Visible Network Labs

Annual Report

-2021-

A Letter From the CEO and Founder

Dear Partners, Friends, and Colleagues,

The last few years tested us all, including the team at Visible Network Labs (VNL). However, despite the obstacles, it has also been a time of significant growth and achievement. As we start this new year, it has been helpful to reflect on what has changed for VNL, where we are going, and how we plan to get there. Below are some of the things I'm most excited about when I look back over the past twelve months.

- The number of communities, organizations, and people VNL has served continues to grow, making our impact even more likely to reach the success we envision.
- We have successfully launched two new products – PARTNER CPRM and PARTNERme – with paid pilots and ongoing revenues.
- The VNL team has grown to 25 employees, comprised of career professionals, Social Connectedness Youth Fellows, and motivated interns. In 2021 alone, we welcomed 13 new employees and three new VNL babies to our family.
- We are now working with partners internationally in over ten countries to impact social isolation, health and mental health, and education.

We have been fortunate at VNL that we have not only been able to maintain strong growth, doubling in revenues in 2021, but we have a business that continues to be in high demand. When I reflect on how we have done that, I realize that while we remain heads-down working to build out our systems, the world around us has been more oriented to thinking like network scientists, and in turn, looking for places to help visualize and measure the connections that increasingly become important to us.

A more general understanding of systems has shifted worldwide over the last couple of years, coupled with an increasing desire for data to help us understand those systems. In March of 2020, when COVID put the world on pause, we were all faced with the very same dilemma: Who would we decide to connect with, how, and with what level of intensity? For the first time, everyone around me was working on a "network strategy", considering who was connecting to whom and the consequences of those connections...

 VNL

Letter From the CEO: Continued

While I wish that we never had to experience COVID, and it is with profound sadness that I consider all that we have lost, the one thing I am grateful for is the systems-shifting lens by which it has forced us to think about how we are all connected, and how those connections impact our lives. That collective shift in thinking means VNL has much work yet to do!

Often, in the middle of a busy day, while spending time with our VNL team, it strikes me that all these people have agreed to spend this part of their life's journey with me at this company. Nothing is more humbling than to know that this group of people are willing to work hard with me to solve problems related to adverse social connectedness together every day. And when we connect with our clients and PARTNER users, I am reminded that they trust us with their data so that they can build stronger relationships and ecosystems designed to solve big complex problems.

We have had a vibrant year in service to the many people and communities working every day to strengthen our social connectedness. Thank you for your trust in us and your support of our shared mission. The continuous support for VNL is why we get up each day to do this work.

We look forward to the years ahead.

Dr. Danielle Varda,
CEO & Founder,
Visible Network Labs

Atlanta, Georgia is home to one of our Customer Success Managers.

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We would like to acknowledge and thank our staff, clients, and community partners who contributed to this report. Thank you for sharing your time and perspective and making this report a success.

One of our Data Science Team Members calls Washington D.C. home.

The Team at Visible Network Labs

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Manager

San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Malinda
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QA Specialist

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The Team at Visible Network Labs

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CEO and Founder

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Customer Success
Manager

Atlanta, Georgia

Lea Xenakis, M.P.A.
Director of Research
and Evaluation

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Andy Zheng, M.P.A.
Senior Data Analyst

Denver, Colorado

Our 2021 Interns and Fellows

We are lucky to work with a great team of interns here at Visible Network Labs, along with a group of four Youth Social Support Research Fellows. They support our Product and Technology Teams develop software, test new features, and document processes. Get to know our 2021 Interns below.

Matthew Michal
Technology
Intern

Golden, Colorado

Krysta Szeto
Technology
Intern

Golden, Colorado

Josh Nikander
Technology
Intern

Denver, Colorado

Isabella Spielmann
Technology
Intern

Golden, Colorado

Through a partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, these young leaders are helping us research and better understand how young adults think about, build, and leverage their social support networks. With their support, we will create new tools and resources to help organizations strengthen social connectedness among young people to provide more opportunities and improve their educational outcomes and quality of life in the long term. Get to know our team of Fellows below.

