FINDING OUR VOICE: BUILDING ADVOCACY SKILLS TO ADVANCE PSYCHIATRIC NURSING

Beth Phoenix, PhD, RN, APNA President-Elect
Ruth “Topsy” Staten, PhD, APRN—CS, NP

The ideas and information presented here are those of the presenters. These speakers have no conflict of interest to disclose.

Agency
- Giving voice and visibility to psychiatric nursing
- IOM report on Future of Nursing
- Agency—to act or exert power
  - Recognizing the importance of psychiatric nursing work and own importance in carrying out this work
- Stigma—a mark of infamy or disgrace
  - For psychiatric nurses, agency also must involve fighting stigma
- Advocacy—the act of pleading for, supporting or recommending
  - Every time we speak up/out for ourselves and for our patients we exert power and fight stigma for both

Barriers and Facilitators
- In small groups, take a few minutes to discuss the primary barriers and facilitators of agency, fighting stigma and advocacy (be sure to give time to each area).
- Identify one or two barriers and facilitators.

Rewriting the Script
- Objectives
  - Describe the elements of a clear and persuasive script for talking about what psychiatric nurses do and why they do it.
  - Discuss tailoring of messages to audience needs/interest/understanding
  - Practice rewriting common conversations that psychiatric nurses have with others (nurses, other health care professionals, clients/families, policy makers, public and media) regarding psychiatric nursing and mental health care.

Agenda
- 3:20-3:40 Introduction: Agency, Stigma and Advocacy
- 3:40-4:30 Rewriting the Script
- 4:30-5:10 Elevator Speeches & Bumper Stickers
- 5:10 -5:20 Wrap Up
Constructing an Anecdote or Argument: Setting the Context

- Describe your specialty or area of expertise
- Describe health condition or situation you’re dealing with
- Who is the patient? Why are they in your setting?
- How prevalent is the problem you’re dealing with?
- What are its consequences?

Constructing an Anecdote: Nursing Action

- What did you do? What do nurses do?
- What clinical knowledge & judgment did you or nurses bring to the encounter or issue?
- Why did you do what you did?
- How did it make a difference?

5 Steps to Creating an Anecdote

1. Paint a picture
2. Avoid jargon
3. Use facts & statistics
4. Paint yourself into the picture
5. Paint the whole picture

Paint a Picture

- Provide detail about:
  - Types of patients you work with
  - Care environment
  - Complexity of care
- Describe how your actions reflected your clinical judgment
- Make clear that your actions were guided by your own expertise

Avoid Jargon

- Eliminate technical jargon ("cognitive restructuring" vs. "identifying and correcting distorted thinking")
- Eschew nurse-speak ("holistic biopsychosocial person-centered care")

Use Facts and Statistics

- Note down useful statistics for later use
- Examples
  - Depression causes more disability worldwide than other health problems except heart disease
  - In a given year, only about half of people with serious mental illness receive any mental health care
Paint Yourself into the Picture

- Discuss your own actions that led to a positive outcome
- Emphasize your own clinical judgment

Paint the Whole Picture

Discuss both caring and technical expertise

Now it's your turn...

Rewrite an anecdote that illustrates how we apply psychiatric nursing expertise to benefit our patients, their families and the community

Tailoring Your Message

- Who is your audience?
- What are their concerns or interests?
- What arguments are most likely to move them?
- Consider current “hot topics”

Message Makeover

Rewrite anecdote to better target one of these audiences:
- Advocacy group
- Mental health administrator
- Lawmaker
- Audience of your choice

Using Your Stories in the Media

Consider news values
- Timeliness
- Prominence
- Currency
- Impact
- Conflict
- Scandal/wrongdoing

- Letters to editor— keep it brief & focused
- Television
  - Short pithy sound bites
  - What visual images convey our work?
Anecdote Checklist

☐ Does your story paint a picture?
  ☐ Would a non-nurse find your story interesting?
  ☐ Does you reader or listener see you at work?
  ☐ Do you include critical details that show the reader or listener what you do is important and why?

☐ Is your story jargon-free?
  ☐ Do you translate complex terms into lay-language?
  ☐ Do you decode your work for the listener or reader?
  ☐ Are you using language appropriate to your listener?
  (Buresh & Gordon, 2006)

Anecdote Checklist (cont.)

☐ Do you bolster your argument with facts and statistics?
  ☐ Do you paint yourself into the picture?
  ☐ Do you use the voice of agency?
  ☐ Can the reader or listener see what you are doing and what your role is?
  ☐ Is your clinical knowledge and judgment evident?
  (Buresh & Gordon, 2006)

Anecdote Checklist (cont.)

☐ Do you paint the whole picture?
  ☐ Do we see a full range of your nursing activities—medical, technical, emotional, social, and body care?
  ☐ Do you focus only on one aspect?
  ☐ Do we understand why vital signs are vital?
  ☐ Is the nurse’s intelligence, curiosity, and decision-making evident?
  ☐ Does your anecdote refute traditional stereotypes about nursing, or inadvertently reinforce them?
  ☐ Does your anecdote help us understand the significance and consequential nature of nursing work?
  (Buresh & Gordon, 2006)

Bumper Stickers and Elevator Speeches

Ruth "Topsy" Staten, PhD, PMH-CS

Objectives

☐ Explore the importance of short, succinct description of the need for psychiatric nurses and the difference they make.
☐ Develop bumper stickers and brief (90 second) statements conveying the essence of psychiatric nurses/psychiatric nursing.
☐ Share creative images of psychiatric nursing.

Elevator Speeches

☐ What?
☐ Why?
☐ Where?
☐ When?
☐ Who?
☐ How?

Chris King  http://www.creativekeys.net/powerfulpresentations/article1024.html
Keys to An Effective Elevator Speech

1. Figure out what is unique about what you do.
2. Make it exciting.
4. Write it down.
5. Practice, and then practice some more.

Crafting An Elevator Speech

- Know your audience
- Know your self
  - Strengths
  - Adjectives
  - What do you want others to know about you?
  - Why do you want the other person to know this?

Crafting An Elevator Speech (cont.)

- Bullets
- Sentences
- 90-word Paragraph
  - Who am I?
  - What do I offer?
  - What problem is solved?
  - What are the main contributions I can make?
  - What should the listener do as a result of hearing this?

Creating Bumper Stickers

- Use few words to convey meaning
- Avoid offensive language
- Use humor that does not exploit or harm

Bumper Stickers

- Archaeologists are the cowboys of science
- If you can read this you're too close
- If you're going to Pass the Torch, Be Sure to Include the Flame
- Stereotypes - De-Humanize
- Don’t believe everything you think

Occupational Bumper Stickers

- Farmers Feed the World
- Accountants are Good With Figures

http://www.zazzle.com/bumperstickers

http://bschool.pepperdine.edu/career/content/elevatorspeech.pdf

http://mind4meetings.wordpress.com/2009/05/12/the-elevator-pitch-you-in-30-seconds-or-less/

http://bschool.pepperdine.edu/career/content/elevatorspeech.pdf

http://www.zazzle.com/bumperstickers
Bumper Stickers

- Goal: I or We help ____________
- Passion: to do ____________
- Subject: by providing ____________
- Audience: ____________

Bumper Stickers for Children

- What a child learns at home will remain forever
- HATE is not a family value
- A happy childhood lasts a lifetime
- Be kind is more important than being perfect
- Teach rather than punish

References

- Partners in Health: www.pih.org
- Gordon, S. (2012). When Chicken Soup is not Enough: Stories of Nurses Standing Up for Themselves, Their Patients, and Their Profession
- **Google clipart used throughout this presentation**