Principles of Shared Decision Making and Health Literacy in the Clinical Setting

Spring 2019
Mondays 9am-12, January 14 – May 6
Rose Room, TAB, 2nd floor

Course Instructor:
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Course Description:
This course will provide a comprehensive introduction to principles of shared decision making and health literacy and their implications for clinical communication. Topics will include basic and applied research on shared decision making and decision biases, principles of designing and evaluating patient decision aids, principles of health literacy, research on relationship between health literacy, numeracy, and health outcomes, best practices for communication with individuals who have limited numeracy or health literacy, best practices (and controversies) in communicating probabilities and their associated uncertainty about screening and treatment outcomes, and best practices for designing and evaluating written information for clinical populations (such as intake forms, brochures, and informed consent documents). We will also cover how to navigate potential disagreements in treatment plans. Examples will be tailored to the interests of the students.

Course activities will include interactive lectures, class discussions, class member presentations, guest presentations, and class activities.

Each class activity will be prepared by the instructors or by guest speakers.

Course Competencies:
1. Define shared decision making and health literacy
2. Understand communication skills necessary to engage in SDM
3. Understand principles of designing patient decision support interventions
4. Discuss how health literacy interventions might improve patient outcomes
5. Describe the health literacy demands of the health care system
6. Understand how health literacy and SDM are related to patient centered outcomes
7. Be able to identify appropriate health literacy and SDM measures and outcomes

Evaluation: Grades will be based on: (1) class participation, which includes leading us through a sample clinical encounter in your discipline, or bringing in a print document used in research
or clinical practice, for discussion and feedback from the class (20%); (2) class presentation (30%), and (3) a final paper (50%). See below for more details.

(1) Participation and Sample Dialogue or Document Discussion (20%):

Class participation consists of reading assigned materials prior to class, being prepared to discuss the assigned readings and topics of discussion in class, engaging in and contributing to thoughtful class discussion, and demonstrating respect for the opinions of your peers. Students are required to read all of the articles unless the article says “optional” next to it.

Class members will sign up to lead a discussion for one class session. This will involve leading us through a sample clinical encounter or role play of a topic relevant to health literacy or shared decision making, or bringing in a print document used in your research or clinical practice (with questions about how to improve this from a health literacy or SDM framework).

(2) Presentations (30%):

Class members will sign up to present a project of their choice (relevant to one of the course topics). The presentation can include a “work in progress” or a more finished product such as your final paper project. Class members should plan to present for no more than 15 minutes, followed by class discussion. A presentation template will be provided for guidance.

(3) Final paper (50%):

The final paper will be broken down into sections (due at different points in the semester):

a. topic (1 paragraph) plus background and significance section (about 2-3 pages) (20%) due March 11 by 9 am
b. full paper incorporating feedback from first submission (30%) due April 29 by 9 am

Please do not miss class because you are finishing up your paper.

The final paper should be about 10 pages double spaced using Arial font size 11 with 1” margins. The final paper can overlap with the class presentation if desired. The paper topic can relate to any topic discussed during the class. There are two options for the paper:

1. Evaluate or critique an existing strategy used in a clinical setting, with a solution for how to improve it based on principles of health literacy or shared decision making (or both). Possible paper structure can include a description of the problem (background/significance), a description of possible solutions, and then a selection of one solution and an explanation of how it could work to improve practice. Examples of past projects: improving informed consent documents for elective surgery (with attention to health literacy and shared decision making), improving the approach to counseling patients about smoking cessation (using principles of motivational interviewing to encourage smoking cessation as well as shared decision making to identify the best approach(es) for an individual to quit), developing a decision aid or communication tool to support clinicians in counseling patients about a clinical situation with multiple reasonable options for testing or treatment.
2. **Develop a research proposal for empirically testing an intervention to improve clinical practice based on either a health literacy or shared decision making issue.** The structure should include a description of the problem (background/significance), a possible solution or intervention to address the problem, and research methods that will be used to measure and evaluate the intervention. Think of this option much like a small grant proposal with a specific aims page, background, innovation, and methods section. You do not need a detailed analysis plan since we do not cover analyses in our specific class, but you are welcome to include a detailed analysis plan, if you would like some comments and/or if you use this proposal or something similar in other MPHs classes.

**Please note:** We are more than willing to meet to discuss your paper or email with specific questions to help you work through the details. However, we cannot review full paper drafts in advance of the deadline.

**Canvas**

We will use Canvas to manage our class, access assignment instructions, and post course-related questions. Canvas can be accessed at [https://mycanvas.wustl.edu/](https://mycanvas.wustl.edu/). Log in with your WUSTL Key, and the course should appear on the homepage. Student-specific questions should be emailed directly to the instructor(s). This is our first semester using Canvas. Please bear with us if there are technological glitches!

**Attendance and On-Time Arrival**

Class attendance is required. As a courtesy to other students and guest presenters, you are expected to arrive on time. The value of the class stems from the quality of the dialog and conversations with peers and course instructors. If you have more than 2 absences, we will have to work out ways to appropriately make up content missed. Please let me know in advance if you need to miss class.

**Laptop Use During Class:** Please be considerate of others during class, especially other presenters. Vigorously typing during class and laughing during class about outside conversations is inconsiderate of others. If you have to attend to a clinical matter or an urgent Facebook or Twitter post, please leave the room briefly and return when you are engaged again. Please also see this article about note taking on paper vs. on a laptop:


“even when laptops are used solely to take notes, they may still be impairing learning because their use results in shallower processing.”

