



Merry Christmas and best wishes for a happy New Year!

In this edition you will find the following sections:

- Health Literacy month
- Health Navigator NZ - New or updated sections
- Websites of Interest
- Resources for Consumers
- Book Review
- Articles
- In the Limelight – the LowDown wins Silver at international awards
- Conference presentations



The Self Management Network is part of the Health Navigator NZ project – a community based initiative to encourage collaboration, sharing, networking and linking of resources and people interested in improving chronic care, quality improvement, e-health and self management support/health literacy.

October was Health Literacy Awareness Month

What is health literacy?

According to Healthy People 2010 and the Institute of Medicine, health literacy is "the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions."

"Health literacy means more than being able to read health information. It is also about knowing what the information means and how to use it. A high level of education does not always equal a high level of health literacy." ([Iowa Plain and Simple Health Literacy Project](#))

How big a problem is it?

Difficulties with health literacy are much more common than most people realise. In most developed countries, including NZ, approx 43% of the population have only "basic or below basic" health literacy skills and are likely to have some difficulties with understanding forms, consent and medication instructions.

A recent Australian study by **Adams, Appleton et al MJA 2009**, found 24% of respondents were at risk of limited functional health literacy (FHL), and 21% had a high likelihood of inadequate FHL giving a total of 45% of all adults at risk. Risk factors include:

- Aged over 65 years (much higher risk)
- Leaving school at younger age
- Male > female
- Born in country other than Australia, NZ, UK or Ireland

For more information, read the article at:

http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/191_10_161109/ada10529_fm.pdf

Why should you care about health literacy?

- **Independent risk factor for premature mortality** (American Medical Association)
- **Cost:** Low health literacy cost countries billions of dollars per year. In the US, this is estimated to be between \$106 billion to \$238 billion each year. This represents between 7% and 17% percent of all personal health care expenditures. (George



Low health literacy is a stronger predictor of a person's health than age, income, employment status, education level, or ethnicity.
(American Medical Assoc)



[View AMA Video – Health Literacy & Patient Safety – help patients understand](#)

Around 45% of the adult population may have limited health literacy

Washington University Medical Center School of Public Health and Health Services)

- **Common problem:** (as shown above)

For more information and resources relating to Health Literacy

- [Health Navigator NZ](#) – health literacy section and resources
- [How to create and assess print materials](#)- Harvard School of Public Health
- [Health Literacy and Patient Safety](#) – video from American Medical Association

Health Navigator NZ

Updated or New Pages and Sections

The editorial team and honorary topic editors are continually adding new topics and pages. Some that may be of interest within the last month include:

- [Healthy recipes](#) – including e-books to download for free (see below)
- [Directory of Self Management Courses](#)
- [Centre for Clinical Excellence](#) – expanded sections www.healthnavigator.org.nz/centre-for-clinical-excellence
- [Library](#) – links to useful video libraries, online CME, articles
- [Multiple Languages](#)



Healthy Recipes Home | Print | Send to a friend

Online Recipe Books
In this section you will find some excellent cookbooks and healthy recipes you can download for free.
Click on any of the images below to open the pdf. (Note: some of these are large files, up to 5 MB)

- EVERYDAY MEAL AND SNACK IDEAS**
Colourful & appealing book from the Let's Beat Diabetes project.
- Cheap Eats for the Heart**
Range of healthy recipes from the Heart Foundation NZ.
- Kai Lelei - recipes for large families**
- The Kitchen Aboard a Maintenance Recipe Book**
Published in 2008 for Let's Beat Diabetes Programme
- The Great Little Cookbook**
Hints & recipes for those on a tight budget (Work & Income)

<http://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/keeping-well/smart-eating/healthy-recipes>

Ideas & Support Needed

Let us know what other tools and resources you think would be useful to add to Health Navigator NZ. This is a collaborative resource for the people of NZ and needs to be as useful as possible.

