

# Enhancing patient-centered medical care through life story work (LSW).

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# Problem Statement



Clinical time restraints can create challenges in engaging in informal or intimate conversations with patients



COVID-19 limits student opportunities to interact with patients and build interpersonal skills



This creates an empathy, compassion, and perspective gap that My Life, My Story seeks to address



**Veteran  
Experience**



**Whole Health**



**Commitment to  
Education**

# My Life, My Story: Overview

A patient-centered program designed to create a **strong connection** between Veterans and providers

Interviewer and Veteran together create a personal narrative which allows:

- Veterans to have an opportunity to relay their “story” and share what they want their providers to know
- Providers can better understand and interact with their patients

The background features several green circles of varying sizes and shades. A large, solid light green circle is in the top-left corner. A thin white circle overlaps its bottom edge. A thin light green circle is in the top-right corner. A large, solid dark green circle is at the bottom center.

# **Example Excerpt**

# My Life, My Story: Methods

Patient provides  
consent

1

Conduct  
Interview

2

Write personal  
narrative

3

Read the story to  
Veteran for  
approval

4

Story is added to  
medical record

5

# My Life, My Story: Goals



Incorporate  
students  
and VAMC  
volunteers



Increase the  
number of  
Veterans  
reached

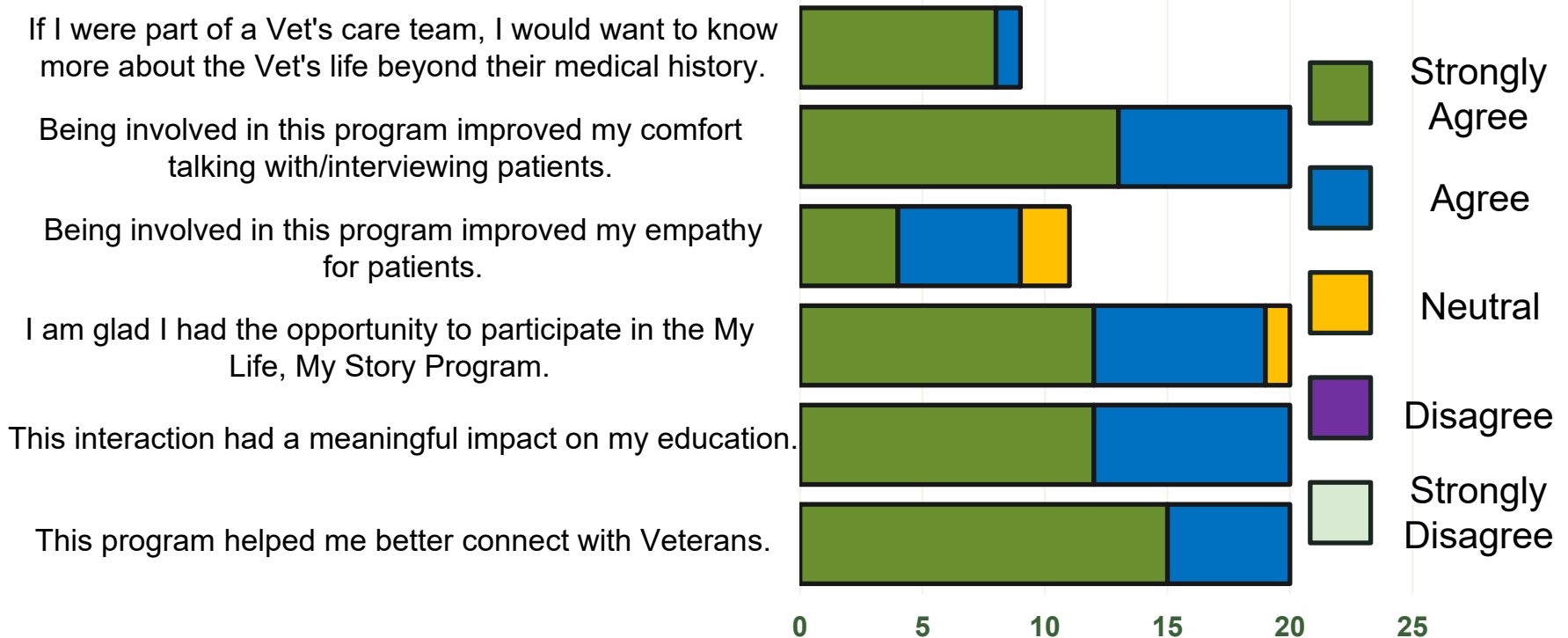


Gather  
feedback to  
inform future  
expansion



Enhance  
volunteer  
communication  
and interview  
skills

# Student Response to the My Life, My Story Program



# Veteran Response to the My Life, My Story Program

Being involved in the MLMS program improved my comfort with my providers.

