



Public Health
England

Health literacy: How to find good health information online and assess quality



Dr Caroline De Brún

16th August 2017 - Richmond Library Annex, London



Objectives

By the end of this session, you will hopefully have a greater awareness of:

- the importance of shared decision-making in healthcare
- good quality consumer health information resources
- resources and techniques to help assess quality of web-sites
- supporting material and organisations



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 Organization 2015

Source: WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia.(2015) Health literacy toolkit for low- and middle-income countries: A series of information sheets to empower communities and strengthen health systems. World Health Organization [URL: http://www.searo.who.int/entity/healthpromotion/documents/hl_toolkit/en/]



Shared decision-making

15 million people suffer from at least one chronic condition (diabetes, epilepsy, asthma)

NHS Care Summary records (2010)

Salzburg statement on shared-decision-making (2010)

An Information Revolution (2011)

- ‘No decision about me without me’
- Shared decision-making
- Access to data vs information



Library and Knowledge Services staff are...

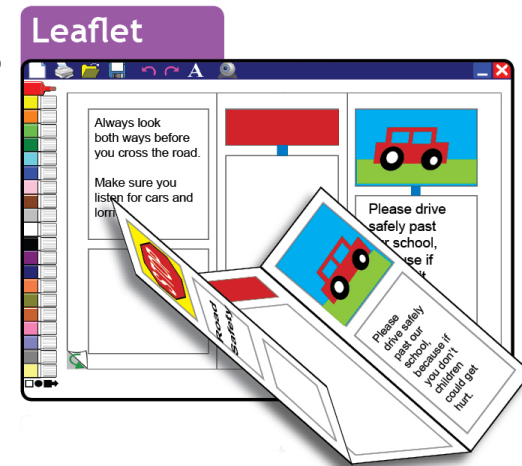
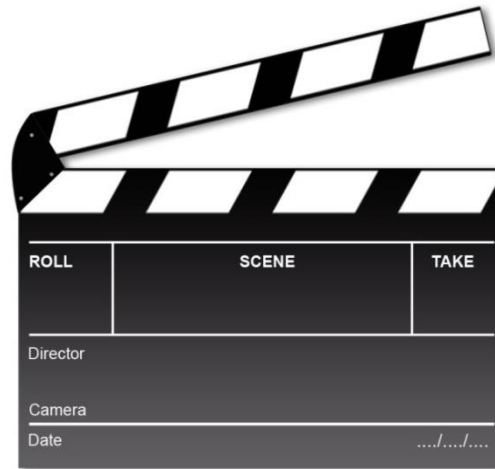
Uniquely positioned to provide healthcare information to the public and patients

- Skills in finding the evidence, appraising it and making it readily available in the right formats
- Can act as signposts to the information that the public, patients and carers need to empower them to be active participants in their health and well-being
- Training skills can be utilised to facilitate health literacy awareness



Consumer health information products

- Patient information leaflets
- Patient experience videos
- Decision aids





Consumer health information sources

- **NHS Choices**
<http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>
 - Behind the Headlines
<http://www.nhs.uk/news/Pages/NewsIndex.aspx>
- **NICE Evidence Search**
<http://www.evidence.nhs.uk>
 - Patient information filter
 - Decision aids filter
- **PubMed Health**
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/>
- **Healthtalk.org**
<http://www.healthtalk.org/>



Hands-on exercise



Spend some time exploring these sites:

- **NHS Choices**
<http://www.nhs.uk>
- **NICE Evidence Search**
<http://www.evidence.nhs.uk>
- **PubMed Health**
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/>
- **Healthtalk.org**
<http://www.healthtalk.org/>

Example questions:

- Air pollution and asthma
- Weight loss programmes
- Symptoms of dementia



Quality tools and techniques





Assessing quality

Authorship - Who wrote the content and what are their credentials? Are they qualified to provide this information?

Attribution - is it clear how the information was generated, e.g. is it referenced?

Disclosure - is the web-site sponsored by anyone who might have a commercial gain? When did they write it? Who did they write it for?

Currency - is there a date to indicate age of the content?

Silberg WM, Lundberg GD, Musacchio RA. (1997) Assessing, controlling, and assuring the quality of medical information on the Internet: Caveant lector et viewor — let the reader and viewer beware. *JAMA*, 277(15):1244-5
<http://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/415407>



Quality tools

The Information Standard

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/tis/>

Six aspects of producing good quality information

1. Information production process
2. Evidence sources
3. User understanding and involvement
4. End product
5. Feedback
6. Review



discern online

<http://www.discern.org.uk/>

Checklist of 16 questions





Public Health
England

Hands-on exercise



You are looking for evidence on the benefits of honey and you find the following 4 sites. Which would you use and why?

Type in “benefits of honey”

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/>

<http://www.webmd.com/>

<http://www.google.co.uk>

<http://www.benefits-of-honey.com/>





Additional support

CILIP Information Literacy Group

<http://www.informationliteracy.org.uk/>

- Examples of good practice
- Toolkits
- LILAC
- Journal of Information Literacy

Patient Information Forum

<http://www.pifonline.org.uk/>

- Making the case for information
- Newsletter



Public Health
England

Caroline De Brún, DipLIS, PhD
Knowledge and Evidence Specialist
Public Health England
caroline.debrun@phe.gov.uk