



PPE PORTRAITS HOW-TO

PPE Portraits are simply **disposable portrait picture stickers** (4x5) put on PPE (personal protective equipment). Anecdotal pilot data captured during treatment of Ebola showed **the PPE Portrait Project helped patients feel connected to their caregivers, and helped healthcare workers feel more like a team and less dehumanized**, though this has yet to be formally studied.

From a placebo standpoint, we know that provider warmth and competence are positively associated with physiological health biomarkers. From our standpoint, PPE signals competence; **portraits could be one of the only signals of warmth** for COVID-19 and potential COVID-19 patients.

[Learn more](#) about the original project developed by [Mary Beth Heffernan](#) during the Ebola crisis.

SUPPLIES

- Camera with 200mm or longer lens
- Computer
- Printer
- [4x5 sticky labels](#) (four per page, matte) and [portrait template](#) OR Plain 8x11 paper, scissors or papercutter, binder clips or tape or Post-it notes



PORTRAIT CREATION

- Use a plain background
- Use diffuse light (not direct sunlight)
- Subject should look directly into the camera lens
- Frame closely around head—crop the top of head if needed, but not the bottom of the face
- **Prompt: "What is the smile you wish your patients could see?"**
- Stand back as far as possible and use the zoom function to avert wide-angle distortions



ORGANIZATION AND PRINTING

- **Save portrait files to be easily retrieved (lastname-firstname)**
- Consider a shared drive so others can assist with printing
- Print pictures four to an 8x11 page (ideally same provider on all four; they will need copies)
- Use labels (matte not glossy) OR paper and scissors
- Label organization and integration into donning process is key to consistent and easy use



AFFIX 4x5 PORTRAIT

- **If it's a sticker, affix portrait to chest at heart level — offering warmth and care "from the heart"**
- If it's printed on paper, get creative! Tape, binder clips and even Post-it notes will work. (Binder clips at the top have the best hold, but must be disinfected if used again.)



"What is the smile you wish your patients could see?"



Contact: Cati Brown-Johnson PhD • catibj@stanford.edu

If you'd like to hear about more opportunities and be connected with other providers and researchers interested in PPE portraits and the patient-provider connection, please fill out [this form](#).