

Collaboration With Healthify He Puna Waiora Plain Language Experts Reduces Time Taken to Produce Patient Education Materials

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Content/existing situation

Hospitals can be overwhelming for patients: encountering unfamiliar procedures, medicines and healthcare professionals (HCPs.) Scenarios arise where patients are provided with new medicines, and they are required to quickly understand the need for the medicine, how it's given, the side effects and to give informed consent.

Many regional hospitals do not have access to specialist medical writers nor translation services. We rely on time-poor HCPs to recreate materials with minimal expertise in plain language. This is time consuming and unsustainable.

Planned change

We needed to update a patient leaflet for intramuscular methotrexate for ectopic pregnancy (off-label use) and create a new one for inhaled methoxyflurane for pain relief (patient-controlled device). To assist us, we approached national experts in plain language health information, Healthify He Puna Waiora content writers.

Methods

We provided our current material to Healthify and they adapted this to produce patient-friendly English language leaflets. Pharmacists from other hospitals also provided review.

Measurement of improvement

Verbal feedback from patients and staff was sought. Production time recorded.

Effects of changes

Patient feedback for the methoxyflurane information, was positive: easy to understand, complete and an accurate reflection of his experience.

Feedback from staff has been positive. Unrestricted availability on www.healthify.co.nz, inclusion of graphics and photos were cited as making the information easy to access, understand and communicate to patients.

Time from conception to publication was about 5 days; reduced from usual production time of minimum one month between committee approval, review and signoff.

Implications for others

In the current fiscal climate and transition to a unified Health NZ, we need to work more efficiently. Standardising patient material, developed in collaboration with health literacy specialists, available freely in multiple languages and formats, is key to providing culturally safe care to all. Our hospitals should identify areas for collaboration and harmonisation wherever possible.

References

1. Healthify He Puna Waiora. Methotrexate injection for ectopic pregnancy [Internet]. Auckland, Healthify; 2024 April 30th [cited 2024 July 15th]. Available from: [Methotrexate injection for ectopic pregnancy | Healthify](#)
2. Healthify He Puna Waiora. Methoxyflurane [Internet]. Auckland, Healthify; 2024 June 14th [cited 2024 July 15th]. Available from: [Methoxyflurane | Healthify](#)

