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PCPE Stakeholder Consultation and Website Content Strategy

Executive Summary

OVERVIEW

Patient and Community Partnership for Education (PCPE) recently hired Signals Design Group to review and analyze the organization's overarching brand narrative, including how PCPE is currently perceived, what is working well, and what are some challenges.

As part of the work, Signals completed competitive landscape research, a communications and website audit, as well as a period of engagement with PCPE's key internal and external stakeholders, representing the diverse audiences with which PCPE enagages. Audience groups included: UBC Health and Human Services Faculty, Students, Patients, and Patient/Community organizations.

Engagement findings have informed content strategy recommendations for PCPE's website.

ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

To gain an understanding of the PCPE brand as it stands today, we asked participants a series of questions intended to uncover the program's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The following findings summarize what we heard:

Strengths

Stakeholders noted a number of strengths.

- "Game changing" Health Mentors Program is very well received by patient educators, UBC faculty, and students, inspiring others in Canada and internationally to mimic the program. We also heard that over the years, the Health Mentors Program has been instrumental in building trust between community organizations, patients, and the university. Participants noted that this is a huge strength because universities at times have a reputation of being difficult to collaborate with.

- Angela Towle's and Bill Godolphin's distinguished careers as researchers and educators, their towering reputation, and relentless passion to empower the patient voice are massive strengths for PCPE.

- PCPE offers high-quality programs.

- Strong relationships with very knowledgeable people in the community and at the university have benefited PCPE over the years.

- Over the years, PCPE has had a significant impact on students who find the meaningful engagement with patients very valuable. We also heard that PCPE is genuinely committed to ensuring that their offerings provide value to students, and are always evaluating and restructuring their programs to meet student needs.

- PCPE provides a "culture of safety" for students to learn and ask questions, that may be inappropriate for a classroom.

- PCPE thoroughly evaluates its programs and has generated sizeable evidence, which is rare among similar initiatives. Stakeholders noted that assessment is not limited to post-course evaluation and exit surveys, but tracks people many years after they participated in a PCPE program.

Weaknesses

Stakeholders noted that some of the weaknesses ailing PCPE are: lack of integration with UBC Health (although progress has been made on this front in recent years), overwhelmed students for whom events and activities directly related to grades are top priorities, overwhelmed instructors who find it challenging to integrate patient sessions into curricula, and weak marketing.

However, stakeholders consistently noted that one of biggest weaknesses is that PCPE is not well known. People don't have clarity on what PCPE does. We heard that when people find out about PCPE and participate in their programs, they find them valuable, but unfortunately, not many know about PCPE. We also heard that many are unclear about what PCPE does, and while people are aware of the Health Mentors Program, they don't see PCPE as a resource that can help health programs at UBC engage patients.

Stakeholders advised PCPE to be more visible. They noted that a lot of the information on PCPE's website plus some of their other communications assets (such as the brand explainer video) are outdated and therefore, losing their impact.

Opportunities

Stakeholders noted the following opportunities.

- It's important to tell the PCPE story compellingly, and more often, in a manner that stakeholders understand and appreciate.

- PCPE's value proposition, need, and impact need to be clear. Participants urged that PCPE needs to "sell the need for this better." Stakeholders advised that PCPE's value proposition and impact must be clear and compelling for people to understand why the work they do is "groundbreaking."

- Engagement of patients becomes part of the core fabric of health professional education at UBC.

Threats

Stakeholders noted that lack of core funding and succession planning (for when the "key players" retire) for the program could potentially threaten the program's existence.

What do Stakeholders Need from PCPE's Website?

We asked stakeholders what they need from PCPE's website and what PCPE can do differently to ensure it's a useful resource for all stakeholders. The following findings summarize what stakeholders would like to see on PCPE's website:

- Succinct description of PCPE, what it offers, and why people should care
- Clear, easy-to-access information about PCPE programs
- Impact of patient engagement on students and patients (what are the benefits?)
  - More personal stories
  - More inspirational content
- Videos (brand explainer video, alumni stories, mentor interviews, testimonials of students and patient educators)

WEBSITE

Stakeholder engagement clearly shows that while PCPE is very well regarded among people who have used its programs, and there is immense regard for Angela Towle's and Bill Godolphin's body of work, the initiative is at a significant disadvantage because it's not well known and it's not clear to stakeholders what PCPE does and why. Given this feedback, we recommend that PCPE create a new website with:

- Refreshed and consolidated written/digital content
- A fresh visual identity that makes it easier for PCPE's target audiences to search for and find the most relevant content

In today's times, an organization's or initiative's website is their digital calling card. Therefore, it's important for PCPE to clearly communicate their value proposition and impact, and share useful resources on their website.

Based on what we heard, we recommend the following content for PCPE's new website.

- Clear, short and strong statement of PCPE's value proposition
- New introductory/brand explainer video
- Additional video (could be considered for Phase 2 of website updates): 15-30 second testimonials of students, faculty, patients; mentor interviews; real-life impact (compelling alumni videos of how PCPE has impacted their practice and changed the way they provide care)
- Successful outcomes of PCPE's programs and initiatives, demonstrated through infographics and success stories (which could be in video format)

We recommend that all of the above should be guided by a storytelling approach to the content.

NEWSLETTER

Our PCPE website (http://meetingofexperts.org) audit showed that PCPE's newsletter is one of the offerings on PCPE's website that generates the most traffic. It's also a key channel for PCPE news and updates. We recommend supporting the new website with a refreshed newsletter, which shares messaging and visual language with the redesigned website. Refreshing the newsletter will give PCPE the opportunity to revisit the look and feel and the content for the newsletter through a strategic lens.

FINAL THOUGHTS

In a recent report by UBC Health titled *Patient Engagement in Education in UBC Health Programs*, the UBC Health Patient Engagement Working Group and the UBC Health Patient and Community Advisory Committee recommended that PCPE's mandate and resources be extended to build a central hub for patient engagement for health programs at UBC. We believe that a strategic PCPE website, with storytelling at the heart of it, would be well-positioned to deliver a central hub for information, resources, and stories about patient engagement in education.

And, in the light of community engagement being one of the core areas of the UBC Strategic Plan, it's important to showcase PCPE as an excellent example of that. Community engagement is a central aspect of PCPE's success and one of its key strengths. Again, a strong and strategic website would be an appropriate channel to highlight PCPE's community engagement footprint.