Illness does not define me; I define what my illness means to me

Group #12
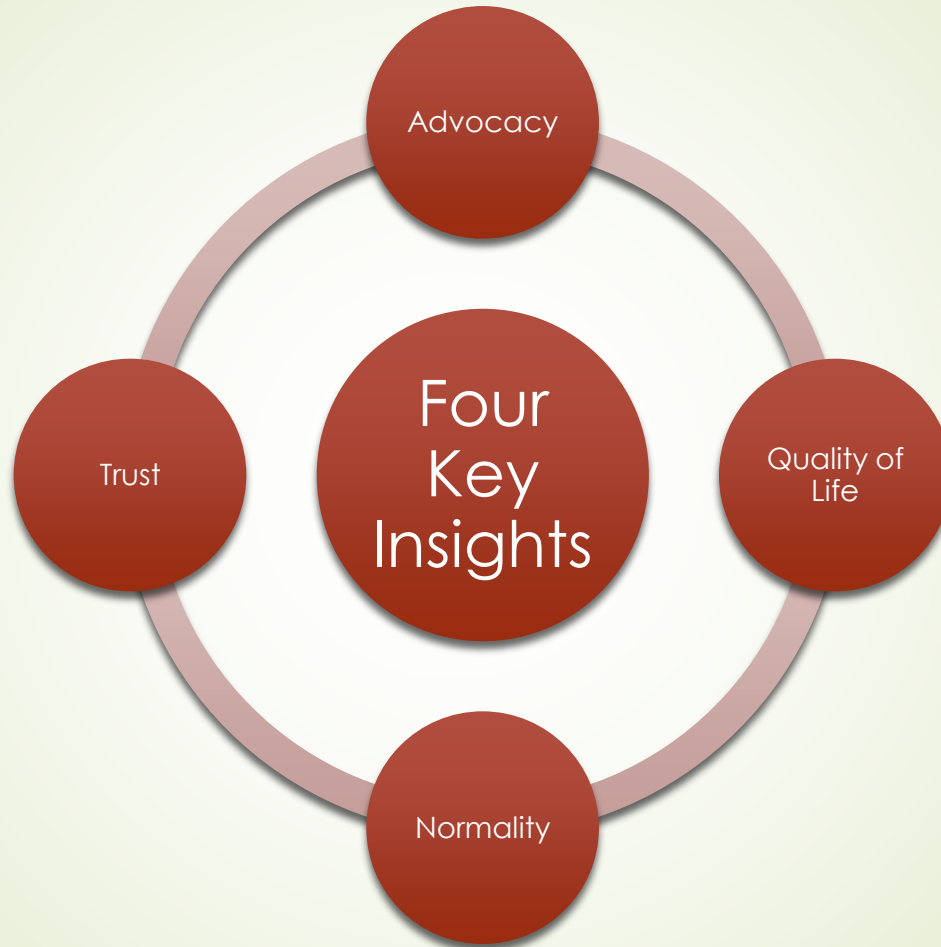**Mentor:** John Dub
Students:
Chloe Gao, Medicine
Amna Khan, Occupational Therapy
Valerie Myers, Nursing
Hillary Smith, Speech-Language Pathology
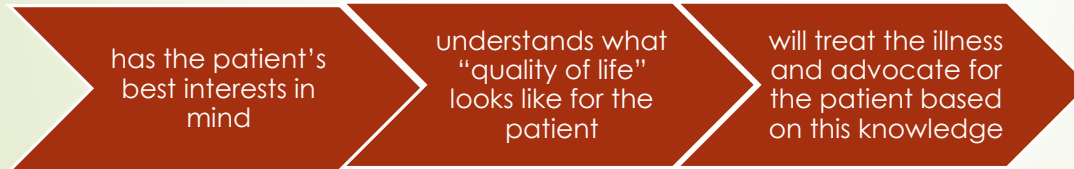**Honorary Member:** Midnight the Cat

Trust as a Foundation for Patient-centred Care

- A trusting relationship between the healthcare provider and the client is extremely influential on the patient's healthcare journey

- **The patient needs to trust that the healthcare professional:**

| has the patient's best interests in mind | understands what "quality of life" looks like for the patient | will treat the illness and advocate for the patient based on this knowledge |

- Having trust in the healthcare professionals a patient is working with is going to reduce a great deal of stress and anxiety surrounding the person's illness.

- A trusting relationship is going to encourage the client to be a more active participant in their care

The Importance of Advocacy

- **Crucial that healthcare providers think beyond their specific scope of practice, to champion their patient or client's holistic wellbeing**
  - Building trust and space for client to share their experiences openly
  - Intervening when client's needs aren't being met

- **Patient as advocate**
  - Important that patient or client feel empowered to exert agency over their own care

What is Normal?

- Medical education continuously strives to define what is 'normal' and 'abnormal'
  - E.g., Hormone levels, blood glucose, BMI, pediatric growth charts, etc.

- Our group discussed how normal looks and feels different for everyone!

- Important to listen and learn from the people we are serving to understand what 'health' and 'normal' means to them, and adopt a **strengths-based approach** to support them the way they want to be supported

- Terms such as "health" and "illness" can take on different meanings for everyone

Quality of Life

Having an illness or a health condition
should not default to quality of life being poor

Thank you!