

# Graphic Medicine as Relational Practice in Dementia Care: Comics, Affect, and Immediacy

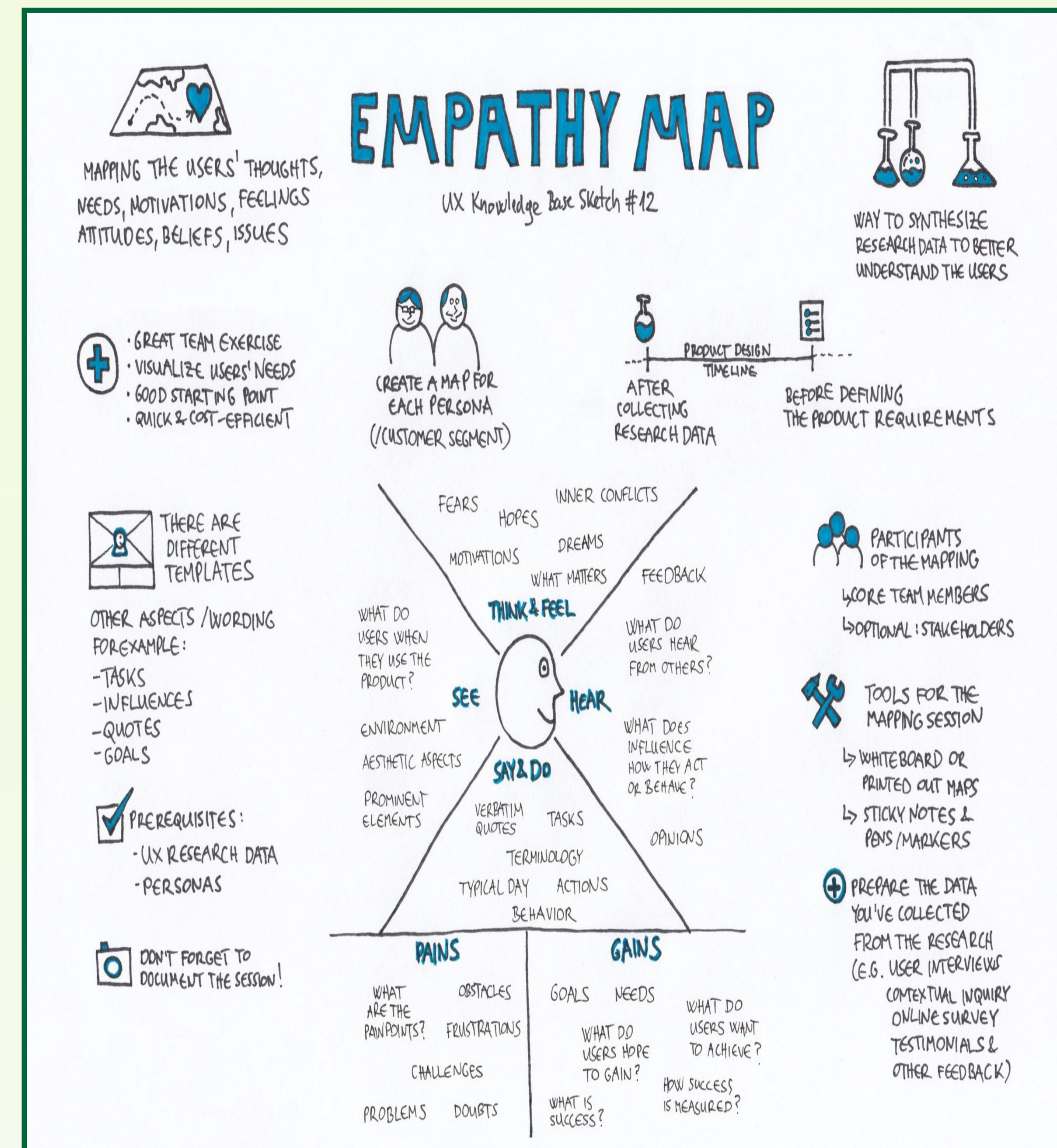
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## Background

Visual art has been used to help convey complex information in many academic and practice areas. For several years now, practitioners and patients have been exploring the use of graphic medicine which is the use of comics to support a relational perspective.

Currently, visual art is being used to integrate relational practice into nursing education. Narrative is a relational methodology that shares emotions and experiences with learners. Visual art offers immediacy and identification and so can better provide context and emotional layers to peoples' experiences.

