

Transcript

Matters of Engagement podcast

Episode: "MoE Spring Update 2023: Checking in with Jen and Em"

<https://mattersofengagement.com>

SPEAKERS

Jennifer Johannesen, Emily Nicholas Angl

Jennifer 00:02

You're listening to Matters of Engagement, a podcast examining issues at the intersection of health, healthcare and society. I'm Jennifer Johannesen.

Emily 00:12

And I'm Emily Nicholas Angl.

Jennifer 00:17

Hey, Emily

Emily 00:18

Hey, Jen

Jennifer 00:19

It's been a while since we've published an episode. We have lots on the go these days related to the podcast, but also individually. How about we do a quick personal update before we wrap up the Health Policy series - which actually seems like a long time ago now - and then we can share what's next?

Emily 00:36

Yep. Great. Okay, so for me, it's been a pretty busy spring, wrapping up some work stuff, mostly consulting on research projects that have a patient and or public engagement component. And as you know, I also have a young child. He actually just turned six.

Jennifer 00:55

Say no more!

Emily 00:56

Yeah...! So, you know... spring is always busy in our household, but somehow the past few weeks have felt especially full. I always think that spring and summer are going to be more relaxing than they are. But nope!

Jennifer 01:09

Yeah, me too. I'm at a different phase in my life than you as I don't have young children. But I do have some of the same busy-ness and constraints. I manage the affairs of my mom, as you know, who's in a retirement home.

And my son is now a young adult. But you know, parenting never really stops! It just kind of evolves. And yeah, all my non-podcast work has been really busy to.

Emily 01:32

In the meantime, though, we have been making some progress on the podcast.

Jennifer 01:36

That's right. We've been thinking through some new directions and even have a new episode coming to kick things off. Basically, we're expanding beyond the idea of patient or public engagement as a specific topic, and thinking of engagement as being more embedded in what we do and talk about.

Emily 01:52

Yeah, and you know, this actually makes a ton of sense. So many health and healthcare projects have a sort of mandatory engagement component now - because of funding requirements, and also because it's just kind of become an expectation. But engagement itself isn't always the research focus.

Jennifer 02:10

Right. We'll continue to talk about engagement, because how can we not?! But we also recognize that that specific term is really more of a corporate or institutional word and has come to mean something rather specific. Which is a bit limiting from our perspective. Essentially, we're very interested in looking at how the general public as well as specific communities are involved in and impacted by both health and healthcare research, and health service delivery.

Emily 02:37

And so we now describe our podcast as: "A podcast examining issues at the intersection of health, health care and society." Remember how long we took to come up with that?

Jennifer 02:49

Yeah, I sure do. But I think it covers our objectives well.

Emily 02:54

Okay, well, before we carry on to what's next, let's just talk briefly about the series we just finished with the Public Engagement in Health Policy group at McMaster. So...shout out to Julia Abelson and the rest of the team!. They're doing such thoughtful work, and we really appreciated and enjoyed our collaboration on the series.

Jennifer 03:14

We'll definitely be checking back in with them as they move to new stages of work. As the current Research Phase is wrapping up, they're looking ahead to the Education Phase, which includes developing an open course for, well, anyone with an interest in public engagement and health policy.

Emily 03:29

Julia also mentioned some forthcoming publications, as well as their newly released guide to Supporting Equity-centered Engagement. Lots of interesting projects on the go. We'll put links in the show notes for all of this.

Jennifer 03:43

Yep, perfect. Okay, so let's pivot and share a bit about our expanded vision for the podcast. We're kind of in development mode, I guess you could call it? And we're looking for new partnerships and collaborations as we move forward.

Emily 03:55

And we think there's a really interesting opportunity here for health research projects, community groups, not-for-profits and healthcare organizations to utilize podcasting as a way to communicate, connect, inform...