Kyra Stoute
Social Support Research
Fellow

Atlanta, Georgia

Yamilex Cruz
Social Support Research
Fellow

Dominican Republic

Zoe Crocker
Social Support Research
Fellow

Orlando, Florida

Martha Gonzalez
Social Support Research
Fellow

Atlanta, Georgia

Missoula, Montana is where one of our Network Scientists calls home.

Our 2021 Partners

- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Brightbeam
- City of Azusa
- Colorado Center for Primary Care Innovation
- Colorado Health Foundation
- Community First Foundation
- County Health Rankings and Roadmaps
- CU Denver Center on Network Science
- Data Across Sectors for Health
- DC Bar Foundation
- Denver Public Schools
- Every Child Pediatrics
- Glasser/Schoenbaum Human Services Center
- Greater Colorado Venture Fund
- Jacobs Foundation
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- Los Angeles County Public Health
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- Mental Health Center of Denver
- Mile High United Way
- North Central Accountable Community of Health
- Peak Pediatrics
- Prime Health Colorado
- RAND Corporation
- RECETAS
- ReThink Health
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center
- Startup Colorado
- Trenton Health Team
- U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

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2021 By the Numbers

5,633 SOCIAL FOLLOWERS

2 PRODUCTS

261 DAYS OF WORK

25 FULL STAFF

20,152 WEBSITE BLOG VIEWS

3 NEW VNL BABIES

10 STATES WITH VNL STAFF

5 INTERNS

4 FELLOWS

5 DEVELOPERS

14,214 CUPS OF COFFEE

8 DATA SCIENTISTS

50% REVENUE GROWTH

236,150 LINES OF NEW CODE WRITTEN

33 PROJECTS

100+ REPORTS WRITTEN

77 SURVEYS

489 WEBINAR ATTENDEES

**10,848** RELATIONSHIPS MAPPED

 VNL

PARTNER: Our Social Connectedness Software Platform

Our mission at VNL is to help make invisible networks visible to help people build and leverage them for good. This means building social connectedness among individuals to improve their quality of life, as well as at the systems level to help organizations work together effectively for the common good. While many people are trying to make a difference in this area few have the visibility and data necessary to inform their strategy.

Our biggest tool in this work is PARTNER: Our all-in-one social network analysis platform. It includes two solutions for collecting, analyzing, and translating network data into actionable insights that help you demonstrate your impact and improve outcomes.

PARTNER CPRM
A Community Partner Relationship Manager

The PARTNER Community Partner Relationship Manager uses network analysis to visualize and track your network of partners over time. Its network science metrics like centrality, trust, and value help you identify gaps and opportunities in your network so you can build a more strategic approach to building and leading a network.

PARTNERme
Person-Centered Network Tool
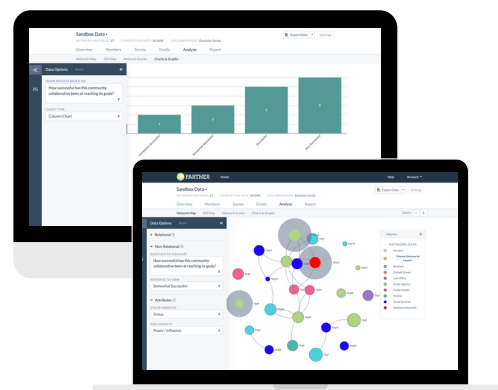
PARTNERme is a tool for measuring social connectedness, social needs, and support using social network analysis. The tablet or desktop-based screening helps an individual draw a map of their support network and identify their top social need with the least amount of social support.
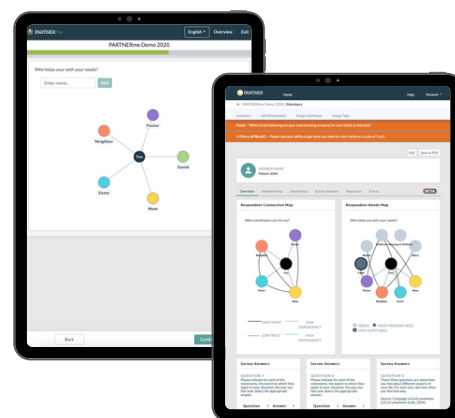
*Several VNL team members live in or are originally from New York, NY.*

COVID-19: What We've Learned

During the past year, we conducted several studies and surveys with questions related to the COVID-19 Pandemic and its impact on social connectedness, mental health, the functioning of community coalitions, and other types of well-being. We compiled an overview of some of the top insights we identified across these projects related to the past two years of struggle.

