FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sparrow and MSU researchers work on new app to help heart Patients stay healthy

LANSING, MI – A collaboration between a Sparrow Physician and Michigan State University researchers will result in a new mobile app that will allow those at risk of heart disease to monitor what they eat, how they live, and make better choices.

“We are trying to empower them with this tool in their hand to see how the choices are affecting their risks,” said MSU researcher Pang-Ning Tan.

The research is being conducted through the Sparrow/MSU Center for Innovation and Research, a formal partnership between Sparrow and MSU. MSU’s intellectual capital and Sparrow’s community-based clinicians work collaboratively to develop innovative approaches in healthcare.

Currently in a prototype phase, the app – called mHeart -- will help users make choices about what they eat based on the data they enter about themselves. mHeart will tell them the risks involved in their food decisions.

It will, in short, “encourage people to make healthy choices,” Tan said.

The app is specifically designed for Patients who are overweight, obese, or otherwise at risk for heart disease. The prototype is being developed by Tan and his Ph.D. student Courtland Van Dam, in collaboration with former MSU researcher Jina Huh, Ph.D., who is currently at the University of California San Diego and Barbara Given, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, from the MSU College of Nursing. Dr. Given is also Chair of the Sparrow Board of Directors.

The project also involves Sparrow’s Paul Entler, D.O., Medical Director of Sparrow Weight Management. Dr. Entler said he’s seen Patients try any number of health-based apps but most concentrate on keeping track of what they have already eaten.

“There are so many journaling apps out there,” he said. “The goal is to make an app where people can actually see something concrete that can change their behavior.”

The project is another example of Sparrow’s dedication to improving the delivery of healthcare for our Patients by participating in high quality clinical research to aid and support the development of the body of knowledge in medicine.
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Sparrow, a member of the prestigious Mayo Clinic Care Network, is mid-Michigan’s premier healthcare organization that includes hospitals in Lansing, St. Johns, Ionia and Carson City as well as Physicians Health Plan, Sparrow Physicians Health Network, the Sparrow Medical Group and the Michigan Athletic Club. Sparrow is affiliated with Michigan State University’s three human health colleges. Through these partnerships and the dedication of our 10,000 Caregivers, Sparrow pursues a vision to be nationally recognized as a leader in quality and Patient experience. For more information, visit Sparrow.org.