

Improving Communication about Food and Nutrition in Health Care Settings: The Development of e-Communication Tools

Sverre Pettersen, Anne Marie Lilleengen, Laura Terragni, Lisa Garnweidner and
Annhild Mosdøl

Faculty of Health Sciences, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences

Abstract. It is well documented that marginalized populations in Europe have a higher share of health problems, including obesity and diet related diseases. These groups may struggle to understand health messages and interact with the health care system in an efficient way. Low health literacy skills have been associated with higher risks of developing disease and receiving poor treatment. Barriers in the health communication can be related to the health care workers' use of difficult medical terms, reliance on written information material, lack of appropriate tailoring to the person's practical situation or cultural preferences, or the person may simply have difficulties with understanding the language (i.e., immigrants/minority groups). Use of visual material and demonstration of relevant practical skills accompanied by simple language have been shown to give better compliance with health promotion and disease prevention messages. In this Norwegian research project, picture material, demonstration videos, and key messages appropriate for multicultural user groups are being created (in a cultural sensitive perspective). In parallel, frameworks for health and nutrition communication strategies are developed so that health care workers can make use of these approaches when counseling about food and nutrition towards minority groups receiving antenatal care and/or visiting Mother and Child Health Clinics. The visual material can be further developed into e-communication tools, which are tailored to special needs of vulnerable target groups, as for instance persons with low health literacy skills.

Copyright © 2013 by the paper's authors. Copying permitted for private and academic purposes.

In: H. Gilstad, L. Melby, M. G. Jaatun (eds.): Proceedings of the European Workshop on Practical Aspects of Health Informatics (PAHI 2013), Edinburgh, Scotland, UK, 11-MAR-2013, published at <http://ceur-ws.org>