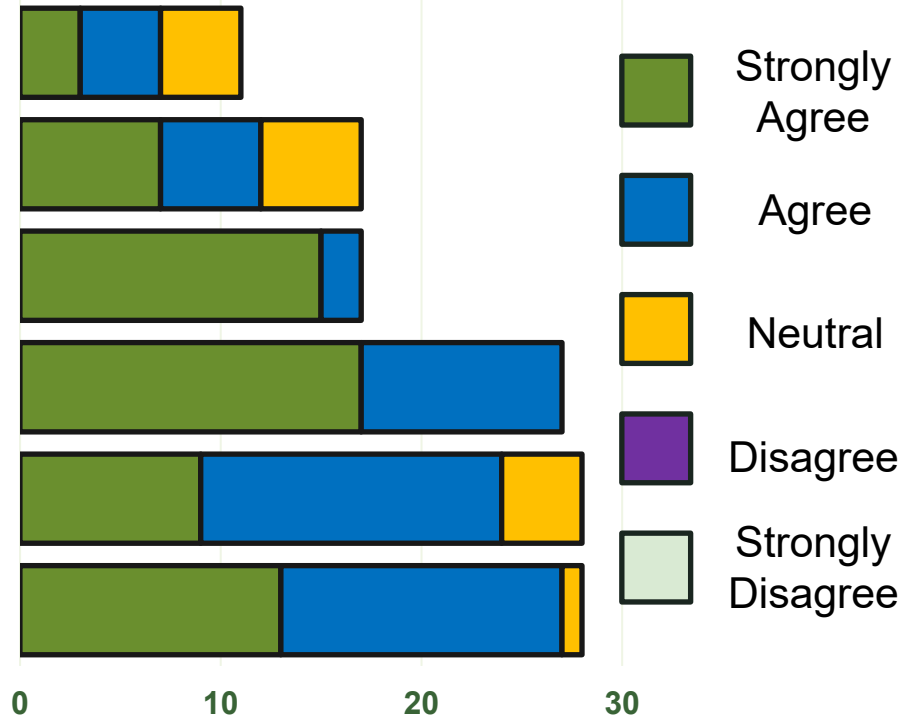
Participating in the My Life, My Story program helped me feel less isolated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center should continue the My Life, My Story Program.

I am glad I participated in the My Life, My Story program.

My medical care team will be able to provide me better care after they read my story.

I enjoyed reflecting on my own life and sharing my story.





# My Life, My Story: Veteran Benefits

1

The stories help humanize the patients for providers

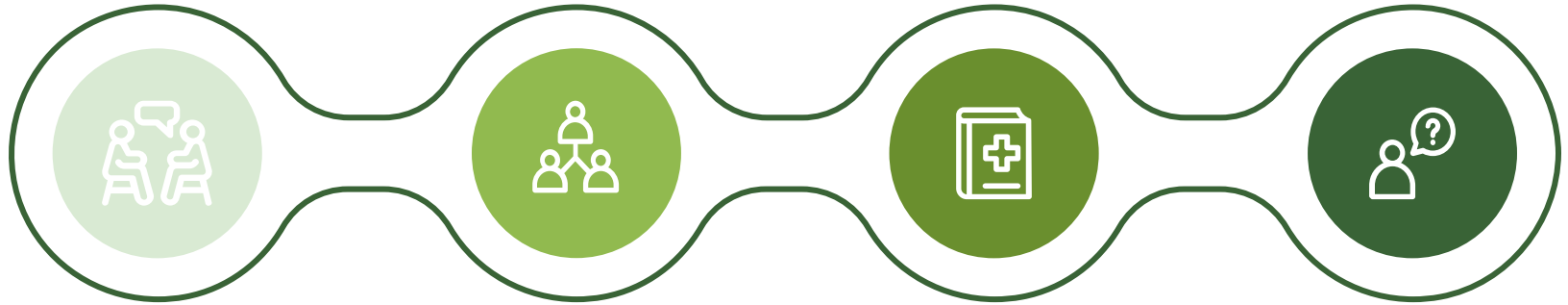
2

Improves mood, lowers stress, and helps improve the immune response

3

The process of telling a story, having a story written, and receiving it back has been shown to reduce psychological distress, increase hope, and help the patient feel valued

# My Life, My Story: Volunteer Benefits



Strengthens  
communication  
skills

Connects with  
Veterans in the  
community

Enhances  
student comfort  
in interacting  
with patients

Improves  
interviewing  
skills

# My Life, My Story: Significance



My Life, My Story Stakeholders better engage the patient and achieve healthcare excellence



Trainees learn to consider patient values and perspectives in future clinical practice



# **If you only remember one thing from this presentation it would be that:**

Conversations beyond the patients' presenting health concerns enable providers and health professions trainees to understand patients on a deeper level, improving quality of care.



# Thank You!

## **Presenters:**

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