Community Engagement in Hard to Teach Subjects: An Example of Health Advocacy

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Medical Students: Matthew Laing, Alec Yu

The Problem

Health advocacy is:
- A core part of health professional education
- Confused with health promotion or advocating for the profession
- Difficult to teach and assess

A Solution

Health Advocacy is:
- A major activity of non-profit organizations
- About issues that community-based organizations have expertise in such as:
  – accessing care and support
  – navigating the health system
  – mobilizing resources
  – addressing health inequities
  – influencing health policy
  – creating system change

Our Approach

Community engagement to develop educational resources for teaching health advocacy.

Steering Committee

PCPE members, patient / community representatives, faculty and student representatives from Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), Pharmacy, and Medicine.

Design Principles

- Learning objectives link to program curricula
- Asset based approach to emphasize community assets not just needs
- Include lived experiences of patients and real life examples of advocacy work from community organizations
- Relevant and accessible to a wide range of students and faculty
- An interprofessional approach based on a health advocacy framework
- Flexible for online and in-person delivery in classroom seminars and lecture halls

Workshops

- Co-designed and led by patient and community partners with faculty
- Real cases and video vignettes of health advocacy told by patients about their own experiences

Mandy & Sophie: A Caregiver's Journey
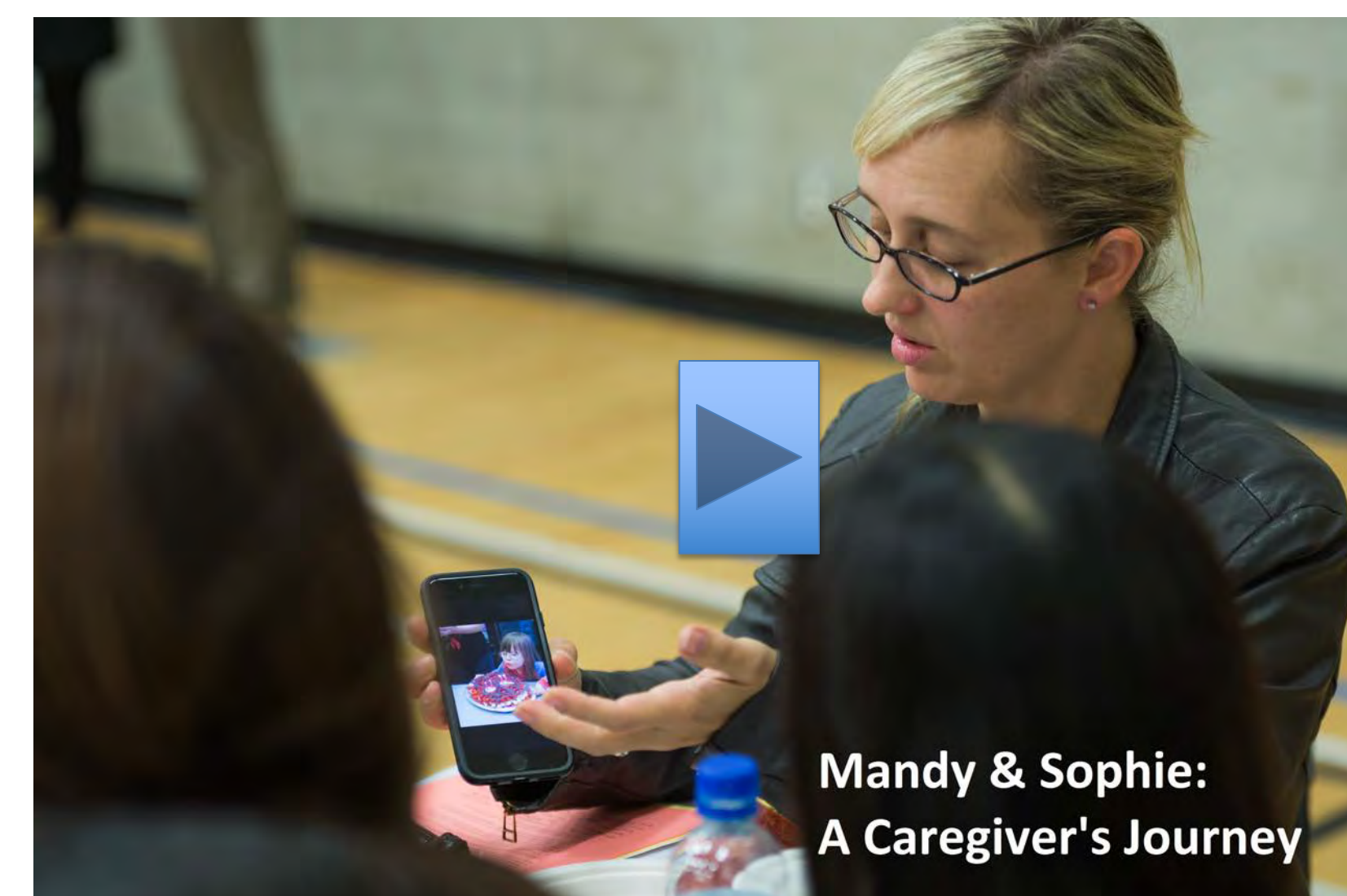
Play video: https://learning.video.ubc.ca/media/0_5o6w2g1u

Learning

We used Mentimeter to generate Word Clouds from students **before** and **after** the workshop.
How it works:
- Students submit a word or phrase using their smartphones
- Words added most frequently appear largest

Pre-Post Word Clouds show:
- Evidence of transformative learning
- Differences across disciplines

BEFORE Pharmacy Workshop – What does health advocacy mean to you?

AFTER

BEFORE OT Workshop – What does health advocacy mean to you?

AFTER

Evaluation

Qualtrics Surveys asked:
- In what ways has the workshop made you think differently about health advocacy?

Similar to Word Clouds:
- Advocacy 'with' not only 'for' others
- Role in systems change

This workshop made me step back and look at health advocacy from multiple points of view. It also provided possible examples of ways to get more involved in health advocacy when out in practice. – PT student

It emphasized to me to importance of advocating with people instead of solely advocating on their behalf. – OT student

Advocacy means much more than education. Advocacy can include patients and systems in which change can take place. – Pharmacy student

Conclusions

Partnering with the community can:
- Result in innovative flexible educational resources that can be adapted for different educational contexts and modes of delivery
- Bring examples into the classroom of how to tackle real world challenges
- Inspire students with real world examples of how they can make a difference in someone's life by doing small things as an individual and join with others on big systems issues

Next Steps

Develop new cases and videos to include diverse community perspectives
Workshops continue in:
- OSOT 549, PHTH 566
- Pharmacy Enrichment Activity Day

Acknowledgement

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