

# A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The integrating and merging of professional practice for health gain

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# Today

- About me
- About health literacy
- A snapshot of HL activity around the world
- Examples of integrated and merging professional practice



# The Royal Women's Hospital

- Established 1856
- Largest, stand alone, specialist women's hospital
- 70,000 (200.000 episodes of care) women from 165 countries, who speak different 80 different languages



# Health Literacy?

<b>Who</b>	<b>Individuals, health care workers, systems</b>
<b>need</b>	Ability, capacity
<b>To</b>	Acquire, access, obtain, understand, process, use, evaluate, communicate
<b>What</b>	Health, health care, health information
<b>Where</b>	At home, in the workplace, the community, the market place, the health care system, the political arena – in a variety of setting
<b>Why</b>	To promote, maintain good health. To improve health. To make appropriate health decisions. A critical empowerment strategy.

# Health Literacy – context by country

- **Australia** momentum for health literacy is gathering mostly in community health. Mentioned in several policy and health care reform documents.
- **Canada** HL driven mostly by public health, adult education and the community sector.
- **USA** HL has been driven by medical profession – more about risk, plain language and the ability to understand medical information – though changing

# Health Literacy – context by country

- **UK** Health promotion context – HL about the skills needed to increase health chances
- **The Netherlands** developing momentum now – seem to identify with US approach – measuring health literacy.
- **Finland** the concept is possibly a reasonably new one.

# Overview

## **Interventions, tools and research into**

- plain language initiatives
- research on labelling – particularly medications
- doctor patient communications (like teach back and teach to goal)
- Pictograms
- readability tests

# Overview

## **Interventions, tools and research into**

- numeracy research
- internet and social media support groups
- internet avatars
- organisational initiatives to encourage adherence to plain language, consistency and quality
- research into measuring health literacy

# Overview

- **Interventions, tools and research into**
- efforts to develop frameworks, theories and to further the understanding of health literacy
- training programs for health care consumers and providers
- the development of competencies for medical students
- developing hospital capacity

# Merging and integrating professions (and health consumers)



# Networks

- Health Literacy Wisconsin
- Health Literacy Missouri
- IHA conference in California – move towards a National coalition
- Health Literacy UK
- Alliance of health literacy the Netherlands

- *Interdisciplinary*
- *RNs, doctors, academics, librarians,*
- *Slightly different focus – patient ed, research,*
- *all gathering momentum*

What is the incentive?



# Adult Education

Rima Rudd – Harvard  
School of Public Health

- Assessing the health literacy environment – telephone, web and a health service walk through.
- Study circles – for adult educators to integrate health literacy into their curriculum



# Adult Education

- Literacy Assistance Centre – NYC
- Shorefront community centre
- Wisconsin Literacy
- Canisius-Wilhelmina Ziekenhuis



# Baby basics

## Lisa Bernstein – the What to Expect Foundation

- “the book is a gift”
- Simple but not simplistic
- Acknowledges issues for disenfranchised women
- All women want to have healthy pregnancies and babies
- Pregnancy is a time to promote literacy



# LLU+ London South Bank University

- Family learning and adult education classes
- Adults come because they want to promote and health skills for their family
- Develop literacy skills by the by



# Baby basics

- Christina Zarcadoolis – *Advancing Health Literacy*
- Linguists never talk about deficiencies instead she says, we need to work at finding out about the patient – we can't just stop at what the patient knows.



# Engage!

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