

GRAPHIC MEDICINE AS PHYSICIAN TOOL TO UNDERSTAND THEIR PATIENT’S EXPERIENCE OF A MEDICAL CONDITION

Tom Janisse

The Permanente Journal/Press, The Permanente Medical Groups, Portland, OR, USA
tom.janisse@kp.org

BACKGROUND

Engaging patients in their healthcare, listening to their stories, and improving the quality of their experience also depends on physicians understanding their patient’s experiences of a medical condition.

Physicians have little time to converse with patients about this in the visit. Graphic Medicine – Comics – pictures and words together in sequence to tell a story – is a way to gain insight into a patient’s experience of what it is like.

METHODS

A small, mixed-method study to test the effect on physicians of reading a comic book, “My Degeneration: Parkinson’s Disease”, the 13 participants, including 11 physician-editors (representing 10 disciplines), answered a 7-question pre-survey before receiving and reading the book, and a 10-question post survey. Also, the 12 participants present at the recent Permanente Journal Editorial meeting commented on their experience of reading the book, its attributes, and their recommendations for the comic book as an educational tool for residents and patients.

RESULTS

Greatest Improvements were: "know patients' wants," (54%), "know treatments" (37%), "know patients' needs" (34%) and "know patients' experience" (30%). 82% recommended the comic book for resident education, and 73% for patients. Comments included "My patients say: 'Doc, you guys really need to understand what's going on for me. It's really hard for me.'" "The things that people do to deal with their condition are remarkable!" "For a patient to have a conversation with his disease, as in the book, is a wonderful idea. "Combining pictures with words has triple the educational value for millennial residents who demand high yield."■