While people have ended up with smaller support networks/maintained fewer partnerships during COVID, many of those relationships have been strengthened.
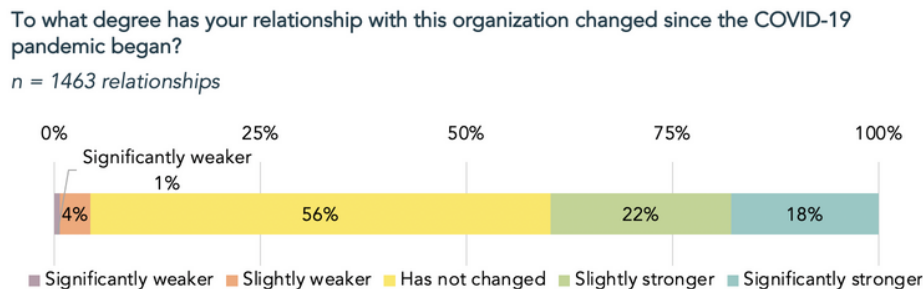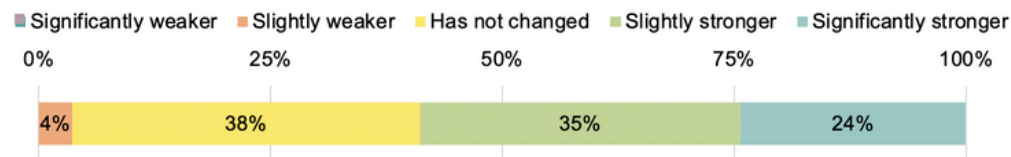

Many people have struggled during the pandemic, both in their physical and mental health, demonstrating the importance of social connectedness and interaction for both types of well-being. The chart below shows the difference in self-reported health scores among veterans directly before and after the March 2020 lockdowns.
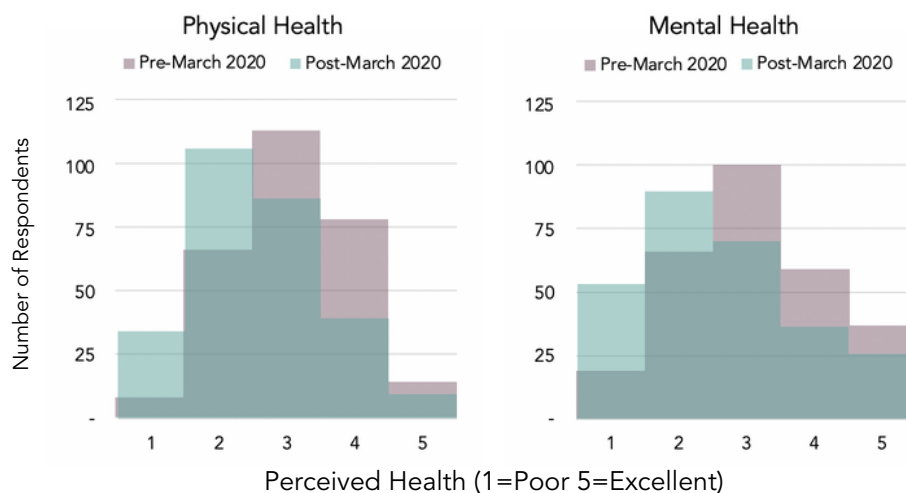
COVID-19: What We've Learned

