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Exploring the Depths of Health Literacy Are We Teaching This and Why Does It Matter?

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The primary aim of this project was to provide students with a solid foundation for competency in consumer education and promotion of health literacy in older adult consumers.

Best practices for assessment and intervention based on principles of health literacy

- Instruments that assess health literacy in patients/clients
- Effective strategies for assessing health materials and environments
- Strategies for effective health communication
- Methods of empowering clients to navigate challenges in accessing health care resources

Overall Project Objectives

- Train graduate occupational therapy students in the principles, best practices and evaluation of health literacy education for older adults
- Provide direct learning opportunities for students to implement research-based educational strategies using virtual world, web-based, print, for health literacy education for older adults
- Identify ways to enhance existing content and assignments related to health literacy in various, older adult certificate and specialty courses

Strategies for Teaching Health Literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module/Course</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Older Adults and Their Living Environments</strong></td>
<td>Present on a topic of interest related to the interface of older adults and their living environments to a group of residents within the virtual world of Second Life</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Fall 2012 (Module with 4 students)                                             | • Gather evidence-based resources  
| Entry-Level MS-OT                                                             | • Apply principles of health literacy  
|                                                                              | • Reflect upon the experience and share with other classmates                                                                                                                                          |
| **Advanced Concepts in Dementia Care**                                       | Develop a preliminary plan for addressing an identified health literacy issue in current work environment                                                                                                  |
| and Caregiving across Practice Contexts - Spring 2012 (Module with 6 students)|                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| **Advanced Practice Certificate and Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD)**    |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| **Health Literacy in Traditional and Emerging Environments**                  | Discuss health literacy issues as they relate to current or intended clinical population                                                                                                                   |
| (10 graduate students – 4 OTD, 5 MPH, 1 BSM) – Summer 2, 2012, full course   | • Complete a readability assessment on a web or print resource used or applicable to your practice setting                                                                                                  |
|                                                                              | • Create a handout or media presentation for your chosen population                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                              | • Discuss the relative advantages and disadvantages of the REALM, the TOFHLA, and the NVS for your chosen population and setting  
|                                                                              | • Create a wiki illustrating the environmental analysis of current or intended practice setting                                                                                                      |
|                                                                              | • Synthesize ideas for delivering health information for your chosen population using social media, virtual worlds, and interactive web design                                                           |
|                                                                              | • Create a project or program for your chosen setting and population  
|                                                                              | • Summarize your plan as a presentation for key stakeholders and record on Adobe connect.                                                                                                               |
| **Older Adults and Their Living Environments**                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Fall 2012 (Module with 9 students)                                             | • Completed an evidence-based assessment of health literacy in two older adult living environments                                                                                                        |
| Entry-Level MS-OT                                                             | • Create a resource packet for an older adult using principles of health literacy                                                                                                                        |

Causal Pathways between Limited Health Literacy and Health Outcomes

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Provider Level</th>
<th>Patient Level</th>
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</table>
| • Screen for literacy skills  
| • Use clear communication strategies  
| • Use plain language  
| • Check readability of written materials  
| • Use teach-back method                                                                 |
| • Teach health literacy strategies  
| • Include health management in Tx  
| • Minimize information on intake form  
| • Consider culture; clarify values  
| • Help client ask questions                                                                 |


Adapted from Paasche-Orlow, 2007

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Literature Review  
Item Development & Review  
Pilot with OT Students  
Final  
Pilot with MPH, OTD, Nu Students

Fall 2011
Spring 2012
Fall 2012

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Charting New Frontiers in Aging