One of the purposes of the site is to link everything together and make it quicker, easier and simpler to find reliable, trustworthy information OR **what you need, when you need it** – an example of enhancing online information to be **better, sooner, more convenient!**

Likewise, let us know if you have ideas of how we can make this project sustainable! **Currently, we're running out of runway and struggling to keep going given the financial recession and impact on DHBs and charitable grant organisations.**

Everyone thinks the website/portal is excellent, but without national funding it's difficult to progress. We're committed to keeping this work totally independent and free of commercial influence so you can be confident to recommend and use the site with patients, friends and colleagues. **Can you offer any ideas, support or assistance with this mission?**

- **If anyone is willing to make a Christmas donation, we would be very grateful!**
- Go to the Donate link on <http://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/website-information/about-this-site/who-we-are>

Health Navigator NZ

An example of enhancing online health resources to be **better, sooner and more convenient!**

Websites of Interest

New website – Te Whaioranga – Optimal Wellness

This website is for health practitioners working with whānau. As described on the website, it's the end result of a lot mahi that's taken place over the last few years on PHARMAC's Māori Responsiveness Strategy and other PHARMAC initiatives focused on Māori health and well-being.



www.tewhaioranga.co.nz

There are two main sections

- **Health professionals** - Learn about working more effectively with whānau.
- **Whānau health** - This website is for whānau striving for te whaioranga (optimal wellness). And it's for all the people who support you in that important journey.

Check out the information, tools and resources on this site and together we can work towards Māori whānau living longer and healthier lives.

IME Video Library – Innovations in Medical Education

This is an amazing site including over 1100 recorded videos of health science presentations ranging from Anatomy, Research, Cultural Diversity to Primary Care, Public Health, Oncology, Pharmacology, Professional Development, Psychiatry and Women's Health. Most videos are freely available to anyone. Log in is only required for course materials/videos which are limited to students attending specific courses.

Provided by the **University of Wisconsin, School of Medicine & Public Health**.

- Visit at <http://videos.med.wisc.edu/>



Interested in Quality Improvement? – WIHI Weekly audio updates

"WIHI is an exciting new "talk show" program from the world renown Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), connecting you to the cutting edge of health care improvement. **It's free, it's timely**, and it's designed to help dedicated legions of health care improvers worldwide **keep up with some of the freshest and most robust thinking and strategies for improving patient care**. A 60-minute program is offered live every other week, or you can listen to recordings of the broadcast **later at your convenience**. WIHI is your opportunity to meet up with colleagues who want to improve patient care and shape a true health reform agenda."

- For more information visit:
<http://www.ihl.org/IHI/Programs/AudioAndWebPrograms/WIHI.htm>



Resources for consumers

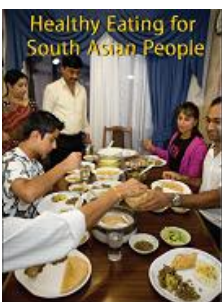
Healthy Eating for South Asian People

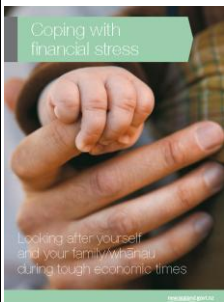
Excellent new resource on healthy eating for South Asian People (eg Indian, Sri Lankan, and Bangladesh) developed by Auckland DHB and the Ministry of Health. The booklet explains healthy eating basics and includes tips for all ages.

It can be used as a stand alone resource by individuals, or during a consultation where health professionals can emphasize certain aspects.

It is hoped that the booklet will help lessen the impact of nutrition related disease, such as diabetes, on the South Asian community.

- **An electronic copy** is available on the Health Navigator NZ website
<http://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/Healthy-Eating-for-South-Asian-People.pdf> (**NB: large file, 9MB**)
- **Hard copies** are available for providers and individuals in the greater Auckland region (ADHB, Waitemata DHB and CMDHB) from your local Public Health Resources office.
- Currently available in English - translations in Punjabi, Hindi and Gujarati coming.