There's a lot to consider as we think about how we build communities and relationships in this new stage of the pandemic — particularly how do we use the best parts of hybrid and in-person settings to foster connections with each other? Our results demonstrate that online tools can strengthen relationships. However, technology and internet access are barriers to virtual tools, and we need to consider how we make these connections equitable.
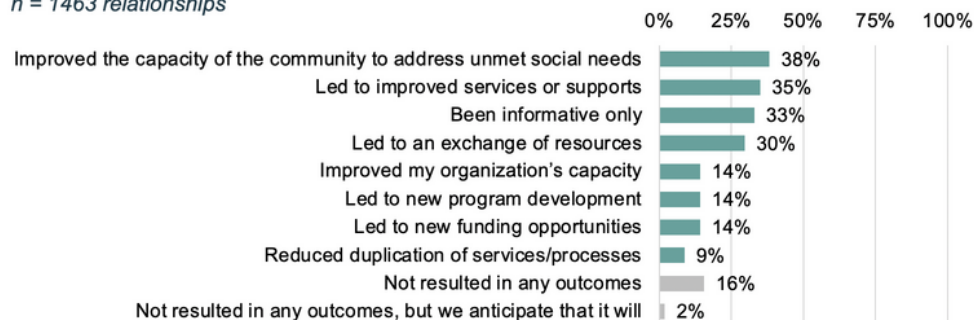
Reported relationships between foundations and community organizations not only grew during the pandemic, but the majority perceived that these relationships were at least slightly stronger since the pandemic began.

■ Significantly weaker ■ Slightly weaker ■ Has not changed ■ Slightly stronger ■ Significantly stronger

0%	25%	50%	75%	100%

4%	38%	35%	24%

Foundations Analysis

During the COVID-19 pandemic, this partnership has (select all that apply):

n = 1463 relationships

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%

Improved the capacity of the community to address unmet social needs	38%
Led to improved services or supports	35%
Been informative only	33%
Led to an exchange of resources	30%
Improved my organization's capacity	14%
Led to new program development	14%
Led to new funding opportunities	14%
Reduced duplication of services/processes	9%
Not resulted in any outcomes	16%
Not resulted in any outcomes, but we anticipate that it will	2%

SRQ Clinic to Community

Additionally, for some with disabilities, increasing online access can be invaluable, allowing for meaningful contributions and providing a setting where they can share as much or as little as they want about their own identities with others. On the other hand, connecting to people in person remains important, and identifying how we do this is essential. The pandemic has been a time for many to identify what is most valuable and meaningful to them and figure out how to prioritize those things.

Read our full Report on our COVID-19 findings at visiblenetworklabs.com/covid-white-paper

Social Connectedness: Our Findings

We've seen a rise in social isolation, loneliness, anxiety, and depression across the country, with many state and national organizations calling for us to collaborate and address these issues. This includes the American Academy of Pediatrics here in Colorado (CO AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) specifically talking about the mental health crisis we're seeing among young adults.

This year, VNL was involved in several projects that have looked at social connectedness, mental health, and loneliness. We've collaborated with partners to address loneliness and social isolation through nature-based solutions, identify how young adults think about their social support networks, and assess how support networks help young families address their current social needs. In addition, we've worked with several primary care, pediatric, and mental health clinics to further understand how support networks are being used to help with a person's current social determinants of health needs.

This year we've learned that the number of needs and types of needs a person does not necessarily tell you what their social support network looks like. People have vastly different support networks, and their trust and dependence on those networks can vary significantly. We also find that people are likely to think of informal supports (i.e., family, friends, neighbors) and not formal supports like medical professionals or social service organizations when they think about their support systems. In the coming year, we want to think about how organizations can become acknowledged members of people's support networks.

All this suggests that there is room for improvement and that helping professionals can help people more if they know how a person perceives their social support network. Learning about these support networks can be done in many ways, that could be through the use of a tool or a simple conversation. We believe that meeting people where they are and helping them to help themselves can result in better outcomes and better health.

Unfortunately, there can be a stigma associated with mental health conditions and many social determinants of health needs. In our work, we're finding too often young adults voice that they don't ask for help because they believe others will be unwilling or unable to help them or believe they are supposed to figure it all out on their own. In our work, we focus on a person's strengths and believe that the PARTNERme approach gives a new voice to young people, as a way to discuss these hard topics in a way they are comfortable with - using fun interactive technology to allow young people to express themselves.

 VNL

Tampa, Florida is home base for one of our Product Staffers.

2021 PARTNER CPRM Case Study

The DC Bar Foundation is the leading funder of civil legal aid in the District of Columbia. They are committed to the vision that residents of the District have equal access to justice, regardless of income.