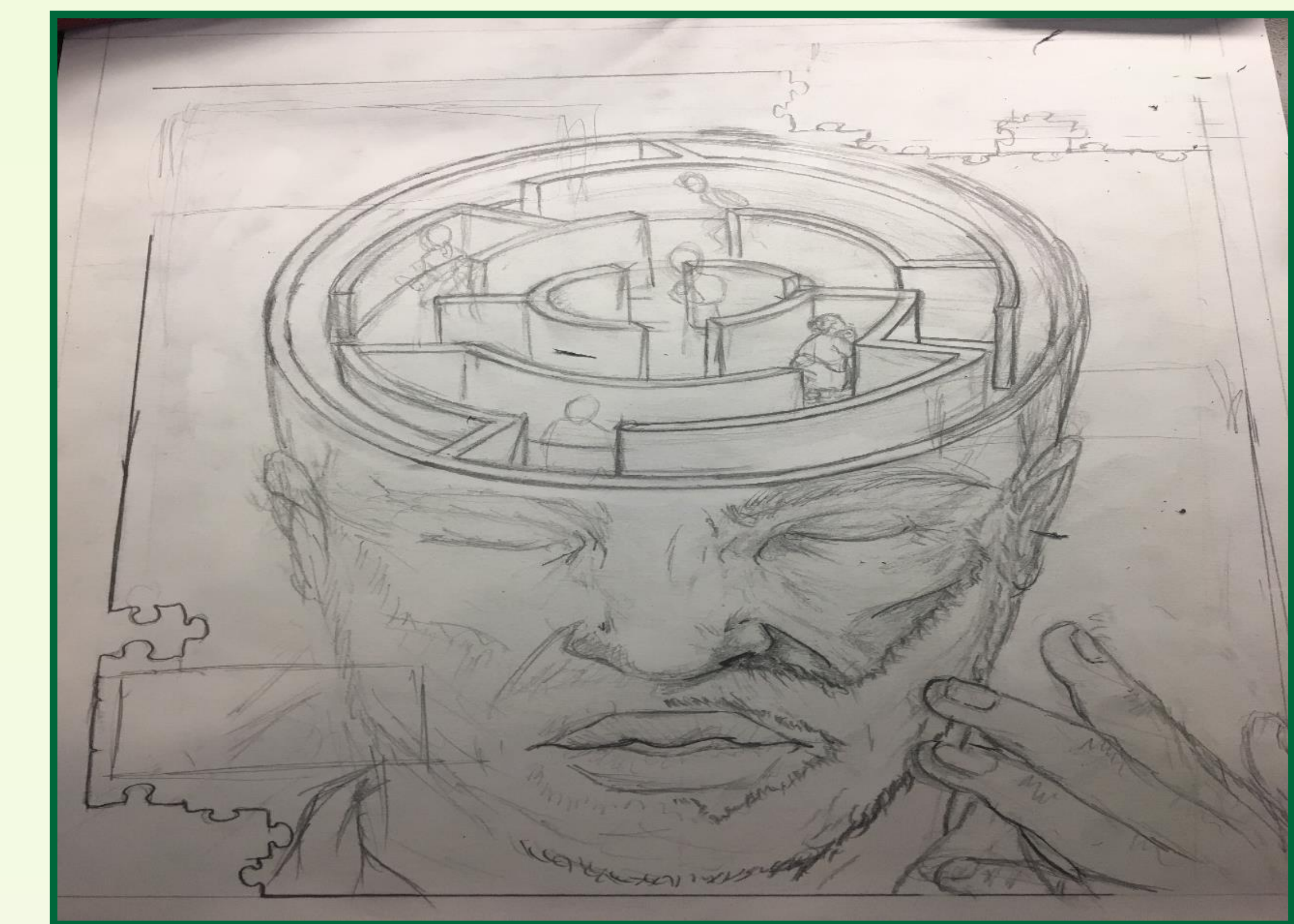


## Measures

Our findings will be compared with the UK resource produced, Parables of Care, at City University of London.

Data have been synthesized to collect common themes rather than the uniqueness of the participants.

Themes from the narratives will be synthesized using a phenomenological methodology and member checked by participants.



## Discussion

The comic, *I Know How This Ends*, is based on the literary form of classical tragedy with its emphasis on inevitability and caregiver stratagems to forestall it.

Comics have allowed us the ability to explore emotions like frustration, resentment, and hopelessness in a way that words alone could not.

They have also helped us highlight the relational dynamics between people with dementia, their family members and their care givers, specifically around control and power (or loss of control and power).

## Conclusion

The use of comic narratives has been a powerful tool for helping support caregivers understand the emotional labour of caring for someone with Dementia.

Future research is needed to determine the extent to which visual art can be used to support relational practice.

Funding Source: Douglas College

## Objectives

- To explore the narratives of professional care givers' experience caring for people with dementia, often their own family members.
- To transform these narratives into a comic resource for health care students who will one day be caring for people with dementia.

## Methods

Recruitment was done using the following strategies: recruitment letters, postings on electronic boards, direct recruitment, referrals, and posters.

Focus groups were conducted at Douglas College with faculty, staff and students. They were used to collect experiences caring for people with dementia. An artist was present at the focus groups to sketch themes that emerged.

The transcripts were reviewed and synthesized using an empathy map.

Story boards were created and are currently being adapted to create a comic book resource for health care professionals



Student experience with Dementia care