
THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS

FILM SCREENING TOOL KIT



“... a powerful film that brings into the light challenges faced by the frail homebound and the heroic efforts to preserve their humanity.”

- BRUCE LEFF, MD — JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

“...absolutely wonderful... shows a professional practice, a human practice, a spiritual practice.”

- MELINDA SWENSON, PHD, FNP, FAANP, ANEF — INDIANA UNIVERSITY

“An achingly intimate portrait of a growing problem... makes you a fly on the wall in the lives of people falling through the cracks of the American healthcare system.”

- SAM WATERMEIER, FILM REVIEWER — NUVO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INVISIBLE PATIENTS TEAM MESSAGE.....	PAGE 3
HOW TO HOST A SCREENING.....	PAGE 4
BUILDING YOUR AUDIENCE.....	PAGE 7
SOCIAL MEDIA.....	PAGE 8
MEDIA AND MATERIALS.....	PAGE 9
FILM SCREENING CHECKLIST.....	PAGE 10
DISCUSSION THEMES AND QUESTIONS.....	PAGE 13
SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY.....	PAGE 17
DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT.....	PAGE 18
A MESSAGE FROM JESSICA MACLEOD.....	PAGE 19

A MESSAGE FROM *THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS* TEAM

Thank you for hosting a screening of *The Invisible Patients*. Hosting a screening is key to spreading the word about healthcare for the homebound and the vital role nurse practitioners play in our healthcare system. This tool kit will help you plan your screening and start meaningful community conversations about the film's many challenging subjects and themes.

It is our hope that those who watch *The Invisible Patients* will be enriched by the experience in unexpected ways. The film opens a window into the daily struggles faced by many of the nearly 5 million homebound and home-limited individuals who live in our communities, as well as the incredibly difficult and important work of the caregivers who do their best to keep them well.

We also hope that people might be inspired to keep an eye out for homebound neighbors in their own communities who might be sick or socially isolated and in need of care.

By hosting a screening of *The Invisible Patients*, you are taking a step toward improving access to health care and ensuring that our most vulnerable citizens are treated with dignity and respect.



Roger Brown is a 30 year-old man with Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy.

HOW TO HOST A SCREENING

These are step-by-step instructions on how to host a great film screening and have fun along the way!

THE PLACE

Choose a place to screen *The Invisible Patients*. Suggestions include:

- Local theater
- Organizational/educational meeting space or amphitheater
- Community Center
- Town/City Hall
- Senior Center
- School auditorium
- Church or other Faith Institution

YOUR GOALS

Each screening will be different, but here are some suggestions:

- Motivate people to participate in our national healthcare conversation. Though *The Invisible Patients* is primarily about healthcare for the homebound, it raises issues that effect us all: end of life care, living conditions of the elderly poor, health insurance, prescription narcotics and the growing need for in-home caregivers.
- Encourage discussion and hear ideas, thoughts and suggestions about the many issues raised in the film.
- Inspire viewers to support initiatives and legislation that improve our healthcare system and bolster the work of nurse practitioners. After seeing the film, people often want to act. You may want to provide the audience with action steps they can take.
- Share the experience of watching an emotional and uplifting true story. Sometimes it's enough to simply enjoy watching a thought-provoking film with an engaged audience.



Nurse Practitioner Jessica Macleod with Wink Sherrill, a 72 year-old retired carpenter with osteoarthritis, who is recovering from prostate cancer surgery.

WHAT KIND OF SCREENING?

Decide whether you are hosting a screening for an organization and/or select group of people, or whether your screening will be open to the public.

While we assume most screenings will be free, don't hesitate to charge for admission to help raise money for your organization and/or defray any screening costs; however, it's our hope that you can find a free location for your screening.

