

Patient and Community Voices in Health Professional Education

Interprofessional learning opportunities for UBC Health Professional students,
designed and taught by patients and community members

What is Patient and Community Voices?

This project provides a special kind of education for health and human services students. The teachers are patients and clients. They teach in interprofessional workshops, moderated patient panel discussions and at the Community & Patient Fair. Students learn directly from patients, through their stories and from their expertise.

A variation on the community service learning model – there is a role and power reversal — this is an ‘in-reach’ by the community to the academy — helping students understand what it is like to live with and manage chronic illness or disability.

We are faculty, students and community members who believe that active patient participation is essential to learning patient-centred interprofessional collaborative practice. Our mission is to build sustainable community -campus partnerships to enhance the training of future health professionals. Our vision is patients and community teachers at the centre of health professional education. To realize these we work toward the creation of a Community Centre for Health Professional Education.

An Advisory Board of stakeholders guides this project. Members are volunteers from community organizations and students and faculty from UBC health professional programs.

Students who attended workshops were most enthusiastic about the opportunity for exposure to the lived experience of patients, the direct interaction with them and interaction with students from other disciplines. They increased their knowledge of the diversity of community health care resources, they filled in ‘gaps’ of their book learning, discovered the complexity and variability of disease, and connected classroom theory to real-world practicality.

Community members who taught the workshops increased their self-confidence and developed presentation and facilitation skills. They noted the reciprocal learning that they did with students. They all enjoyed the contact with, and curiosity of students. The opportunity to share their experience and expertise provided an unexpected bright side to their burden of chronic illness.

“The biggest change in my attitude was in seeing the resilience displayed by the facilitators in dealing with the limitations that their disease processes have placed on them” - Medical student

*“It was an experience that built my confidence and made me feel I was a worthwhile person with something to contribute.”
- Community Educator*

meetingofexperts.org — our website was launched, with help from the UBC Office of Learning Technology, in July 2010. It is a virtual Centre, a step toward a real Community Centre for Health Professional Education.

- It provides information about the project, organizations we work with, our educational activities, and ways that community, students and faculty can get involved;
- streamlines the sign-up for students who attend workshops or patient panels; and
- facilitates internal communication among community, students and faculty directly involved in the project.



Division of Health Care Communication
informed and shared decision making



a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

"Allies in Health Care" a Community & Patient Fair held for the second time during Celebrate Learning Week in October was **bigger and better**. It happened at UBC but was presented by community organizations and patient support groups. Their members (many of whom are patients/clients) chat with students and faculty, telling their personal experiences of living with chronic illness or disability and providing information about community health care resources. In 2010 the Fair included 33 community exhibitors, 5 patient panels and 400+ students and faculty visitors.



"I felt that the community educators brought a lot of insight to us about the hidden emotional struggles that patients and their families face." - Pharmacy student

News, Publications and Presentations

A Featured Project of the UBC Teaching & Learning Enhancement Fund: <http://tlef.ubc.ca/featured-projects/>

"Learning from our future patients" by Amber Jarvie. *UBC Medical Journal* 2010 Mar; 1(2): 37 http://www.ubcmj.com/pdf/ubcmj_1_2_2010.pdf

"Engaging community agencies and patient organizations in health professional education". Workshop at *Canadian Conference on Medical Education*. St John's, NL May 2010

"Narrative and honouring the patient's voice in health professional education" by Shah S. In McLean C, ed. *Creative Arts in Interdisciplinary Practice, Inquiries for Hope and Change*. Calgary, Detselig Temeron Books, 2010

"Turning Patients into Professors" by Brian Lin in *UBC Reports* Oct 2010. <http://www.publicaffairs.ubc.ca/2010/10/07/vol-56-no-10/>

"Patient involvement in health professional education" by Towle A, Godolphin W. In Dornan T et al, eds. *Medical Education: Theory and Practice*. Ch 5. Oxford, Elsevier, 2011

"Community Connections" highlighted in the Burnaby, Richmond, and North Shore versions of *UBC in Your Community, Issue 1, 2011*: <http://governmentrelations.ubc.ca/ubc-in-your-community/>

The Spring 2011 issue of *UBC Medicine*, the magazine of the UBC Faculty of Medicine, will feature an article on the project.

Earlier work in this project (2008-10) was presented at 5 national and international conferences and in 4 journal publications by community teachers and faculty.

"Small groups ... ensure an intimate and safe environment where patients ... share their stories that get at the heart of living 24/7 with an ailment." - Brian Lin, UBC Reports

We are especially indebted to representatives of these organizations who contributed to the Advisory Board, planning the Community & Patient Fair and presentation of Workshops and Patient Panels:

Aphasia Mentoring Project (School of Audiology & Speech Sciences)
BC Cancer Agency Prevention Programs
BC Epilepsy Society
BC Persons with AIDS Society
Canadian Association of Familial Ataxia

Canadian Celiac Association (Vancouver)
Canadian Mental Health Association (Burnaby/Vancouver)
Canadian MPS Society
Developmental Disabilities Association
Health Sciences Students' Association UBC
Heart and Stroke Foundation
Indian Residential School Survivors Society
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada
Mood Disorders Association
MS Society of Canada

North Shore Disability Resource Centre
PeerNetBC
Positive Women's Network
Richmond Mental Health Consumers and Friends Society
S.U.C.E.S.S. Chinese Help Lines
Scleroderma Association of BC
Social Accountability and Community Engagement Initiative UBC
Vancouver Prostate Support and Awareness Group
West Coast Assistance Teams

This project, *Community Partnerships for Health Professional Education*, was supported by UBC students via grants from the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund 2008-11. © Division of Health Care Communication, College of Health Disciplines, UBC V6T 1Z3. 604-822-8002, isdm@interchange.ubc.ca, <http://www.chd.ubc.ca/dhcc/> February 2011.

Faculty interest from all Health & Human Services programs at UBC was shown in interviews and focus groups we held in 2010.

We asked:

- IF and how patients are involved in their programs? - and
- WHAT are opportunities and needs for increased involvement?

They told us:

- MOST are supportive of patient and community involvement in their courses; all would like their students to attend the Community & Patient Fair. Some would make it a requirement.
- OPPORTUNITIES exist to embed new patient-led activities in current or new programs, e.g., clinical psychology, dental hygiene, genetic counselling, pharmacy, a graduate program on aging.
- SEVERAL programs, with already full curricula, (e.g., medicine, nursing, dentistry, occupational and physical therapy) have accreditation requirements to provide interprofessional education activities. Our workshops offer a solution to that problem.

"You really got a sense for how these diseases have affected their lives and how their needs can be met through different health disciplines" - Dentistry student

Future

We will:

- Continue to develop and present the Community & Patient Fair, patient panels and interprofessional workshops that enrich students' learning.
- Pilot a Health Mentors program, in which groups of students from mixed disciplines will be 'attached' to a community member, an expert by experience with a chronic condition.
- Work with community partners to develop a coalition of organizations that nurtures the vision of a Community Centre for Health Professional Education.

The challenge for all of these is to acquire ongoing financial support for coordination and communication. The promise is ENRICHED EDUCATION for our students, SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY by our academy, and creation of NEW KNOWLEDGE about meetings of experts.

See a Video of patients, members of community organizations, students and faculty who describe their experiences and ideas about the project. (5 minutes) <http://meetingofexperts.org/what-we-do/>

We welcome inquiries and interest. Come, learn with us. Div Health Care Communication isdm@interchange.ubc.ca 604-822-8002

"Our education isn't truly client centred until we involve clients, not just as partners in care, but partners in learning." - Occupational Therapy student