

Medical Comics: A Vehicle to Explore Humanism and Reflection in Medicine



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INTRODUCTION

- Providing opportunities for the development of humanism is valuable in medical education.¹
- The capacity to adopt humanistic values in medical practice is challenged by the pressures of increased productivity, administrative duties, and burnout. These challenges erode the doctor-patient relationship, compromising professionalism and quality of care.
- Integrating art into medical education curricula places focus on cultivating humanistic values in addition to refining trainees' clinical reasoning.¹ Creating art has been shown to foster a sense of personal growth, reflection, self-discovery, as well as enhancing awareness of others.²
- Graphic medicine is an evidence-based way to encourage reflection of training experiences through the use of art.
- At WSU SOM, a session was delivered to facilitate student clinical experience discussions using graphic medicine. Feedback about this pilot may inform future initiatives.

METHODS

- Third year medical students were offered an optional virtual session during their Clinical Reasoning Integration Skills Practice (CRISP) course and 12 students were in attendance. All students completed the feedback survey.

Presentation:

Faculty facilitated discussion about the utility of medical comics in education with examples.



Break out sessions:

Students created comics illustrating their expectations before 3rd-year, experiences during 3rd-year, and hopes for 4th-year.



Discussion:

The session ended with students discussing their work and completing an optional, anonymous feedback survey.

MEDICAL COMICS EXAMPLES

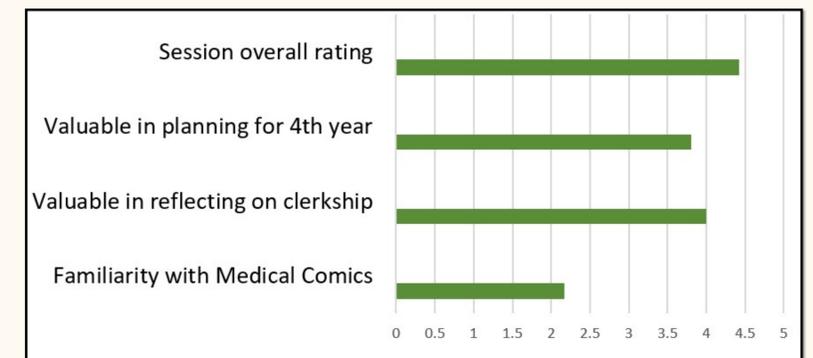


- The first comic (above) portrays the anticipation of a pediatrics rotation, COVID effects, and impact on the student.
- The second comic (below) portrays how interactions within a clinical team affect confidence and identity as a future physician, and ways to achieve her goals for the next year.



RESULTS

- Most students were not previously familiar with graphic medicine.
- Students thought drawing a personal comic was valuable in reflecting on their clerkship experience (4/5), and planning for success during 4th-year (3.8/5). The session was rated 4.4/5.



CONCLUSION

- This session introduced graphic design to medical students and showcased its value in inspiring plans for future clinical success, and introspection.
- Participation in the session was perceived to be valuable for:
 - Reflecting on past experiences in medical training while building connections amongst peers in a humanizing and light-hearted setting
 - Developing the next steps in training and career planning
- The use of medical graphics has great potential in allowing the expression of complex experiences while evoking humanism in medicine. This deserves further study with a larger group.
- Future projects can focus on sessions with larger groups, follow-up of effects, and launching a school comic book that is published in periodic school newsletters. This could include both medical students and faculty submissions.

REFERENCES

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