Coping with Financial Stress Booklet: Looking after yourself and family/Whanau during tough economic times – NZ Govt.

This brochure is for people who may be experiencing stress or mental health problems relating to financial hardship.

It provides practical advice for coping with stress, solving problems, and looking after family during tough economic times. It includes information about the symptoms of depression and anxiety, and directs readers to support services if they need them.

[http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/9620/\\$File/coping-financial-stress-oct09.pdf](http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/9620/$File/coping-financial-stress-oct09.pdf)



A guide for carers: practical help for people caring for family or friends who are older or have ill health, a disability or a mental health, alcohol or other drug issue (2009, September). Booklet produced by Ministry of Social Development, Wellington.

A practical guide to support, put together by Carers NZ, New Zealand Carers Alliance and the Ministry of Social Development.

- Webpage on Ministry of Social Development website - <https://www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/carers/index.html>
- Pamphlet in multiple languages
- View booklet <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/what-we-can-do/community/carers/carers-a4-booklet-v8.pdf>

Self Management Support – Useful Tools & Resources

Self Management Toolkit website

"Help me get through the maze of self-management models and instruction! Where can I start?" (Anonymous Healthcare Worker)

“The purpose of this site is to allow healthcare providers to quickly learn the basics of helping patients be better self-managers of their health care. We know that providers are confused about the best ways to deliver self-management support to their patients. We have heard that in their busy day they need easy-to-use tools to get started helping their patients with self care. To that end, this site has been divided into three modules that teach the healthcare provider to:

1. Assess where patients are with their self care and elicit a care issue relevant to their lives
2. Assist patients to set a behavioural goal that addresses their self care issue and design a simple action plan that helps the patient take his/her first steps toward achieving that goal
3. Assist patients with enacting their action plans and to undertake follow-up with patients to ensure their continued success.”



www.selfmanagementtoolkit.ca

Partnering in Self Management Support: A Toolkit for Clinicians

This is an excellent resource developed by the Institute of Healthcare Improvement and international experts in chronic care.

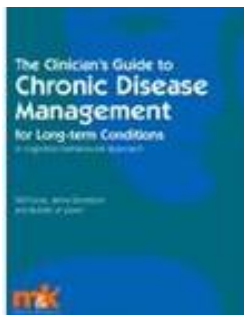
“The concepts and tools in this toolkit are intended to give busy clinical practices an introduction to a set of activities and changes that support patients and families in the day-to-day management of chronic conditions. Experienced organizations and teams will find tested resources and tools.

Practices that are just beginning to reorganize for patient-centered care as well as those experienced in collaborative self-management will find tested resources and tools and high-leverage changes that offer a number of ways to begin trying them with a small number of patients.”

- Download from <http://www.newhealthpartnerships.org/provider.aspx?id=1544>



Book Review



The Clinician's Guide to Chronic Disease for Long-term Conditions – a cognitive-behavioural approach – Gill Furze, Jenny Donnison and Robert JP Lewin. M&K Update Ltd, 2008.

This book has been written with clinicians in mind and aims to provide an informative and useful resource to help clinicians understand how people deal with, and adjust to, life with a long-term condition. Content includes an overview of the following topics as well as some practical questionnaires and charts.

- cognitive-behavioural therapy,
- the difference between impairment and disability,
- unhelpful patient beliefs and coping behaviours
- overcoming resistance to change
- goal setting to change behaviour
- reducing stress
- anxiety and depression
- assessing needs and outcomes.

In the Limelight - The LowDown Wins Silver at International Marketing Awards



Premier Direct/Interactive Marketing Award Competition

“The DMA International ECHO Awards Competition honours the world's best direct marketing campaigns — campaigns that have raised the bar in terms of strategy, creativity and results.

Every year, over 1,000 entries are submitted for the International ECHO Awards from all over the world. The Low Down website won a very prestigious silver award!

