Health Literacy: moving from research into practice

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What is health literacy?

“the personal characteristics and social resources needed for individuals and communities to access, understand, appraise and use information and services to make decisions about health.”

World Health Organisation, 2015
Health literacy affects patients’ ability to...

- discuss health information/medical concerns with healthcare providers
- engage in self-care and disease management
- navigate their way through the healthcare system
- act on medical-related information
- adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle
Low health literacy = problems with

- Pill bottles
- Appointment slips
- Informed consents
- Discharge instructions
- Patient/health education materials
Mismatched communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider process</th>
<th>Giving information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patient process</td>
<td>Understanding, remembering, and acting on information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variability in the Message...

Take 1 tablet by mouth every morning

53 Different Ways to Say ‘Take 1 Tablet a Day’

Take one tablet orally once every day.

Take one pill by mouth once each day.

Take one tablet by mouth once daily

Take one tablet for cholesterol.

Take one pill by mouth at bedtime

Take 1 tablet 1 time daily.

Take one pill by mouth nightly.

Bailey et al., Annals of Pharmacotherapy, 2009
What we know

- Use of preventive services
- Delayed diagnoses
- Understanding of medical condition
- Adherence to medical instructions
- Self-management skills
- Risk of hospitalisation
- Physical and mental health
- Mortality risk

1800 + studies
Stoke-on-Trent

• The health of people in Stoke-on-Trent is generally worse than the England average
• Deprivation is higher than average and about 27.5% (13,600) children live in poverty
• Education attainment is lower than the England average
• Life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the England average
Health Literacy Survey in Stoke-on-Trent

Face-to-face survey >1000 randomly selected adults in Stoke-on-Trent

Results

Health literacy measured using NVS – 52% of adult population less than adequate health literacy

Poor HL significantly associated with:

• Older age
• Poorer health
• Lack access to internet
• Living in deprived areas

Protheroe J et al; in preparation
Patient leaflets in GP surgeries in Stoke-on-Trent

- One example of all PIL in 17 random surgeries was collected
- Examined readability and content

Results

- Less than 25% of PILs meet recommended reading level
- Majority would be too complex for 43% of population
- Less than 10% of the PILs covered managing illness:
  (including chronic disease, eg diabetes; or health promotion, eg healthy diet and lifestyle)

Protheroe J, Estacio E et al; BJGP 2015
What can we do about it?

- Raise Awareness
- Develop a local strategy
- Action planning
Thanks to our speakers

Judy Kurth is the Principal Health Improvement Specialist for Social Determinants of Health in Public Health, Stoke-on-Trent City Council. She has managed the World Health Organisation Healthy Cities work for Stoke-on-Trent since 2007. Her main interest and work focus is on reducing health inequalities and supporting health equity in all policies, of which health literacy is an important, and growing, strand of work.

Dr Jo Protheroe joined Keele University as a Senior Lecturer in General Practice in 2011 and continues to practise as a GP in Manchester. Her research, influenced by her clinical practice as a GP in inner-city Manchester, is focused on two NHS priorities - the needs of socio-economically disadvantaged patients and the need for interventions to improve patient self-management in long-term conditions. Research has shown that patients with low health literacy have difficulty in participating in their health care, resulting in poorer health. She is Chair of the Health Literacy UK (www.healthliteracy.org.uk) group.

Julie Obada has been Strategic Manager for Employment and Skills at Stoke-on-Trent City Council since September 2011. Julie is also the city council’s lead on skills for the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Economic Partnership (LEP). Employment and skills comprises several teams, one of which is Adult and Community Learning (ACL). ACL provides courses for local residents to improve their skills in a wide variety of subjects, but there is a particular emphasis on literacy, numeracy and employability. Skill levels in the city are low, with double the national average lacking any formal qualification. Poor literacy impacts on a person’s ability to find and sustain employment or to move to a higher level job with higher pay.

Thank you for coming
Should you have any questions, please feel free to email us at:
public.health@stoke.gov.uk
Photographs will be taken at this event for use on our website. Please contact the organiser if you do not wish your photograph to be taken.
Strategy

**Working together for the future**

- **self care**
  We will help people to make decisions for themselves relating to their management of long term health conditions.

- **adult learning**
  Organisations which deliver adult learning will be encouraged to include health literacy in the courses that they offer.

- **early years**
  Partners which work with young children will be helped to put health literacy into the things they do.

- **digital inclusion**
  Partners across the city will ensure that as people’s access to digital media and the internet improves, there will be a focus on health literacy.

- **policies and procedures**
  We will aim to get health literacy considerations into decision making policies across the city.

- **removal of barriers**
  We will work with partners including the NHS in particular, to make it easier for people to navigate healthcare systems and the wider health environment.

**Acting together will make Stoke-on-Trent a Health Literate City**
Presented strategy in further stakeholder event: Ideas to action

• Obtained pledges of actions
• Identified existing working projects that HL could be included / added
• Identified new projects for short, medium and longer term
Personal Pledge

In support of bringing health literacy to life in Stoke-on-Trent, I'm going to:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Health Promotion Conference 2015
### Ideas Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idea description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will benefit?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will they benefit?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who would deliver this?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there any obstacles to making it happen?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would a delivery partner be needed? If so who?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What support is required (e.g. training resources, funding etc.)</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact name:</th>
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<td>Email address:</td>
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<td>Telephone:</td>
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Prioritisation session
PATIENT INTERACTION

- Good communication skills
- Clarity
- Teach back
- Medics + Gatekeepers proactive

Patient interaction
Teach-back

Awareness Training
Gatekeeping

National Level
Patient interaction
Medics
Comm's skills

Plain English (written)

Teach back

G.P. behavior

Patient interaction

Offenders

Health Promotion Conference 2015
Actions started

• Community pharmacy technicians supporting older people on home deliveries
  — Medicines management; HL, signposting

• ‘Sports Leaders’ and ‘Playground Leaders’ in schools
  — 12-16 and 8-11 encouraging healthy exercise

• Raising awareness of HL in front-line staff
• Consider PIL / waiting room
• involve Patient Participation Groups
Actions planned

• Pharmacy pilot of using ‘Teachback’ – summer

• ‘plain English’ in public notices from Council

• Increase training frontline staff – consider a video

• Many more.....HL into Policy!!
Summary

• Health literacy is important with a significant impact on morbidity and mortality

• Key to “improving health literacy” is really about getting rid of the ‘mismatch’

• Balancing this mismatch should lead to reduction in health inequalities
Questions?

j.protheroe@keele.ac.uk

www.healthliteracy.org.uk
Health Literacy Group UK

1-day Conference at The Beardmore Hotel and Conference Centre, Glasgow

Friday 18th March 2016 SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for our 4th UK Conference

Health Literacy at the Deep End: Addressing Health Inequalities

We welcome applications - oral presentation/posters

• Health Literacy research and development
• Innovative and exciting Health Literacy practices

The abstract submission guidelines are available on www.healthliteracy.org.uk or from Sue Weir (s.weir@keele.ac.uk).

Abstract submission opens 25th June and closes 12pm Sunday 1st November 2015.