Infinite Ability: The Confluence of Disability and Medical Humanities

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ABSTRACT

In June 2011, Infinite Ability, a new special interest group on disability within the Medical Humanities Group was formed to explore disability through creativity. Disability studies are sporadically used in Medical Humanities program. Since persons with disabilities constitute a large minority, we need to bridge the gap so as to move towards social model of disability. The author describe an innovation of reaching people with disabled attitude through medical humanities and believes further research can help in incorporating new evidences towards achieving new special interest group on disability and initial activities in sensitizing people

Keywords: Disability, Disability through Creativity, Disabled Attitude, Medical Education, Medical Humanities

BACKGROUND

Deobrah Kirklin defines Medical Humanities (MH) as “an interdisciplinary and an increasingly international endeavor that draws on the creative and intellectual strengths of diverse disciplines including literature, art, creative writing, drama, film, music, philosophy, ethical decision making, anthropology, and history in pursuit of medical educational goals” (Kirklin, 2009). The study of disability is underrepresented in MH programs despite persons with disabilities (PwD) are a large minority which seeks medical care (Garden, 2010a; Garden, 2010b).

Article 1 of the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines PwD as those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in the society on an equal basis with others. The list of disabilities include autism spectrum disorders, blindness, cerebral palsy, chronic neurological conditions, deaf-blindness, dwarfism, hemophilia, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, leprosy-cured, locomotor disability, mental illness, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, specific learning disabilities, speech impairment and thalassemia.

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