

# Walk...in My Shoes



Walk in My Shoes is a lively workshop that helps you:

- *Open eyes about the every day challenges facing uninsured and underserved families*
- *Energize attendees with meaningful context for their work*
- *Promote teamwork and collaboration*
- *Motivate to solve problems*



A Community Catalyst Initiative

*What's it like to try to get health services for my family or myself if...*

*...I am uninsured—or if Medicaid pays the bill?*

*...I can't speak English?*

*...I work two jobs and can't get to the doctor during office hours?*

*...my insurance copays or premiums get out of control?*

## **Energize your event!**

**BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER** in a memorable and meaningful activity they will talk about for months...

Not another PowerPoint presentation: **WALK IN MY SHOES** engages large groups of 40-75 people in experiencing the everyday difficulties for people without health insurance or relying on public programs for health care.

**Eye-opening:** Insightful for all—students, business leaders, public officials, medical providers, health planners and advocates. This dynamic, learning experience brings new levels of insight and understanding to everyone in the room. Sessions can be tailored to the needs of specific types of participants.

**Engaging:** All group members are assigned “roles” that identify health concerns, insurance coverage, employment, race/ethnicity, immigration status, and other characteristics affecting their access to health care. The mission: to obtain health services for family members.

**Real-Life Parallels:** Participants visit “stations” representing local hospitals, doctors’ offices, health centers, government offices, health plan, pharmacy, dentist, etc. “Staff” at each station use real applications, eligibility guidelines, and current policies to determine who gets what.

**WALK IN MY SHOES** simulates the barriers and frustrations of many seeking care:

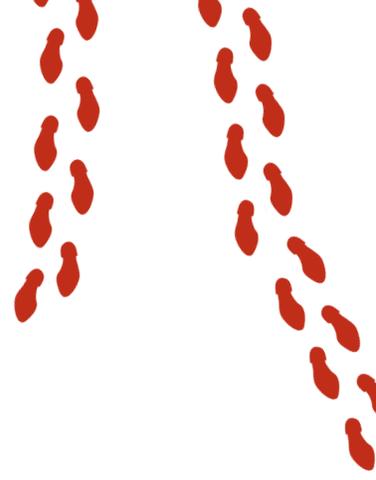
- **Lacking a Car.** Pick up a bus pass and circle the room before arriving anywhere
- **Limited English Proficiency.** Wait for an interpreter or bring your child to translate
- **Change in Public Insurance Enrollment Requirements.** Re-enroll *and* find a willing practitioner before receiving care.
- **Co-payment Increases.** Return home and get the cash before receiving care.



**Think and Act:** The high energy experience zooms by. The first hour creates a richly layered, collective experience ready to be “mined.” In the second hour, a facilitator helps group members discuss their experiences and emotional reactions, connect these with facts about health system gaps, and consider initiatives to improve community health access.



# Open eyes Put work in context Motivate Action



## What SPONSORS SAY About **WALK IN MY SHOES**:

### HOSPITAL

It was incredibly powerful to put together emergency room nurses, billing office personnel, social workers, and top managers and share our experiences, concerns, questions, and hopes. The session drew us together and gave our work new meaning. FLORIDA HOSPITAL, ORLANDO

### MEDICAL AND NURSING SCHOOL

We want our students to understand and to navigate a complex and often fragmented system, and to be able to advocate for their patients. **WALK IN MY SHOES** gave us an innovative way to include these learning objectives in our crowded curriculum—students rated the experience highly. UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SCHOOL, WORCESTER, MA

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

We wanted to bring together a wide range of people in our community—consumers, providers, people from local agencies, public officials—to forge a memorable connection and to put health issues higher on their agenda. **WALK IN MY SHOES** did all that, and in the process we formed some important new relationships. METROWEST COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE COALITION, FRAMINGHAM, MA



### HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION

Our staff, board, and community partners have been grappling with how to make a real impact on the pressing health needs and gaps we see. By opening our annual retreat with **WALK IN MY SHOES**, we began some serious programmatic planning with a fresh perspective on our mission and our common concerns. People are still talking about it two years later. MISSOURI FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH, ST. LOUIS, MO



### POLICY INSTITUTE

Federal agency and Congressional staff have limited opportunities to see how the laws and policies they enact play out in the real world. **WALK IN MY SHOES** offered a unique experience that provided new insights into the importance of their work. NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY FORUM, WASHINGTON D.C.

## What GROUP PARTICIPANTS Have To SAY About **WALK IN MY SHOES:**

"**WALK IN MY SHOES** was easily the most interesting session in my 25 years of attending [our annual professional meeting]... I left the session with a new sense of purpose and renewed energy."

CALIFORNIA HEALTH EDUCATOR

"It is one thing to hear a lecture on the issues; it's another to experience it. **WALK IN MY SHOES** opened my eyes to the challenges my patients will often face and made me think about my role as a health professional in improving the system."

MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL STUDENT

"One of the most insightful and meaningful professional education programs our hospital has offered staff. Highly recommended." FLORIDA NURSE PRACTITIONER



"I immediately connected this simulation to the work I am doing each day—very insightful experience." WASHINGTON DC CONGRESSIONAL STAFF PERSON



"This will help keep me committed to help those in need and to advocate for better health care." KANSAS PASTOR

# Walk in My Shoes

...is a service of Community Catalyst, a national nonprofit organization that builds consumer and community participation in the U.S. health system to secure quality, affordable health care for all. We are committed to providing tools and information that can help organizations and communities serve and improve the lives of their constituencies.

We can tailor **WALK IN MY SHOES** to your community or organization.

Download a copy of a **WALK IN MY SHOES** Information Packet ([www.communitycatalyst.org/WalkInMyShoes](http://www.communitycatalyst.org/WalkInMyShoes))  
Or call us to discuss your goals (617-338-6035).



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