Better health, Better lifestyles, Stronger Communities

Health Literacy PDSA Project 2012-2013
Introduction

What was our aim?

• Implement an organisational Health Literacy policy.
• Improve our Rights & Responsibilities brochure by utilising the SMOG test and evaluating the change.
• Introduce Health Literacy training for LCHS staff.
Policy

• Drafted a policy for the organisation with help from the Quality team.
• The policy went to the Clinical Governance Advisory Committee where it was deferred to the Quality Implementation & Advisory Committee.
• It was discussed and a working group was formed to further the work on Health Literacy and Easy English principles.
• Working group is currently meeting to develop a paper for Executive.
• We hope Executive will approve the paper and draft policy so it can be implemented early this year.
• Once the policy is approved we will develop associated procedures-including links to various tools (i.e. SMOG, TeachBack, Ask Me 3).
Latrobe Community Health Service (LCHS) shall strive to increase health literacy for all clients, customers, carers and the wider community. LCHS recognises that health literacy is a social determinant of health and tends to predict the degree of engagement people have with health organisations, as well as their knowledge and self-management of health conditions.

LCHS is committed to addressing the varying health literacy levels of our diverse range of clients, as well as the general public. This commitment incorporates all aspects of the organisation including the provision of general information, service access, ongoing marketing and communication, site facilities and signage, and service provision.

LCHS shall increase health literacy and client empowerment through:

Extensive marketing and easy to understand client information:

- Wherever possible, LCHS shall use 'health literacy readability tools' on all brochures, flyers, forms and signage.
- LCHS shall provide resources so that publicly available and accessible information on its policies and programs is where necessary communicated appropriately to people from a range of diverse backgrounds.

The provision of excellent customer service:

- All staff shall actively assist clients and customers to receive quality services in a professional and courteous manner and staff shall actively read through information with the client, answering questions and ensuring they understand.

The provision of a central gateway for service access:

- A single free-call phone number is provided for access to all services provided by LCHS throughout Gippsland.
- At central intake, Service Access staff shall engage clients and empower them to make informed decisions regarding their health care by clearly explaining programs and assisting clients to access appropriate services.

Effective assessment and service provision:

- All LCHS practitioners shall ensure that clients and their carers/advocates are involved in the assessment process, and agree with its outcomes.
- Staff shall provide clients with information about, and if necessary referral to, other appropriate services.
- All LCHS practitioners shall utilise health literacy methods such as the 'Teach-Back' method when talking to clients, especially when giving advice and instructions.

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Rights & Responsibilities Brochure

- Brochure needed updating and improvement.
- Utilised various tools and knowledge gained in the course to assist.
- The SMOG test result for the old brochure was a Grade 12 level.
- The SMOG test result for the new brochure was a Grade 10 level - an improvement on readability!!
- Work was also undertaken to improve the layout, colour, images etc.
- To measure the impact of the changes and identify any improvement we had 10 volunteers, 4 clients and 10 staff evaluate both brochures.
How would you rate the overall look of the brochure?

Mean Score New Brochure: 8.6
Mean Score Old Brochure: 6.3
How would you rate the use of colour?

Mean Score New Brochure: 8.5
Mean Score Old Brochure: 5.7
How would you rate the style and size of the text?

Mean Score New Brochure: 8.4
Mean Score Old Brochure: 7.1
How easy was it to read?

Mean Score New Brochure: 8.8
Mean Score Old Brochure: 6.5
How easy was the brochure to understand?

Mean Score New Brochure: 8.8
Mean Score Old Brochure: 6.8
How useful did you find the information?

Mean Score New Brochure: 8.2
Mean Score Old Brochure: 7.3
Preferred brochure size

Brochure Size

- New Brochure: 91%
- Old Brochure: 9%

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Preferred brochure overall

Preferred Brochure Overall

87%

13%

New Brochure  Old Brochure

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Comments about the new brochure

- Good presentation, easier to read and understand for the consumer.
- Was smaller with less pages which made it easier to read. Simple sentences/language.
- Is brief, precise and has short dot points.
- Colourful, easy to read, useful information only.
- The information needs to be in bold font so it stands out more.
- Print needs to be darker.
- There are no pictures other than the one on the cover.
Training

• Executive Directors are aware of the policy/training and believe Health Literacy will become a focus point in the upcoming year.
• Once the policy is approved we plan to submit a briefing paper to Executive, outlining a Health Literacy training proposal for Executive and Managers.
• Had preliminary discussions with Professor Helen Keleher re this.
• Encouraged staff to attend recent Health Literacy training sessions- several staff did attend.
Ask Me 3

• Originally planned to design posters with our own take on the Ask Me 3 concept to display in our new GP clinic.
• The PCP are developing a version which we can utilise.
• Manager Clinic Services and Manager Quality & Front Office have approved the display of this.
Barriers

• Time due to busy workloads
• Lengthy approval process
• Low client participation in survey responses
• Cost associated with training

Enablers

• Executive are supportive of implementing an organisational policy
• Executive are open to participating in training
• Assistance of Senior Quality Officer with policy
Summary

- By implementing the policy and organising training we aim to highlight the importance of the Health Literacy concept within our organisation.
- Through providing easy access to various tools (i.e. SMOG, TeachBack, Ask Me 3) we aim to encourage staff to utilise these and be mindful of Health Literacy principles when working with clients.
- Marketing & Communication team will continue to utilise readability tools and health literacy principles in the development/improvement of print media.
- Overall, we have successfully achieved one of our project objectives and are in the process of achieving the other two.
Feedback and Questions