Through the DC Legal Aid Transformations Network, the Foundation hopes to bring together legal aid providers, funders, community activists, social service providers, and other stakeholders to build a network that will help them achieve a vast goal: to ensure that every DC resident has a fair and equitable civil legal experience.

Following a rigorous, community-engaged design process facilitated by the Interaction Institute for Social Change, the Foundation invited 75 organizations to join the network and participate in a social network analysis of their current organizational partnerships.

The CPRM survey asked respondents to describe themselves, their current collaborative partnerships, and their views on how the new network should be organized. The DC Legal Aid Transformations Network will use the PARTNER data to understand how to build on current collaborative strengths and how to develop a structure to achieve its goals.

DC BAR FOUNDATION

WE INVEST IN JUSTICE

DCBF

"What We're trying to understand is, what is the current state of the legal aid network within the district? Where is it strong, where is it weak, and how can we improve upon that to achieve the transformation we'd like to see?"

Kirra L. Jarratt
Chief Executive Officer,
DC Bar Foundation

 VNL

2021 PARTNERme Case Study

The mission of the Jefferson Center is to inspire hope, improve lives, and strengthen the community by providing mental health and related solutions for individuals and families. VNL is working with the Trauma Systems Therapy (TST) Team to implement social connectedness screening for clients and their families.

Many individuals with mental health challenges also need other forms of support, like help with transportation, childcare, or housing. The Jefferson Center began using PARTNERme to screen families in their TST program to map their social support networks, ask questions about their social needs, and identify and fill gaps in support with targeted community referrals.

The screening process gives providers visibility into a patient's system of care from their own perspective, including both formal and informal supports that often go unacknowledged. Counselors are using the results to engage in conversations with clients about needs and support, connect them with community resources, and intervene in cases of severe need like abuse or domestic violence.

Following a pilot program demonstrating the potential of social screening, the Center is now considering scaling their use of PARTNERme across the organization.

"Our clinicians are often also case managers, required to provide a variety of types of support to families and triaging pressing social needs. PARTNERme helps us identify the social needs that stall therapy so we can begin to address them."

Nicholas Buchholtz,
Family Services Manager,
Jefferson Center

2021 PARTNER Platform Updates

We are always innovating and improving our products, and this year was no exception. We made important upgrades to both the PARTNER CPRM and PARTNERme during the past year of work. Here are some of the biggest Product rollouts from 2021.

PARTNERCPRM
A Community Partner Relationship Manager

We made a lot of significant improvements to the CPRM in 2021. These are our three top favorites.

- The new Visible Network Profile launched this spring, allowing you to view all your data on an individual community partner in an easy-to-share online report.
- The Profile Customizer allows you to format these Profiles to meet your exact needs and share the data and visualizations that matter most to you.
- Our One-Link feature allows you to share a PARTNER survey with anyone using a single link, instead of having to add each respondent manually beforehand.
- Significant updates to our Network Analyzer have already been released, with more on the way, including better graph options, easier controls, and a new, clean look.

PARTNERme
Person-Centered Network Tool
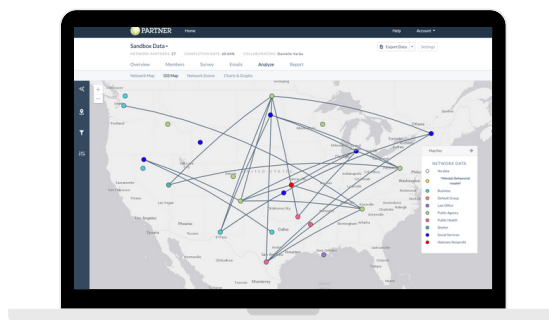
Our pilot projects have provided a wealth of data to update and improve PARTNERme, including these new updates:

- The Smart Resource Search Function lets you search for resources more quickly and add them to your client's "Suggested for You" page.
- Our new Profile Link Feature allows you to share a Profile of results with a quick and easy link.
- New Urgent Alerts respond to significant risk factors, like suicide or domestic abuse, providing an immediate resource for clients being screened.
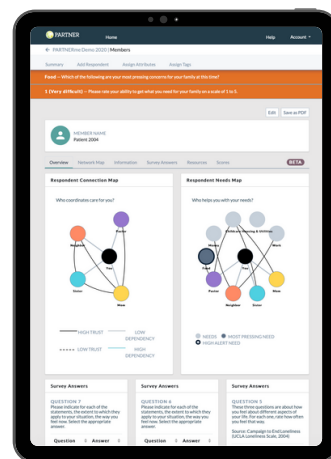
Looking Ahead to 2022

With a New Year ahead of us, the team Visible Network Labs is excited to work with our partner communities, clients, and software users to continue strengthening social connectedness - one link at a time.

