

## HEALTHCARE IS A HUMAN RIGHT--STORIES PROJECT

**\*Why are we getting testimonials?** It's important that the impact of the healthcare crisis is heard from many voices across the state, because it affects everyone. Here are a few examples of how the current crisis has affected people's lives:

- Being denied care because they don't have insurance or because their insurance won't cover something
- Insurance premiums skyrocketing, which means people have to drop their insurance or opt for a plan that covers even less
- A healthcare crisis resulting in massive debt because the deductibles are so high
- Being afraid of the consequences of getting medical care because you're uninsured or underinsured
- Foregone care because of high costs – premiums or deductibles or co-pays
- Has bare-bones insurance coverage that they can't really use for what they need

### **Tips to Getting Testimonials:**

- *Before you start shooting:* Talk with people! Explain why we're doing the project, and why we want to hear their voices. Ask them the questions below, and let them know that there is no "right" answer.
- *Instructions:* It's good to let the person who will be speaking know about what's going to happen. Tell the person before you start shooting that you're going to give a thumbs up when you start recording, but ask them to look into the camera and count to three before they start talking. Let them know that you'll give them a thumbs up when you're about 1 minute in, and then another thumbs up at two minutes (so they should start wrapping up if they aren't already). Ask them to look directly into the camera, speak loudly and clearly for one to two minutes. Finally, ask them to start their testimonial by clearly saying their name and town.
- *Visuals:* Try to keep the camera as still as possible. Also try to avoid cutting off the tops of peoples' heads or their chins, it looks funny! Also, try to position the person so their face shows up well on the camera. If a light is behind someone, then it hard to see their face.
- *Sound:* Make sure you're in a space that is quiet. Ask the person to speak loudly and clearly. If you have to get the testimonial outside, just let the person know that if there is any disturbances that you will probably stop filming and start again.
- *Testimonials:* Remember, testimonials are not interviews. The idea is to make the watcher really connect with the person speaking, like they are talking directly to them. Try to refrain from speaking or asking questions while the person is giving a testimonial. You can always start again if they get stuck. **Remind people that it's always better to give examples, paint a picture, or tell a story!**
- *Tips for a nervous storyteller:* Some people are really nervous in front of the camera, and that's okay! We should work with them to help them feel more comfortable. Here are a few tips:

- Remind them of how important it is for their story to be heard and that their voice matters!
  - Film them just talking about something else...ask them to describe the room, talk about their day yesterday, anything to just get them talking and relaxed in front of the camera (the camera doesn't even really need to be on)
  - Let them use the camera and record you telling your story
  - Watch the first take together and get their feedback on what worked and what didn't for the next take.
  - Make a joke!
- *Releases:* Make sure you get releases for everyone who participates!

## QUESTIONS

Some people might have really powerful stories, some people might want to talk more about their ideals for their community. **The person giving the testimonial should answer both questions in one testimonial.**

**Question 1 [Personal]: Have you or people you know struggled with the current healthcare system in any way? If so, how?**

**Question 2 [Political]: (Pick One)**

- What does the human right to healthcare mean to you?
- Do you think we should create a system in Vermont where healthcare is a human right? Why?
- Why should we treat healthcare as a public good?
- What would a healthcare system look like that's based on human rights? What would be the main difference for Vermonters?

In the conversation with people before they give their testimonial, the organizer/interviewer might ask people questions that would get at the above kinds of problems.

**Here's a list of questions that help get good personal stories:**

- Do you have insurance right now? How about the rest of your family?
- Have you ever not had health insurance? How did it feel to not have insurance?
- Have you ever had to put off healthcare because of issues with insurance (either high deductibles or no insurance)?
- Do you have kids? Have your kids ever gotten really sick?
- Do you have a chronic illness you feel comfortable talking about? How has that impacted your access to healthcare?
- Have you ever had to purchase drugs online or from another country because you couldn't afford them here?
- Have you ever had to drop down to a worse plan because you couldn't afford the plan you were

on?

- How high are your deductibles? Do you think that's a barrier for you?

**Here's a list of questions that get at the Campaign's vision for a universal healthcare system:**

- As far as you know, do all people in Vermont get the same kind of access to health care, or not?
- If there are differences, what are these? Is it acceptable for some people to get access to care and others not? Would the differences in people's ability to get care be a human rights problem?
- Do you think everyone should have the same access and the same coverage?
- Do you think health care services be funded independent of a person's use of those services, so that the burden does not fall unfairly on those who get sick?
- Do you think those who can easily afford it should make higher contributions to the system, in order to subsidize those who are less able to pay?
- Do you think healthcare should be a public good, like the fire department, with costs and benefits shared by all?
- Do you think healthcare should be publicly financed and administered, so that access and services are not restricted by market forces?
- What do you think about government having a responsibility to ensure that everyone gets care, like it does for fire services or schools?