SELECT GROUP

Here are some possible scenarios:

- Turn your organizational monthly meeting into a screening of *The Invisible Patients* – film screenings are great ways to inspire people to attend meetings.
- Include *The Invisible Patients* as apart of a professional conference

- An intimate screening with friends, neighbors, family and co-workers – you may even ask some of them to serve as co-hosts. Look for names in your address book, Facebook page, and holiday card list. Send an email invitation and/or create a Facebook event page. Be sure to keep a list of the names, addresses and phone numbers of those whom you invite. About a week before your screening, you might want to make follow-up calls.
- Do you belong to a church or faith institution? Consider having a special screening for your congregation.
- Screening for the public – here are some tips for building an audience:
- Co-hosts – are there organizations and/or known individuals who can co-host your screening? More hosts = better attendance. Think about elected officials, healthcare organizations, businesses, medical and nursing schools, human service organizations, film/arts organizations, and others who you think would have a particular interest in watching *The Invisible Patients*.
- Media release and/or a listing in your local paper/s' calendar of events.
- Listservs – Many of us are part of listservs and/or know others who belong to a listservs; sending notices through a listserv is a great way to reach lots of people. Ask people to RSVP to you or a designated person who will keep track of who's coming.
- Social Media – Set up a Facebook event page that is open to the public and start inviting everyone you know. Your friends and co-hosts can be co-administrators and invite their friends as well. Twitter is an important way to get the word out as well. Remember #InvisiblePatients @invisidoc.
- Gathering hotspots! Printout and put up a poster advertising your screening at your local university center bulletin board, community center, coffee shops, etc.

BUILDING YOUR AUDIENCE - INVITATIONS

SAMPLE EMAIL INVITATION

To:	Cc: Bcc:
Subject: Invisible Patients Special Screening, Please Join Us!	
Dear Please join me for a screening of THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS, a new documentary film directed by Patrick O'Connor. Check out the FILM'S TRAILER. Date: Time: Location: <i>THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS</i> tells the story of Jessica Macleod, a nurse practitioner, and four patients she cares for in their homes in Evansville, Indiana. Together they put a human face on some of the most urgent healthcare issues facing our nation, from the living conditions of the elderly poor and end-of-life care, to the soaring costs of hospitalization, complexity of insurance and over-prescription of opiates. Jess's patients' stories reveal the emotional and financial burdens created by our current system, and cry out for solutions. THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS pulls back the curtain on a hidden, vulnerable population whose circumstances ask us to wrestle with not just healthcare policy, but as importantly, how to mend today's fraying social fabric. I hope you will join me. Please reply to RSVP	

INVITATIONS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

Click here for official posters, invitation templates, and official images that you can use for your screening notices on social media: (need link to all these things)

FACEBOOK – set up a Facebook event page and/or post a shareable invite that tells the date, time, and location. Contact Lauren if you'd like help setting up an event page:

Lauren@invisiblepatients.org or 215-939-7621

Here's an example of an event page that was used for the #IndyFilmFest

<https://www.facebook.com/events/650990018387200/>

TWITTER – here are some sample tweets (remember- 140 characters!)

#InvisiblePatients -This (day). (time) at #Location

FB event page: tinyurl.com/XXXXX #Documentary #Healthcare @invisidoc

Watch THE #INVISIBLEPATIENTS this (day) at (time) Get your tickets: ([tinyurl.comxxxxx](https://tinyurl.com/xxxxx))

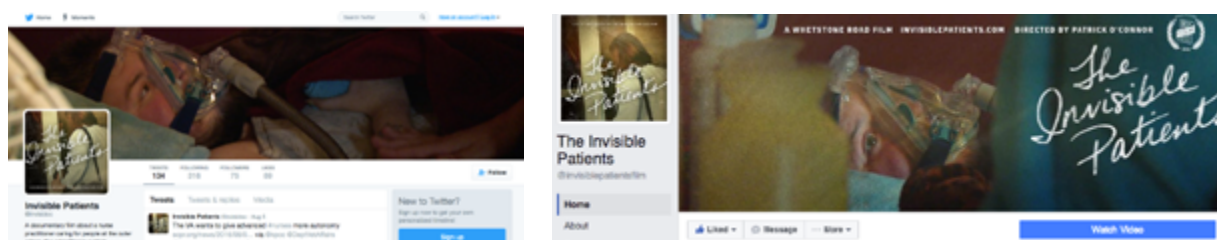
#healthcare #nursepractitioner @invisidoc

Important #hashtags and @handles:

@invisidoc #nursepractitioner

#Invisiblepatients #healthcare

#homebound #nurses



MATERIALS

All the files listed below can be found on the HOST A SCREENING page at www.invisiblepatients.com