Take a look at page 55:

www.thelowdown.co.nz

http://dma.movadamedia.com/EchoAwards2009/ViewAllPages_spread.aspx

Articles of Interest

Asking for help is helpful: validation of a brief lifestyle and mood assessment tool in primary health care [Goodyear-Smith F](#), [Arroll B](#), [Coupe N](#).

[Ann Fam Med](#). 2009 May-Jun;7(3):239-44

PURPOSE: The short, validated, self-administered, Case-finding and Help Assessment Tool (CHAT) for lifestyle and mental health assessment of adult patients in primary health care addresses inactivity, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug misuse, problem gambling, depression, anxiety and stress, abuse, and anger problems.

For each issue patients are asked whether they would like help, either during the consultation or at a later date. This study aims to assess the value of the help question.

METHODS: Validation of the CHAT was conducted according to the STAndards for Reporting of Diagnostic accuracy studies statement for diagnostic tests. The setting was Auckland primary care practices with **755 consecutive patients** completing the CHAT tool + help question and reference standards.

RESULTS: Sensitivity ranged from 80% to 98% for the more-common conditions (depression, nicotine dependency, anxiety, problematic drinking). For each condition, specificity increased with the addition of the help question: depression increased from 73% to 98%; anxiety 77% to 99%; drinking 85% to 99%; verbal anger 92% to 99%; verbal abuse 97% to 99%; problematic drinking and gambling 98% to 99%.

CONCLUSIONS: The help question increased specificity without compromising sensitivity and reduced false positives, thereby increasing the positive predictive value. It allowed patients with comorbidities to prioritize issues they wished to address, indicate their readiness to change, promote self-determination, and give the clinician an indication of which topics to pursue.

Review - Impact of Consumer Health Informatics Applications

Comprehensive systematic review evaluating the evidence on the impact of **consumer health informatics (CHI) applications on health outcomes**, to identify the knowledge gaps and to make recommendations for future research.

“Electronic tools and technology applications for consumers can help improve health care processes, such as adherence to medication and clinical outcomes like smoking cessation, according to a report by researchers at the **Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health**. The analysis of consumer health informatics, conducted by the Bloomberg School's Evidence-based Practice Center for the **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)**, was based on an examination of 146 published research studies of patient-focused electronic tools.”

Consumer health informatics applications are defined as any electronic tool, technology or electronic application designed to interact directly with consumers, with or without the presence of a health care professional that provides or uses individualized (personal) information and provides the consumer with individualized assistance, to help the patient better manage their health or health care.

- For more information visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/tp/chiapptp.htm#Report>



Diabetic peripheral neuropathy: How reliable is a homemade 1-g monofilament for screening? A case-control study of sensitivity, specificity, and comparison with standardized sensory modalities

Matthew E. Bourcier, Jagdeesh Ullal, et al. Journal of Family Practice. June 2006 (Vol. 55, No. 6)

Case control study of 871 subjects found fishing line, cut to different lengths as effective at screening for diabetic peripheral neuropathy.

The study recommendations include:

- Use fishing line cut to different lengths (4 cm=10 g; 8 cm=1 g) as substitutes for monofilaments to assist in the diagnosis of diabetic neuropathy. This test is highly specific for neuropathy; using longer lengths of line increases sensitivity.
- Physicians and healthcare providers can use this quick, inexpensive tool for screening neuropathy. Patients can be empowered inexpensively to examine their own feet and reduce the likelihood of developing foot ulcers or amputations.
- Read article at <http://www.ifponline.com/Pages.asp?AID=4169&UID>

Comments:

Has anyone tried this in NZ or Australia?

Do you find it reliable and useful?

Conferences & Presentations



HINZ Conference

Presentations from the Health Informatics NZ conference are now available on the HINZ website.

- [Conference presentation papers](http://www.hinz.org.nz/page/archive_Conference_2009/conference-2009-post)
- To view powerpoint version of presentations visit [Slideshare](#).
- [Closing Comments from the SPC Chair](#)

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