

Stories of Lived Experience: patient-perspectives on providing compassionate care

Category: Storytelling Presentation

Abstract Body

Patients find it easier to connect to care teams that include individuals with lived experience. Qualitative evidence has proven value in the use of peer support in the care of people who use drugs (Lennox et al., 2021). Moreover, storytelling and listening to lived experience breeds empathy in care providers (Fairbairn, 2002). Subsequently, a conference discussing care and compassion in addiction medicine is incomplete without listening to individuals affected by addiction how we can make the journey of others struggling with this brain disease a little more humane. In this storytelling workshop, individuals who identify as people who used addictive substances will share their stories and their pathway to better health. A discussion on what was helpful and harmful in their recovery will ensue. This will be followed by a question and answer period where the audience can ask about how to improve their clinical work with people who use addictive substances. The lived experience panel will be compensated for their time.

Key Words

- Advocacy
- Prevention/Harm Reduction
- Primary Care
- Quality Improvement
- Stigma
- Treatment Models/Programs

Learning Objective # 1

Upon attending the session, the attendees will be able to understand and appreciate the challenges that lead to a spiral of problematic substance use as well as the experiences that can help move people towards a healthier life.

Learning Objective # 2

The attendee will be able to advocate in their home clinical environment the need and benefits of including people with lived experience in their work as well as what structural supports are required for success.

Reference # 1

Lennox, R., Lamarche, L. & O'Shea, T. (2021) Peer support workers as a bridge: a qualitative study exploring the role of peer support workers in the care of people who use drugs during and after hospitalization. *Harm Reduct J* 18, 19. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-021-00467-7>

Reference # 2

Fairbairn, G.J. (2002), Ethics, empathy and storytelling in professional development. *Learning in Health and Social Care*, 1: 22-32. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1473-6861.2002.00004.>

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