Incorporating Narrative Medicine into Undergraduate Pre-Health Education



Ella Meyer, College of Science and Engineering, Texas Christian University

TCU

Background

- Narrative Medicine is one component within the broader realm of medical humanities
- Defined by Dr. Rita Charon as the "medicine practiced with [the] skills of recognizing, absorbing, interpreting, and being moved by the stories of illness"
- Key Practices: Close Reading, Reflective
 Writing, and Active Listening
- Relevant for pre-health students because:
 - Helpful in developing an understanding of patient-centered care
 - Narrative competence has been suggested as an important pre-requisite for patient care skills (communication, listening, empathy, etc.)
 - Reflection is an effective tool for alleviating burnout and reminding students of their motivations for pursuing a career in healthcare

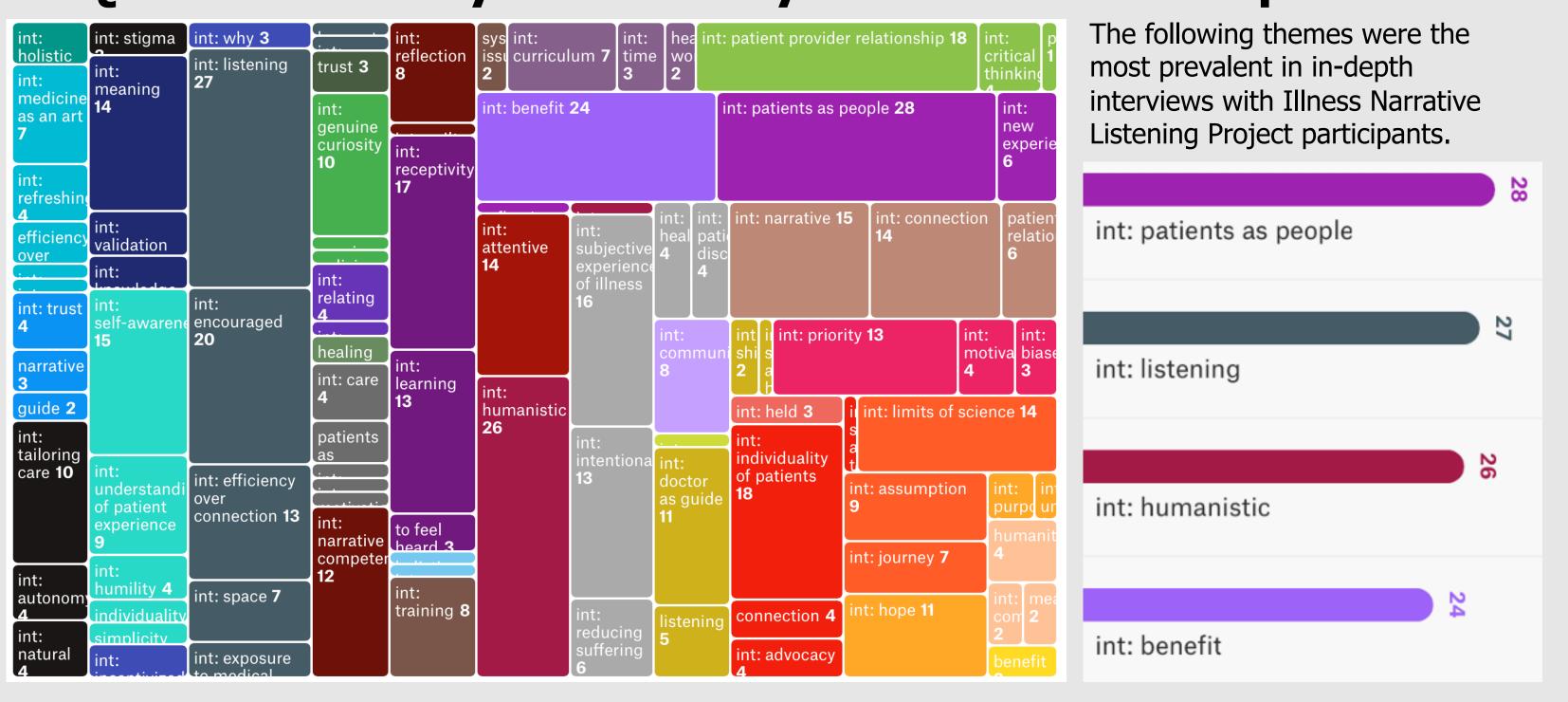
My goal is to explore the impact of narrative medicine training on pre-health students.

I assessed three avenues of narrative medicine training:

- 1) Workshop Series
- 2) The Illness Narrative Listening Project prehealth student group
- 3) My own reflective writing from experiences in medical contexts

Through data collected from these avenues, I sought to evaluate the impact of these practices on pre-health students, assessing their understanding of the importance of stories and storytelling in medicine. Narrative medicine opened my eyes to the art of medicine and helped alleviate burnout and provide purpose in my pre-health journey, and I wanted to share and assess this with those around me.

Qualitative Analysis of Survey and Interview Responses



Goals and Hypotheses

- Equip pre-health students to develop reflective practices
 - <u>Hypothesis</u>: Students will understand the importance of basic reflective practice and view it as a beneficial activity
- Equip students to engage with patient stories: build and foster narrative competence & active listening skills
 - <u>Hypothesis</u>: Students will gain insight into the clinical relevance of narratives and understand importance of the relationship between the patient and provider
- Perform a qualitative assessment of reflection capacities
 - <u>Hypothesis</u>: Qualitative assessment through thematic intervention will allow for understanding and analysis of nuances from student experiences.

Results and Discussion

- Three broad categories: the patient-physician relationship, listening and receptivity, and the emphasis of connection over efficiency in healthcare.
- It was <u>clear that participants had grown in</u>
 <u>reflective practice</u> through <u>consistency of themes</u>
 relating to how experiences had changed or
 impacted their perspective
- Themes 'listening,' 'subjective experience of illness,' and 'individuality of patients' provide evidence of narrative competence skills
- In both groups, <u>participants expressed</u> that they had <u>benefitted from their experience</u>, with 'learning,' 'self-awareness,' and 'encouraged' being prevalent themes
- Themes aligned with core competencies outlined by the AAMC that medical schools expect in applicants, supporting the claim that narrative medicine training is beneficial for pre-health students.

Methods

Illness Narrative Listening Project

- Group of 10-12 pre-health upperclassmen selected through application process
- Goal of providing students an opportunity to develop active listening skills and a greater understanding of the patient experience
- To be a storyteller: To encourage healthcare to turn to creative expression to understand and express embodied experiences
- To be a story receiver: To acknowledge and honor the stories of illness

Fall Narrative Medicine Workshop Series

- Open to all pre-health students
- Addressed three questions: Why? How? What? of Narrative Medicine
- Included reflective writing prompts, a panel of medical students, and opportunities to listen to patient stories

Qualitative Analysis

- In-depth interviews with three Illness Narrative Listening Project participants
- Qualtrics Survey for workshop participants including yes/no questions, rating scale questions, and open-ended questions
- Atlas.ti Software was utilized to thematically code and categorically group quotations from survey and interview responses

References

Charon, Rita. "Narrative Medicine: A Model for Empathy, Reflection, Profession, and Trust." *JAMA*, vol. 286, no. 15, 2001, p. 1897., https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.286.15.1897. Core competencies for entering medical students. AAMC. (n.d.). Retrieved April 9, 2023, from https://www.aamc.org/services/admissions-

lifecycle/competencies-entering-medical-students

PowerPoint Template ©2009 Texas Christian University, Center for Instructional Services. For Educational Use Only. Content is the property of the presenter and their resour