

Incorporating health literacy and effective power point presentation techniques into the capstone project

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One of the elements in my capstone project includes a brochure for parents with explanation and facts related to torticollis, plagiocephaly and the role of the physical therapist in the intervention of these conditions. I did an informal survey of parents with babies diagnosed with torticollis and plagiocephaly. I gathered information concerning questions and information they felt was not clearly explained by healthcare professionals with regards to the causes, intervention strategies and prognoses for these conditions. Included in the brochure is evidence-based research written in basic language to help parents understand this information? The brochure also includes several activities that parents can do at home based on evidence and best practice guidelines including prone positioning, alternating feeding sides, and decreasing time in bouncy seats and carriers when at home. I decided to include information on the role of physical therapy in the assessment, intervention, and outcomes process.

In a survey done by the National Association of Adult Literacy results showed 36% of adults had basic or below basic levels in health literacy.^{1,2} The figures on the basic and below basic literacy rates in NC also were staggering.³ These figures heightened my awareness of the need to address health literacy issues in the written materials being provided to parents on this topic. The article by Jensen and the voice thread by McCulloch recommended that written information should be presented on a 4th-6th grade level, however they noted it is more often presented at higher-grade levels.^{1,3} This information prompted me to seek out the means to check the level of the written information in my parent brochure.

In reading more about the “SMOG” and the “Fry” tests of readability, I found these tests could be used to determine the grade level of written information.^{4,5} Even though these tests are designed to help approximate the grade level of written material, they do not give information on accuracy or appropriateness to various populations. I felt I had written my information in basic terminology but when using the “Fry” test, I

realized my information was still around the 9th grade level and I needed to make some revision to the brochures.¹

I evaluated the materials in the parent brochure and my capstone power point presentation utilizing the Suitability Assessment of Material (SAM) in the areas of cultural appropriateness, learning simulation, literacy demand, content, and layout.¹ I utilized a variety of pictures and included parents and babies of different ethnicities. I divided the brochure by subheading, leaving white space and using clearly readable font.¹ I had a great deal of information for the brochure and had to make sure that I was able to pick out the key points.^{1,6}

I found the information in the resource entitled “death by power point” very helpful.⁷ After watching this and the YouTube by Waknell, I reduced my slides by 20% from my initial number.⁶ Realizing that my power point slides are not my presentation, I chose to put key point on the slides and added my additional comments to the notes sections on each slide. I was struck by the comments in the YouTube by Wagnall, in which he suggested the participants should leave a presentation saying the following things:

“I didn’t know that”⁶

“I’m glad I do now”⁶

“I would like to know more”⁶

These statements stressed to me the importance of narrowing the focus and provide key points in my power point slides and not trying to give my audience all the information I have researched during the last 4 months.

The resources on the DPT website on parent/family education and presentations provided some insightful information. It was very helpful in thinking through the process of developing patient friendly material and power point presentations.

Reference:

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3. DeWalt D, Pignone M. Health literacy 101: Defining the problem and what we can do about it. Voice thread with Karen McCulloch Web site. <https://unc.voicethread.com/?#q+health+literacy.b984634.i5249043>. Accessed March 6, 2014.
4. Fry E. Fry's readability graph clarifications, validity, and extension to level. *Journal Read*. 1977;21:242.
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6. Waknell. How to give a TED talk. Wiki talk Web site. http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=jT-H6UrinG0#at=45. Updated 2013. Accessed February, 28, .
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