Download poster

<http://invisiblepatients.com/files/Invisible-Patients-Poster.pdf>

Download #INVISIBLEPATIENTS postcard invites

<http://invisiblepatients.com/files/Invisible-Patients-Post-Card-Invites.pdf>

Download screening sign-in sheet

<http://invisiblepatients.com/files/Invisible-Patients-Sign-up.pdf>

Download official photos

<http://invisiblepatients.com/photos/>

MEDIA

All the files listed below can be found on the HOST A SCREENING page at www.invisiblepatients.com

Download press kit

<http://invisiblepatients.com/resources/>

Download discussion guide

<http://invisiblepatients.com/files/Invisible-Patients-Discussion-Guide.pdf>

FILM SCREENING CHECKLIST

While the timing suggestions below are optimum, it is possible to pull together a well-attended screening in a shorter period of time if you have the right team in place.

✓ **Pick a date for your screening and find a venue (4-6 weeks out from screening)**

- Ask about the DVD player or internet connection, projector, microphones, and any other AV equipment the venue might have for the screening. If it's a community center or a venue with no equipment, decide how you will show the film and what tools you need to do it.
- It is always a good idea to visit the venue (if you are unfamiliar with it) before the day of your screening to see the venue layout and actual location. For example, you may discover that you will need to make signs telling people where to go because there are several entrances to the building.

✓ **Recruit co-hosts/sponsors (4-6 weeks out from screening)**

- Talk to your co-hosts/sponsors (particularly if you are having a public screening) and find out how many people they think they can recruit to attend the screening. This is the time to set a goal for attendance.
- Make sure co-hosts/sponsors are listed on posters/outreach notices/FB event page
- This is also a good time to assign roles for your co-hosts. Roles might include:
 - Publicity – media advisory so that a notice gets printed in local paper about screening; posters up in key hotspots; email invites out to local elected officials, faith institutions; healthcare institutions, universities, social service agencies; etc.
 - Social media
 - Refreshments
 - Emcee at screening

- Lead post-screening discussion
- Circulate The Invisible Patients keep in touch sign-up sheet

If you are having a private screening, co-hosts might not be necessary; however, it's a good idea to have an inner circle that will help you get people to the screening.

✓ **Send out email invitations/notices about the screening (3-4 weeks out from screening)**

- Don't forget to make mention of the 30-minute discussion that will follow the screening

✓ **Set up a Facebook event page (3-4weeks out from screening)**

✓ **Advisory to the community events editor at local newspaper/s (3-4 weeks out from screening)**

- Follow-up by phone to make sure the advisory was received and confirm that it will be in the paper/s before the screening.

✓ **Advisory to reporters – particularly film/arts and health care reporters (1 week out from screening)**

- Make follow-up calls to confirm receipt and pitch the screening for coverage.

✓ **Reminder calls/emails/notices (2-3 days before event)**

- It's always good to send out a reminder to guests that have RSVP'd and to those who didn't send regrets a few days before your screening.

✓ **Arrive 30-45 minutes before your screening and bring the following items:**

- Sign-in sheets
- Directional signage to put up before people arrive (if it is needed)

- Refreshments
- If you are having a public event, bring several press kits about The Invisible Patients to give to anyone from the media who attends the screening; please keep track of the reporters that attend.
- Test DVD player or internet connection, projector, microphones, and any other AV equipment needed for screening – get everything ready so that you can “hit play” after you’ve welcomed your audience.



Jessica Macleod with Ron Riordan, a 62 year-old artist with brain damage caused by a motorcycle accident.

DISCUSSION THEMES / QUESTIONS

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What was your overall reaction to the film? Did you like the film? Why? If not, why not?

What did you learn from the film?

Has watching the film changed your perception of our healthcare system? If so, how?

FAMILY & COMMUNITY

The bond between Roger and his mother, Shirley, is incredibly strong and is clearly a positive factor in Roger's care.

How do you think Roger's story would be different if his mother was not an integral part of his care team?

How does Jessica fit into the family dynamic?

Ron and his older brother Louis live in the same house, and though Louis views himself as a caregiver (his "mother-brother"), it does not appear to Jessica that Louis provides much assistance to his brother.

