Health Literacy as a pathway to promoting the health of Young Adults

Presenter: Julie Shaw
Study information

• **Authors** –
  – Julie Shaw¹,², Anthony Welch¹ & Moira Williamson¹

• **Affiliations**
  – ¹School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Sciences, Central Queensland University
  – ²School of Nursing and Midwifery, Griffith University

• **Funding**
  – supported by a Scholarship from the Australian Government’s Research Training Program / Research Training Scheme

• **Nil conflicts of interest**
Overview

• Health literacy
• Relevance to nursing
• A health professional construct
• Current study - Young adult health literacy
• Summary
Health Literacy

• health literacy defined by the WHO (2015) as ‘the personal characteristics and social resources needed for individuals and communities to access, understand, appraise and use information and services to make decisions about health’ (Health information sheet 1, para 2).
Relevance to nursing

• Nurses are in direct contact with young adults accessing health information and services

• There is a need for nurses to understand how young adults enact health literacy

• Understanding how individuals enact health literacy
  – facilitate the delivery of appropriate health care,
  – supports health self-management
Health literacy
-a health professional construct

RISK
• ‘the set of individual literacy capacities that act as a mediating factor in health and clinical decision-making’ (Baker, 2006).

ASSET
• Functional
• Interactive
• Critical

(Nutbeam, 2000/2008)
Current Study

• **Aimed** to identify, describe and interpret the health literacy of young adults

• **Asking the questions** ‘How do young adults
  – determine their health status?
  – access health information and services?
  – evaluate health information and services for decision making?’
Charmaz’s Constructive grounded theory approach

- **Sampling** - purposeful; theoretical
- **Demographic data**
- **Interview data**
- **Concurrent data collection and analysis**
- **Data saturation** - 12 interviews
Young adult health literacy
Summary

- My health – embodiment
- Learning about health
- Developing meaningful knowledge
- Making health decisions – empowerment
- Context
Embodiment – Merleau-Ponty

- making sense of ‘being’ through the senses
- provides for the individual’s understanding of their experiences of the world through their body
- the body provides for both experience as an:
  - object e.g. sensations such as touch
  - subject e.g. the lived experience
- Relates to young adults ‘being healthy’ and ‘being unhealthy’
Empowerment - Foucault

• 3 ways people are subjectified
  – the objectivising of the subject e.g. the young adult
  – dividing practices - within oneself or from others - e.g. the patient and the health professional
  – people changing themselves into subjects – e.g. self-identifying as a patient. (Foucault, 1982)

• Power indicates the reality of the subject’s world

• Diffusion of power - occurs when subjects struggle against the power e.g. young adults struggle to make sense of health information or make health decisions
References