Jennifer 04:09

...and even entertain! There's so much potential here to convey complexity and nuance in a way that's creative and accessible. And, you know, really gets people thinking about ideas and topics in a way they might not have before.

Emily 04:23

Having worked a lot in the research world, I know how much thought and effort and money goes into trying to connect with communities and populations who could really be impacted by the work that's being done. And yet, you know, the options always seem to circle around the same kinds of more traditional academic outputs, like lay summaries, short press releases, maybe an infographic here and there... And these definitely have a place, but it's kind of unclear how much impact they have. They don't necessarily lend themselves to capturing more complex ideas or different voices.

Jennifer 04:58

I agree. Same goes for initiatives that bill themselves as "Patients Included". I do think having some patients at academic conferences can be valuable to those individuals who attend. But I have questions as to how much reach there really is.

Emily 05:14

Well, all of this to say: we've been excited recently to have some exploratory conversations about how podcasting can support community outreach and knowledge mobilization. We've actually done a workshop, which we recorded and put on YouTube. There's a link in the show notes.

Jennifer 05:30

Yeah, that one was called Podcasting for Knowledge Translation.

Jennifer 05:36

[inserted audio from the workshop] "...Invite or bring in other voices and center other voices as appropriate...."

Emily 05:40

"....When you're thinking through your Knowledge Translation plan, think about how to do different types of creative endeavors with your podcast to meet the needs of different audiences or to present your material in..."

Jennifer 05:51

"...we realized there are so many editorial and technical choices that you have to make along the way even to just refine and decide and curate what is going to go into an episode...." [end audio]

Jennifer 06:02

It's potentially really informative for people new to the whole idea. But I think maybe the most useful thing is to just reach out to us and have a conversation. We can help to brainstorm ideas, put some costs together, and even help contribute to a grant proposal.

Emily 06:17

I do just want to add: we mentioned "community outreach"... but that's obviously very one sided - someone wanting to reach a community, whether they want to be reached or not. I mean, this certainly doesn't have to start with researchers. We're also really keen to work with community organizations, advocacy groups, etc. to offer our podcasting services and platforms for them to actually produce content that matters to them.

Jennifer 06:46

Exactly. We can function as advisors and co-producers. But it doesn't even have to be our voices on the episodes. We actually pitched a project recently, where it's the community members themselves who would do the field recordings and conduct the interviews, determine the topics. There's always a question of funding, of course, but I think creative ways can be found.

Emily 07:07

Absolutely. Should we leave it there for now?

Jennifer 07:10

Yeah, I think so. And we're just putting the finishing touches on our next episode, which is more in the direction we want to head.

Emily 07:17

I am really excited about this one. And not just because I'm involved in the project we're talking about! We produced a kind of behind-the-scenes look at how this particular SPOR project - SPOR is Strategy for Patient Oriented Research - how the researchers and Lived Experience Edvisors reflect on the value of including patients on the research team. It was genuinely interesting, especially considering that the project itself wasn't really studying patients, but was rather focused on the prescribing behavior of clinicians.

Jennifer 07:48

Yeah, there's definitely a lot to think about there. But let's pause on that. It is coming out soon. And I think listeners will really like it. It probably has the most moving parts of any episode we've made. And it's a bit of a departure because Emily, you're one of the guests instead of one of the hosts. How was that for you?

Emily 08:06

It was actually really fun. But it was also stressful. I'm really looking forward to getting back into the hosting role.

Jennifer 08:13

Yeah, me too. Okay, let's end there.

Jennifer 08:16

Just to officially close off the Public Engagement in Health Policy series, we want to especially thank Julia Abelson, Katie Boothe, Alfa Abebe, Rhonda C. George, as well as all of our other guests who appeared in the series.

Jennifer 08:32

This episode was written and produced by Jennifer Johannesen and Emily Nicholas Angl. If you'd like more information about our podcast, or just want to go ahead and book an exploratory call or meeting with one or both of us, please get in touch through our website at mattersofengagement.com