In what ways, either positive or negative, does Louis impact Ron's care?

What do you think of the way Jessica handles the situation where Louis accuses her of inadvertently making him a "third-rate citizen" in Ron's care?

Do you think Ron will be better off without Louis living in the house?

At the end of the film, Jess says that we need more people helping these families.

How might a community do more to help homebound and home-limited individuals?

What can you do?

DEALING WITH THE “HEALTHCARE SYSTEM”

At various times in the film, both Roger and the Sherrill's (Wink and Patty) struggle to navigate the “healthcare system.” Medicaid will not pay for the non-invasive vent that would make Roger's breathing easier. Patty is unable to find new doctor after failing a drug test and then she's dropped by her insurance provider.

What challenges have you faced dealing with the healthcare system?

What solutions would you suggest?

FAITH & SPIRITUALITY

Early in the film, Jessica asks Roger if he has any spiritual beliefs, and he says that he “*respects some of it, but not all of it.*” As his disease progresses, his beliefs seem to change.

How would you describe Roger's evolving thoughts about God and religion?

In what way did religion impact Roger's life?

Wink thanks “the good Lord up above” for feeling better, and later tells a story about someone from his church “putting his hand on” his stomach to make the pain go away.

What do you think about the notion that spiritual belief can aid in healing?

How do your own beliefs about religion or spirituality affect your health?

END-OF-LIFE CARE

Roger's story gives us an intimate view of a person working through how he wants to be cared for at the end of his life.

Describe the stages that Roger seems to go through as he nears the end of his life.

Describe how Jessica handles the conversations with Roger about the DNR “Do Not Resuscitate” order. Do you think she was too blunt or was her directness and honesty the right approach?

Have you given any thought to how you would like to be cared for in your final days?

POVERTY

Many of the 5 million homebound and home-limited in this country live in poverty.

Discuss the effects of poverty in healthcare. What challenges must the poor face that others do not?

What might be done to insure that the poor are given better access to quality healthcare?

NON - JUDGMENT

During the scene where Roger's mother tells Jessica that his doctor "didn't listen to him," Jess tells us that she feels patient care is often influenced by the caregiver's perception of the patient's financial status or education.

Do you think the Jessica's assessment is accurate?

How might the healthcare system work to reduce this bias?

Discuss whether or not you feel Jessica was able to avoid being judgmental in her care of these patients.

STRESS

The film offers small glimpses into Jessica's family life and exposes conflicts between her ability to care for her patients and to be there for her family.

Where in the film can you see the tension between Jessica's job and her family life?

What might be done to help caregivers balance their work and home life?

THE ROLE OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS

There's currently a robust debate about the appropriate role of nurse practitioners in our healthcare system, with many advocating for more independence and others suggesting that their care should be supervised by a physician.

What's your opinion about the quality of care the patients in the film received?

Do you agree or disagree that nurse practitioners should have more independence providing patient care?

Has watching the film changed your view of nurse practitioners in general?



Jessica Macleod with Shirley Brown, Roger's mother, as she struggles to decide whether or not to call an ambulance to take her son to the hospital.

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release:

Date

Contact:

Name, Phone

(Insert name/s of organizational host/s) to Screen

THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS

at (time), on (date) at (location)

A new documentary about a nurse practitioner, the homebound, and life at the edges of the healthcare system.

THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS tells the story of Jessica Macleod, a nurse practitioner, and four patients she cares for in their homes in Evansville, Indiana. Together they put a human face on some of the most urgent healthcare issues facing our nation, from the living conditions of the elderly poor and end-of-life care, to the soaring costs of hospitalization, complexity of insurance and over-prescription of opiates.

(Insert name/s of organizational host/s) is/are pleased to announce a community screening of THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS

WHEN:

WHERE:

RSVP:

(optional - insert paragraph about why your organization/hosts are screening the film and/or information about your organization/s)

THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS, directed by Patrick O'Connor, premiered at the Indy Film Fest earlier this summer and won the film fest's Audience Choice Award. Watch the **FILM TRAILER**.

“An achingly intimate portrait of a growing problem...makes you a fly on the wall in the lives of people falling through the cracks of the American healthcare system.”