With the momentum of the past year's growth and accomplishment fueling our effort, we are looking forward to this year: this is the moment we truly begin to expand our impact; to support social connectedness through our solutions on a far broader scale than before.

Here are the four biggest ways we hope to amplify our efforts to strengthen social connectedness in 2022 and beyond.

- After more than a decade of development, we aim to accelerate our build-out of the PARTNER Platform to innovate more quickly than we ever have before. With the team and resources we need firmly in place, we're ready to scale up our release of new tools and features for our partners.

- We are creating the tools and resources necessary to make our Grab & Go PARTNER Packages available again to our users, making the platform more accessible and affordable to communities that might not otherwise be able to use it in their networks.

- VNL is committed to scaling the use of the PARTNER Community Partner Relationship Manager during this year. With a proven track record with multiple partners during 2021, we are now ready to expand the number of organizations tracking and strengthening their community partnerships using the PARTNER CPRM.

- Our successful PARTNERme Pilot Projects have provided us with enough energy, insight, and improvements to help us make the new product available for purchase in 2022 as a fully ready-to-implement social connectedness solution.

Thank you for walking this road with us. If there is one thing we're certain of, it's that none of this work is possible without our incredible network of supporters. We cannot wait to see where we can take this together!

Appendix: PARTNERme Project Highlights

In 2021 we partnered with numerous organizations to continue pilot testing for our newest social connectedness screening tool, PARTNERme. Through six different partnerships, we've learned a great deal to help us strengthen social connectedness.

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS SCREENING IN TWO PEDIATRIC CARE CLINICS

With support from the Community First Foundation, we worked with families at two local Pediatric Care Clinics to screen for social connectedness and refer families to helpful community resources to fill gaps in support. Using PARTNERme, VNL identified the most pressing needs, including childcare, baby supplies, and rent assistance, using information from 41 families in two pediatric clinics.

IDENTIFYING AND HELPING WITH SOCIAL NEEDS AT TWO MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS

Through an award grant from Prime Health Colorado, we are partnering with Jefferson Center and the Mental Health Center of Denver to integrate social connectedness screening into several of their counseling programs. The MHCD project is ongoing and will continue to screen at least half of the Trauma Systems Therapy patients and connect them to community resources to address unmet needs.

RESEARCHING HOW YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

In one of our most innovative projects, we are working with a team of Social Support Research Fellows and the Annie E. Casey Foundation to research and better understand how young people think about and leverage social support. VNL is collaborating with the fellows to develop a new survey tool that will help measure and strengthen social connectedness for young people out in the community.

Appendix: PARTNERme Project Highlights

ADDRESSING ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES IN THE SAN LUIS VALLEY

The STANCE project is working to reduce adverse childhood experiences (ACE) among children in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado. To improve access to critical social services, VNL collected data about the most pressing needs and barriers to accessing support faced by families. This data will be used to break down barriers and strengthen support for families with ACEs.

SOCIAL SCREENING WITH THE COLORADO CENTER FOR PRIMARY CARE INNOVATION

We are partnering with CCPCI and Westminster Clinic to pilot PARTNERme in a primary care setting. We are screening patients' social connectedness, identifying gaps in support, and referring them to community resources that can help. VNL is providing data via a clinic's ongoing screening process to inform the clinic's approach to addressing loneliness and isolation in their patients.

WORKING WITH A VETERAN SERVICES ORGANIZATION TO SCREEN & SUPPORT

In our newest PARTNERme project, we are working with Foward Flag, a Veteran Services Organization. We will be helping them identify a veteran's most pressing need with the least amount of social support so we can help address it. The data we collect will help inform suicide prevention work, help to mediate depressive symptoms, and identify upstream mental health factors to improve outcomes for veterans.

*One of our Full Stack Engineers
lives, works, and hikes in Hawaii.*

Appendix: CPRM Project Highlights

PARTNER has come a long way in the past decade. Today it is a complete platform for tracking a network of community partners. This year we used PARTNER with nearly two dozen organizations to map networks, demonstrate impact, and translate data into insights.

EVALUATING A REGIONAL NETWORK OF PARTNERS WITH THE CITY OF ASUZA

We are assisting in evaluating two related networks with the City of Asuza, California. PARTNER will visualize their network, provide insights about how they collaborate, and identify opportunities for improvement to scale their impact. Our final report will include recommendations to strengthen their impact and improve the strategy for the future.

STUDYING NATURE-BASED SOCIAL PRESCRIBING TO ADDRESS LONELINESS

Our team is partnering with several international research groups as part of the RECETAS Project. This study is testing nature-based solutions to address loneliness in six different countries. VNL is providing ongoing social network analysis expertise and support to identify how social prescribing might be embedded in existing systems of care.

BUILDING A CIVIL LEGAL AID NETWORK WITH THE D.C. BAR FOUNDATION

VNL worked with the DC Bar Foundation to conduct a social network analysis of their current organizational partnerships. The survey provided details on their partner's role, current collaborations, and views on how the new network should be organized. The Foundation will use its data to build on current collaborative strengths and develop an effective structure to achieve its goals.

 VNL

Appendix: CPRM Project Highlights

EXPLORING SYSTEMS SHIFTING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE HEALTH & WELLNESS

VNL worked with ReThink Health, a Rippel Foundation initiative, on their ongoing innovative and collaborative initiatives to conduct to learn more about systems change using a network lens. We conducted a social network analysis that explored the role of partners in stewardship, shifting mindsets, and the evolution of their networks.

RESEARCHING HOW COVID-19 CHANGED CLINICAL-TO-COMMUNITY REFERRALS

VNL used the PARTNER Platform to collect data on services each organization provides for families with ACEs, the current strengths and weaknesses in the system of care, the quantity and quality of collaborative inter-organizational relationships in this system, and the effects of COVID-19 on the system. The results will inform efforts to strengthen systems of care and clinic-community referrals across the U.S.

STRENGTHENING THE COLORADO ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

Our team at Visible Network Labs is working with Startup Colorado to map and visualize the state's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem at both an individual and organizational level. By identifying the ways support networks help entrepreneurs, along with gaps that can be improved, the project aims to build a stronger, more resilient network of support throughout the state of Colorado.

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Appendix: CPRM Project Highlights

EVALUATING & STRENGTHENING A COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

We partnered with Trenton Health Team to conduct a social network analysis of the organizational partnerships in their Community Advisory Board. We used the PARTNER CPRM to understand the nature of relationships in the network, perceived roles, and outcomes of the network. We provided THT with results from the survey that identify the strengths and areas of opportunities for the network.

MAPPING A COLLABORATIVE TO SUPPORT NEW MOTHERS IN LOS ANGELES

VNL conducted an evaluation to explore whether MAMA'S Neighborhood Network has effectively aligned quality linkages across social, health care, and public health services to provide better-coordinated care for moms accessing the program. VNL provided results on the implementation challenges, community impact, network characteristics, and COVID response, and network resiliency.

EMPOWERING A COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORK IN MASSACHUSETTS

Mass in Motion, a community health collaborative initiative, worked with VNL to evaluate 27 grantee partnership networks using social network analysis. We visualized the quantity and quality of relationships among organizations. The analysis examined the network characteristics, connections, growth, qualities of the relationship, level of collaboration, and overall impact of the partnerships.

 VNL

Connect with the VNL Team!

Whether you have a question about one of our projects or you simply want to connect, please send us a message at hello@visiblenetworklabs.com or send us a message online at www.visiblenetworklabs.com/contact-us.

You can also follow us on your favorite social networks below. We look forward to connecting with you.

www.facebook.com/VisibleNetworkLabs

https://twitter.com/VNetworkLabs

https://www.linkedin.com/company/visible-network-labs/

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKcJHK_9CW1slLAONDlCmZA

San Fransisco, California is home to one of our Data Science Team Members.