**Collaborations:** Many collaborations result from class discussions and projects. Examples:

(1) Kronzer, V*. (2016). Screening for health literacy is not the answer. *BMJ 2016;354:i3699*


If you have a paper or grant idea that you would like to pursue beyond class, please let me or another MPHS faculty member know. We can help you find collaborators or mentors, and/or can help you write up your idea for a manuscript submission.

**Class sessions:**

**Jan 14: What is Shared Decision Making (SDM)?**
Overview of course; Origins of SDM, Core elements of SDM and Patient Engagement

*Class activity: patient/clinician SDM scenarios, sign up for sample dialogue or discussion day*


Jan 28: Numeracy and Risk Communication—Patients. Definition of numeracy, how can it influence decision-making, numeracy and health outcomes, effective risk communication

Class activity: case examples of risk communication strategies and implications of them

Readings:


Feb 4: Risk Communication/Risk Perception—Public (guest lecturer: Alvitta Ottley, PhD)
Drug Facts Box, Data in Direct-to-Consumer Ads, Framing Effects, *Your Disease Risk*, Risk communication and the media.

Class activity: case examples of risk communication to the public: the role of numbers & stories

Readings:


Feb 11: Decision Psychology
Psychological processes affecting accuracy in medical diagnosis, heuristics, biases affecting medical decisions, conflicts of interest as they affect SDM

Class activity: Interactive activities are incorporated into the lecture

Readings:


Feb 18: Patient Decision Aids
History of PtDAs, IDPAS, how DAs are incorporated in practice (including implementation in the UK, Canada, Germany, and the US), sample DAs, evaluating PtDAs (IPDASi), who should be responsible for decision communication or administering DAs?

Class activities: evaluating a decision aid, evaluating a consultation using the OPTION scale

Readings:


https://catalyst.nejm.org/shared-decision-making-patient-decision-aids/


FEB 25: VALUES CLARIFICATION/PREFERENCE ELICITATION EXERCISES (GUEST PRESENTER: LISA POLLACK, PHD, SDM ABOUT SURGICAL APPROACHES TO HYSTERECTOMY)
utility assessments, narratives, balance sheets, diabetes cards, values during the consultation

**Class activity:** evaluating different types of values clarification exercises, hysterectomy decision making

**Readings:**


Politi, M.C., Dizon, D.S., Frosch, D.L., Kuzemchak, M.D., & Stiggelbout, A.S. (2013). Importance of clarifying patients’ desired role in shared decision making to match their level of engagement with their preferences. *BMJ, 347:f7066*

**March 4: Informed Consent, Health Literacy, & SDM (Guest Presenter: Jessica Mozersky, PhD, 10 am)** health literacy interventions for informed consent, SDM interventions for informed consent for clinical procedures and clinical research

**Class Activity:** Evaluating existing informed consent documents

**Readings:**


**March 11: What is Health Literacy?**
Definitions and components of health literacy; epidemiology of health literacy in the U.S.

**Class activity:** American Medical Association video and discussion

**Readings:**


[https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/learn/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/learn/index.html)

**March 18: Health Literacy and SDM (Guest Presenter: Randi Foraker, PhD, Director, Center for Population Health Informatics (CPHI))** Effect of health literacy on decision making preferences; Health literacy and shared decision making framework; Directions for future research

**Class activity:** origami instructions

**Readings:**


**March 25:** Determinants and Outcomes of Health Literacy (guest presenter: Mychal Voorhees, MA, Community Outreach and Public Health Services Coordinator for Becker Medical Library) Associations between health literacy, health outcomes, and health services use; possible mechanisms; social determinants of health literacy

**Class activities:** Discussion of pathways by which health literacy impacts health outcomes; guest presentation about variables affecting health literacy

**Readings:**


April 1: Assessing Health Literacy Demands of Health Care System (class starts at 9:45 am today to make time for the BJC environment exercise)

Assessment of written materials; Health literacy issues in health care system access and navigation

Class activity: Materials assessment; Discussion of assessment of BJC environment

Readings:


Assignment to complete for class:
Assessment of BJC hospital environment (supplemental handout)

April 8: Assessing Health Literacy of Patients (guest presenter: Richard Griffey, MD, MPH) Objective health literacy measures, subjective health literacy measures, limitations of existing measures

Class activity: Assessment of health literacy skills using common measures; case example from health literacy assessment in ED

Readings:


Kronzer, V. (2016). Screening for health literacy is not the answer. BMJ 2016;354:i3699

April 15: Health Literacy Interventions (Guest Presenter: Susy Stark, PhD, OTR, 10 am, health literacy and older adults)  
Health literacy interventions; State of the evidence; Directions for future research

Class activity:  Discussion of intervention design, example for older adults

Readings:


April 22: Health Literacy, Biases, and Provider-Patient Communication (guest presenter: Sydney Philpott-Streiff, MPH)  
Oral health literacy; health literacy and provider-patient communication; best practices in provider-patient communication

Class activity:  Strategies for clear communication with patients, clinician biases in communication

Readings:


April 29: Student Paper/Project Presentations

May 6: Student Paper/Project Presentations