- SAM WATERMEIER, FILM REVIEWER - NUVO

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I've known Jessica MacLeod, the courageous and caring nurse practitioner in the film, since she was a nursing student at Fairfield University. She graduated with honors, married a friend of mine, and then began a career in healthcare. She's worked on the renal medicine and telemetry floor at Yale-New Haven Hospital, cared for elderly dementia patients in an English village and students at a university health center. She earned her PhD and spent ten years as a nurse practitioner in a small family medicine practice in Evansville, Indiana until she was recruited to work for a company that provides primary healthcare to homebound individuals.



One night over dinner, Jess told incredible stories about her new patients, how sick they were, how they struggled to get the care they needed, how desperate and shocking their conditions were. In her telling, she described a group of people who were neglected and isolated – they were invisible to the healthcare system. I could tell that she was excited about her new job, but I could also feel a sense of despair – these people needed so much from her that she was beginning to feel overwhelmed.

“We should make a film about your work,” I said. To my surprise, Jess said she had been thinking the exact same thing.

Over the next 10 months, I followed Jess and four of her patients, shooting roughly 50 hours of footage. When you watch Jessica interact with her patients in the film, you'll see what I see in Jess – a talented caregiver, thoughtful and caring. She is also honest, unflinching, and an incredible listener. She's not afraid of difficult conversations, even if it means she has to tell her patient he will die soon.

Along the way, I asked Jess what she hoped might come from this film. “I really just want people to see the people I see,” she said. “How they live, what challenges they face in terms of health, economics, addiction, lack of education. I just want people to know that these invisible patients are here, among us – they're in our communities, and we need to do more to take care of them.”

The film critic Roger Ebert once wrote, “the movies are like a machine that generates empathy.” I like to think that this film opens the door to empathy.

PATRICK O'CONNOR, PRODUCER/DIRECTOR – THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS

A MESSAGE FROM JESSICA MACLEOD, NURSE PRACTITIONER, *THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS*

For 13 years, I've been a family nurse practitioner (FNP) caring for patients with different backgrounds and different health issues.

In 2013, I started working with Louisville-based MD2U and provide primary health care to the homebound and home-limited, who for a variety of reasons, are unable to leave their homes to see a primary care provider.

During this time my work has changed radically.

Prior to MD2U, my office work involved screening physicals, well-child exams, and minor acute illnesses; I also formed relationships with patients and families, helping them navigate issues like melanoma diagnoses, childhood diabetes, and unexpected pregnancies.

Now the patients I see are nearly invisible, living at the very edges of our healthcare system. Taking care of them is by far the most challenging job I've ever had.

Researchers estimate that there are approximately five million adults in the US who are homebound or home-limited due to chronic illness or functional limitations. They are often elderly and frail.

In three years, my micro-practice has grown to a team of 4 primary care nurse practitioners. We care for over 460 patients in conjunction with a collaborating physician, community partners, and regional council on aging.

Despite calls to action to improve primary care in our community, and despite the fact that many of our patients would go without care if this service did not exist there has been push from some who are tethered to traditional health care delivery models. I was called "a glorified hand-holder" on one occasion. But-I have also been overwhelmed by the support of others: specialty physicians who have given me their personal cell phone numbers to collaborate on difficult patient cases; home health agencies that work tirelessly to keep our most chronically ill neighbors out of what can be a revolving door of high cost hospitalization; and hospice agencies that provide exceptional end of life care.

When I told my friend Patrick O'Connor about the work I was doing, and he asked if he could make a

documentary film about the patients I see every day. I said yes because I believed it would be an important tool to reach people and teach them about how we treat the homebound with dignity and respect. Over the course of nearly a year, Pat followed my care of four patients – the result is THE INVISIBLE PATIENTS, a feature-length film that has moved audiences tears and, I hope, will move them to action.

My work, and the work of my fellow nurse practitioners, is vital. We find ourselves in the center of important healthcare issues facing our country – how to take care of people who fall through the cracks, how to navigate end-of-life care, the burdens placed on families, and the emotional toll on those of us providing care outside of a traditional “accepted” health care model, in sometimes dispiriting situations.

JESSICA MACLEOD, PHD, APRN

NOTES: