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| Visual language; simplifying communication in a diverse world |
| **Setting/problem** While investments in health and wellbeing continue to grow in many countries, health disparities are disproportionately experienced by specific groups. Miscommunication is common and preventable problem in health communications, disproportionately affecting marginalised populations, and people who speak another language, contributing to health gaps. All communication are intertwined (coded) with values, attitudes and beliefs formed by social processes; and is influenced by world views, literacy and power hierarchies. Much can be learnt from interdisciplinary knowledge of Visual language. Visual images increase attention, comprehension, recall of health information and persuade. Visual language is a powerful form of communication that has the ability to influence understanding and behaviour. **Intervention** This session will demonstrate how a simple tool, My Story Cards can be used to facilitate communication, and find shared meaning. My Story Cards were developed to address a gap in communication and understanding. They are a comprehensive set of images representing core life elements, express human needs and motivations. The use of salient images trigger unconscious emotional memories and associations. The process is more powerful than words alone to identify important aspects of one’s life, explore meaning and develop shared understanding. For example one’s concept of health can be explored in the context of other priorities, along with barriers and enablers to make decisions about health and wellbeing. My Story Cards have been used across Australia in a range of settings since 2012. They fast track rapport and understanding and can make a significant contribution to better communication and client centred approaches.**Outcomes** Understanding how images can be developed and used to translate concepts, engage and influence a person to think, feel or take action could significantly influence the way we us or develop communication materials, particularly cross culturally.**Implications** The use of considered visual communication in health offer significant opportunity to reduce communication, cultural and literacy barriers and put the person at the centre of the health interaction. From this foundation we can explore personal understandings of health issues and motivators for action. **Preferred presentation format - oral** |