

# Putting Values and Ethics on the Front Page: An Interprofessional Activity on Current News Stories in Substance Use Disorder

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## BACKGROUND/ RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Healthcare professional students need training opportunities to explore ethical dilemmas and conflicts to grow their professional identity and provide future optimal patient care.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Interprofessional collaboration is optimal to expand students' learning with value and ethics activities since it is one of the four Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) core competencies.<sup>3</sup>

## GOAL AND PURPOSE

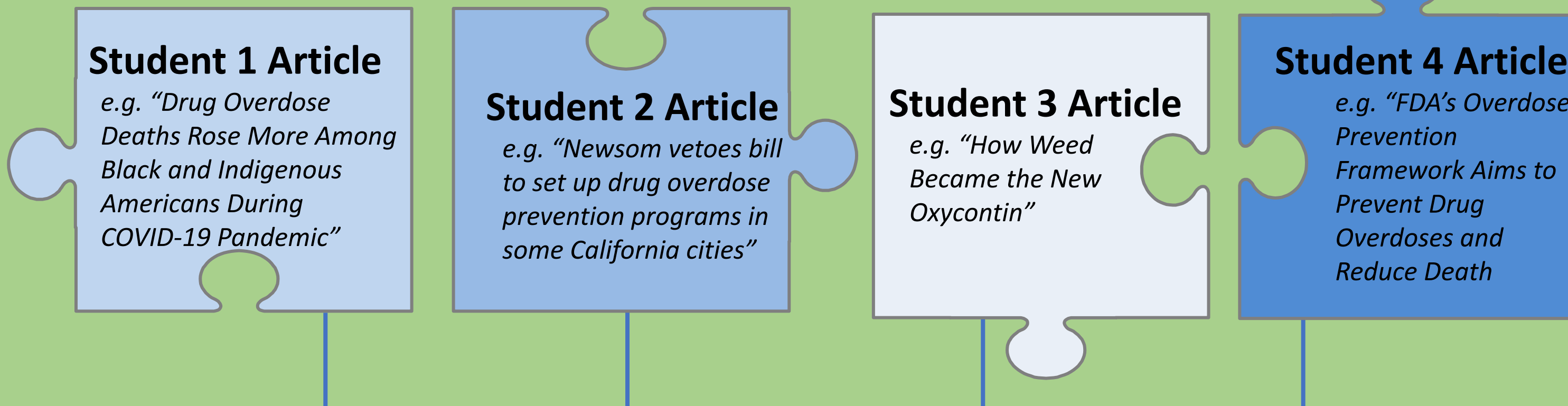
- Purpose of this activity is to encourage student growth in the area of:
  - Ethical dilemmas related to current events
  - Encourage interprofessional education (IPE) surrounding values and ethics discussions
  - Substance Use Disorders (SUD) ethical dilemmas
    - Particularly to increase the student exposure to this content area and highlight the importance of collaboration

## METHODOLOGY & METHODS

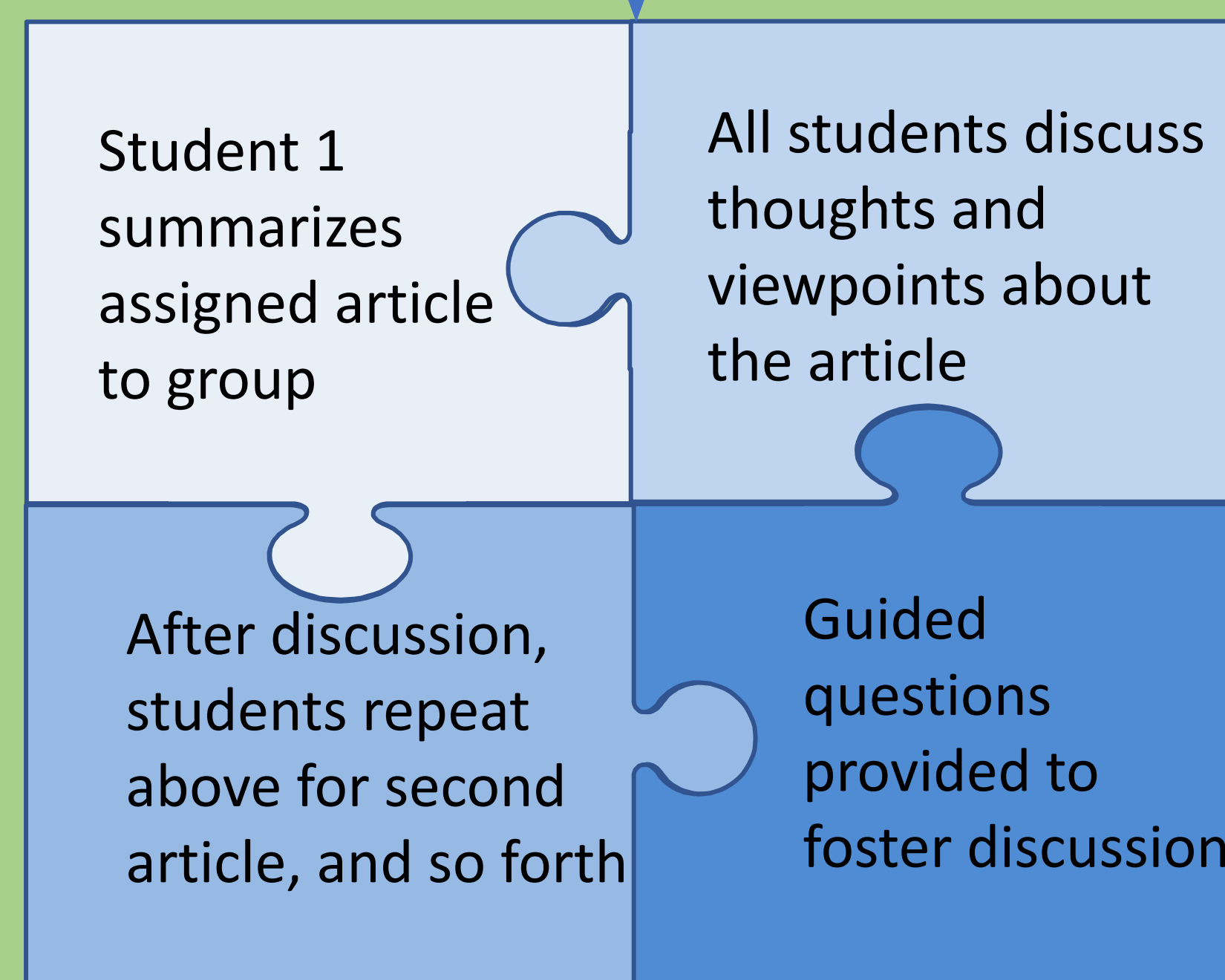
- Learners from medicine, occupational therapy, and pharmacy divided into interprofessional breakout room cohorts of four students
- Students given four recently published news articles to read and discuss among the group, with topics including:
  - 2019: Needle-exchange programs and safe injection sites
  - 2020, 2021: Delayed care during COVID-19 pandemic
  - 2022: Racial disparities, harm reduction, marijuana
- Facilitators enter breakout rooms periodically to facilitate discussion

## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

### Step 1: Independent reading



### Step 2: Group discussion



### Step 3: Facilitator involvement

- Facilitators enter breakout rooms after several minutes of discussion
- Facilitator advances discussion by challenging students to consider:
  - All sides of the debate
  - Ideas for policy changes to improve current problems
  - Validity of news articles versus peer-reviewed articles
  - Role of each profession in assisting patients

## RESULTS

Figure 1: Survey results for question: Please describe how the ethics activity altered your **knowledge and understanding** of COVID-19's impact on the Opioid Epidemic, Opioid Use Disorder treatment, and Overdose Deaths in the United States.

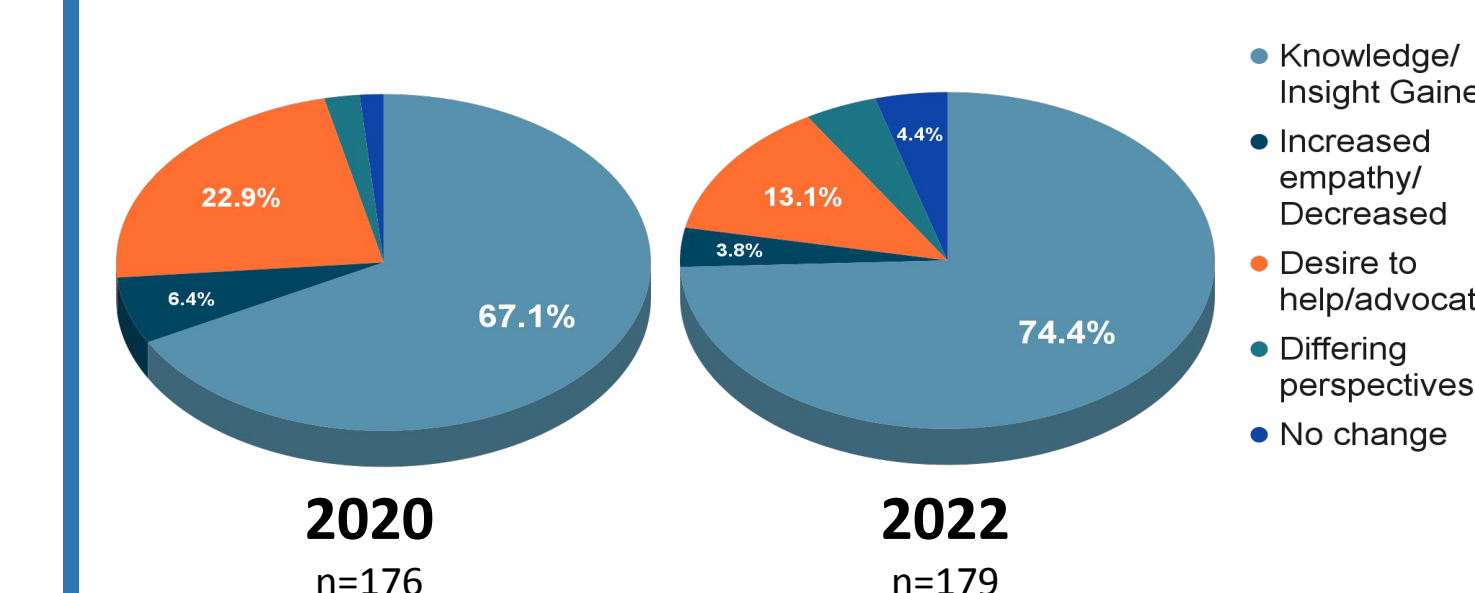
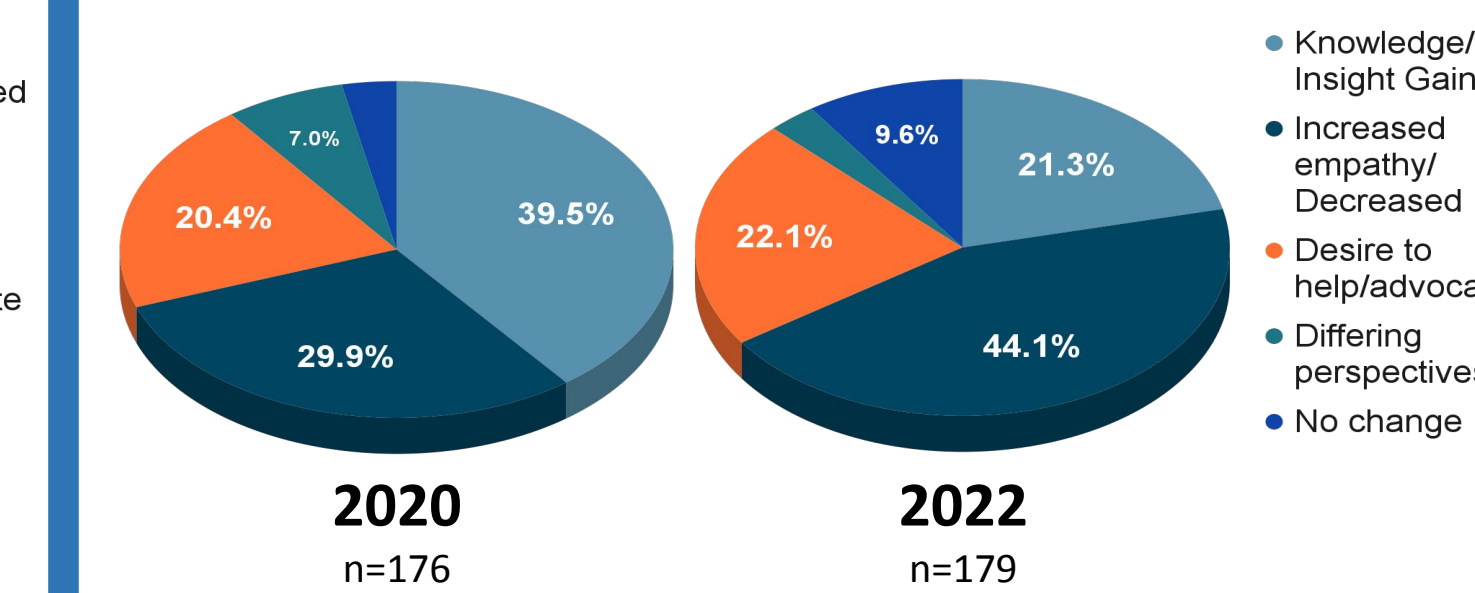


Figure 2: Survey results for question: Please describe how the ethics activity impacted your **empathy or attitudes** towards the Opioid Epidemic, Opioid Use Disorder treatment, and Overdose Deaths in the United States.



### Selected Comments:

- "It was cool to talk to other students who are taught to look at things in a different light and to learn from them. We all had different ideas in how policy makers could make a change, how we could make a change from our respective profession."
- "The stereotype and stigma [will] not go away easily and as a health care professional, it is very important to make the very first move in changing such environment."
- "It made me want to reach out to individuals and provide them with care they may need. I want to act as a resource to the ones that need help."

For more student comments and full conclusions:



## CONCLUSIONS & CURIOSITIES

Due to number of students (444), facilitated small group work maximizes learning impact<sup>4</sup>

- Observed & reported benefits:**
  - Increased communication, teamwork skills and problem solving skills
  - Better prepared for "client" interaction
- New learning of SUD reported by students:**
  - Increased understanding of complexity of SUD & empathy for those affected (most frequent factor)
  - Far reaching impact & intersectionality of the pandemic with SUD
  - Effects of health disparities, access to care, & the importance of advocacy
  - Effects of stigma & students' own stigma reduction
- Shortcomings:**
  - As a one time experience, participation expectations occasionally resulted in forced interactions
  - Some students did not critically analyze article
  - Student & faculty dynamic not consistent across groups
- Improvement Suggestions:**
  - Provide one article per discussion group before event
  - Provide discipline-specific preparation
  - Provide more warm-up time