look at it together?
Kit: Posters

Poster Template Examples

REGISTER TO VOTE
Text “join VotER cchealth” to 34444
or visit vot-er.org/cchealth

THE HEALTH
OF OUR
DEMOCRACY
IS IN YOUR
HANDS

 REGISTER TO VOTE WHILE YOU WAIT
Text “Join VotER MGHER” to 34444
Or visit vot-er.org/mgher

Envía el texto “join VotER MGHER” al 34444

¿Cuál es su motivo?
Regístrese hoy para votar.

Did you know? Places where more people vote also have better healthcare.
Healthy Democracy Kits

Early Results

- 2,256 kits ordered

Can you guess who ordered more? Across 39 states

Physicians or Social workers?
Healthy Democracy Kits

Pre-orders

Physicians: 1,668
Social workers: 315
Healthy Democracy Kits

Order your free HDK now by pointing your camera at the QR code:

or go to: vot-er.org/socialwork
VotER and Telehealth

Telehealth toolkit for social workers

- VotER has been adapted to telehealth platforms to offer voter registration and mail-in ballot request via telehealth
- Available on all telehealth platforms
VotER and Telehealth

1. Bookmark the page:

**Vot-er.org/telehealthsw/**

Make this resource easily accessible and reduce the amount of time you spend searching for the page during your interactions with clients.
VotER and Telehealth

2. Prompt the Conversation

“Before I let you go, I wanted to acknowledge that with all the disruptions related to COVID-19, it can be hard to do the important tasks like remembering to register to vote. Are you ready to vote in the next election?”
VotER and Telehealth

3. Paste/edit this invitation.

“I want to help you prepare to have a healthy, safe voting experience. Register to vote where you live now and request a mail in ballot by using this site: vot-er.org/sw or text ‘vote healthier’ to the number 34444 on your phone.”
Learn More

Contact us - https://vot-er.org
@vot_ER_org

Links on Background:
• COVID response: https://www.nonprofitvote.org/mission-possible-voter-keeps-engagement-key-during-covid-outbreak/
• Penn Partner: https://www.phillymag.com/healthcare-news/2020/01/22/the-emergency-room-is-the-new-place-to-register-to-vote/
• Boston Globe: https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/01/13/opinion/er-sign-up-vote/
• MGH Hotline: https://www.massgeneral.org/news/hotline/HTL011020/voter
• MGH Giving: https://giving.massgeneral.org/hospital-voter-registration-initiative/
• Video Explainers: https://vot-er.org/explainervid/
VotER and Social Work

Making the most of this webinar:

1. Order your free kit: vot-er.org/socialwork
2. Bookmark for telehealth: vot-er.org/telehealthsw/
3. Share this story with one other like-minded social worker
Becca Litwin, LMSW
Voter Engagement
Partnerships at Democracy
Works, Inc.

Jill Brownfield
Voter Engagement
Partnerships at Democracy
Works, Inc.
Democracy Works is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that aims to make voting a simple & seamless experience... 

...so that no one misses an election.
How TurboVote works

Help people register to vote

Help people get ready for elections

Send regular text communications

TurboVote

We make voting easy.

We make sure you always know when elections are happening, and have the information you need to vote with confidence. Sign up to receive election reminders, get registered to vote, & apply for your absentee ballot!

GET STARTED

TurboVote.org

Where do you want to register to vote?

This should be where you live. If you’re a student, you can choose either your campus or your permanent address as your home, and vote in elections for that location. You cannot choose a P.O. Box to register to vote.

20 Jay St.
Apartment
Brooklyn
NY

Your next election is on Tuesday, September 12, 2017

New York offers absentee ballots to voters who will be unable to vote in person. All other voters are expected to vote at a polling place on Election Day.

How do you plan to cast your ballot?

AT THE POLL
BY MAIL
BACK

Congratulations!

You’ve signed up for TurboVote. We’ve sent you a welcome note, so check your messages.

So what’s next?

You can download your voter registration form below. We’ve also sent you a copy just in case.

To register, you still need to:

1. Print it out!
2. Fill in your ID number, as required by state law. Federal law requires that you provide your driver’s license number to register to vote. If you do not have a driver’s license then you will have to provide at least the last four digits of.
Sign up at voter.turbovote.org

ER Based Voter Registration

We know registering to vote is not always convenient. That’s why we want to make it easier for you. Why not register to vote while you wait? Get Started Below!

GET STARTED

IN ENGLISH | EN ESPAÑOL
For COVID-19 election updates, visit

tvote.org/COVID19
Thank you!

Contact us at partnerships@democracy.works
THE ROLE OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS ON VOTER ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Cheryl Aguilar, LICSW, LCSW-C
Founding Director & Therapist
Hope Center for Wellness

National Association of Social Workers
Mental Health Specialty Section Committee Member

Congressional Research Institute for Social Work Policy
Board Member

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CONNECTING VOTER ENGAGEMENT TO SOCIAL WORK MISSION

➢ Empowerment = Foundation of Social Work Helping Role

➢ National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics

   NASW’s Code of Ethics standard 6.02 denotes that “social workers should facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions” (NASW, 2020).

➢ Clinical Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics

   The Clinical Social Work Association (CSWA) Code of Ethics standard VI (2020), points to clinical social workers’ responsibilities to the community, noting that “clinical social workers recognize a responsibility to participate in activities leading towards improved social conditions.

➢ What does social work identity have to do with it?
INTEGRATING VOTER ENGAGEMENT IN CLINICAL INTERVENTION

➢ Voting participation connected to enhanced well-being
  *(Abramovitz, Sherraden, Hill, Rhodes Smith, Lewis, & Mizrahi, 2019)*

➢ Voting as social determinant of health
  *(Spence & Coffey, 2020)*
WHAT ENGAGEMENT MAY LOOK LIKE IN SESSION

➢ Covert and Overt Strategies

➢ Mindful Listening – Listen for Opportunities

➢ Existing interventions lend themselves to voter engagement:
  ➢ Solution-Focused
  ➢ Strengths-Based/Empowerment Approach
  ➢ Person-Centered Care
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

➢ Clinical social workers should engage in ongoing exploration and self-evaluation.

➢ As you self-reflect and consider how you may be able to effect, as a first step, check-in on your own assumptions or feelings to your role on voter engagement.

➢ If feelings and assumptions are grounded on a not-knowing stance, turn to research, our Code of Ethics, and your practice’s or agency’s policies to guide your decision on whether you should engage in voter participation efforts.
If you are exploring efforts outside of your own practice, consider your emotional bandwidth. If there is a drive to do more, it’s important to do so in moderation and while balancing work and life.

Become familiar with social media or online voter engagement efforts you may support that make take less time.

If you decide not to engage in voter participation efforts, consider delegating this task to someone else within your practice/agency or providing clients referrals to others who may be able to provide relevant voting information.
CONTACT

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Phone: 202-508-3673

Facebook.com/hopecenterforwellness.com

Twitter: @hope_center_

Instagram: @hopecenterforwellness
Audience Q & A
Your call to action!

1. Order your free kit: vot-er.org/socialwork
2. Bookmark for telehealth: vot-er.org/telehealthsw/
3. Share this story with one other like-minded social workers
5. Go to VotingisSocialWork.org for resources and information
Stay in touch!

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