

3ICHC

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Objective

To know if the information that promotes health literacy is in the agenda setting of Portugal

Background

The access to information involved in the dynamics of autonomy necessarily implies that health professionals and institutions must (re)define their position in relation to the users (Espanha, 2009).

Background

Health literacy, defined as the capacity that people show to obtain, process and understand basic health information and the services they need to take appropriate health decisions (Nielsen-Bohlman *et al.*, 2004) is a field of study of health promotion in full expansion.

There is a link between the presence of a health topic on the agenda setting and its influence in the development and promotion of health literacy (Zarcadoolas *et al.*, 2005)

Background

The process of empowerment of individuals in the development of health literacy constitutes one of the main objectives of communication in health (Ishikawa and Kiuchi, 2010).

One of the actions of health promotion via education is to communicate information on health through the different media and channels of communication (Nutbean , 2006).

Research Questions

RQ1. Does the information that fosters the development of health literacy (IFHL) already show visibility in the Portuguese media; is it already part of the agenda setting of the Portuguese media?

RQ2. What sort of information that could encourage the construction of health literacy receives most media coverage in Portugal?

Methodology

Qualitative study: health news content analysis

Sample : 947 news about health

Barometer of the *Centro de Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia of Portugal*- PEW Research Center's Methodology

Methodology

Analysis data

To evaluate the degree of visibility of health literacy in the media

1) we checked for indication of the existence or not of news with content alluding to any of the fields of health considered (Health Care, Disease Prevention and Health Promotion); 2) we verified whether the news with IFHL was found in the headlines of the media.

Methodology

Analysis data

To check whether the type of information on health literacy which is covered by the media

An analysis matrix was created based on the European research of the *HLS-EU Consortium (2012): Comparative Report of Health Literacy in Eight EU MemberStates* (a) health care; b) prevention of disease and c) promotion of health)

Presence and Relevance of IFHL in the News

Information promoting Health Literacy	n	%	Health Literacy in a headline	n	%
Yes	230	24.3%	Yes	56	24.3%
No	717	75.7%	No	174	75.7%
Total	947	100.0%	Total	230	100.0%

Topics of Health Literacy in the News

Health Literacy Topics in the News	n	%
Health Care/Medical treatments	53	21.7%
Health Care/Medicines	29	11.9%
Health Care/Symptoms of disease	4	1.6%
Health Care/Medical emergencies	1	0,4%
Disease Prevention/Keeping a check on unhealthy behavior	4	1.6%
Disease Prevention/Management of mental health problems	2	0.8%
Disease Prevention/Forms of protection against disease	17	7.0%
Disease Prevention/Vaccines and medical tests	34	13.9%
Disease Prevention/Monitoring of clinical signs	7	2.9%
Disease Prevention/Annual check-up	0	0.0%
Disease Prevention/Health risks	24	9.8%
Health Promotion/Promotion of healthy behavior	7	2.9%
Health Promotion/Activities that are beneficial to mental wellbeing	1	0,4%
Health Promotion/Reduction of sound pollution and creation of green spaces	0	0.0%
Health Promotion/Health policies	56	23.0%
Health Promotion/Health at the workplace	0	0.0%
Health Promotion/Food packaging	0	0.0%
Health Promotion/Being and staying healthy	1	0,4%
Health Promotion/Unhealthy and healthy spaces at home	0	0.0%
Health Promotion/Actions to improve health and wellbeing	4	1.6%
Total	244	100.0%

Discussion and Conclusions

Information promoting health literacy shows a low level of visibility in the Portuguese media

This level does not corroborate what the **specialised literature stresses about this topic**: The defence of a higher level of visibility of information about health which fosters the literacy of the user-patient in the media so as to increase the user-patient's knowledge and education (Nutbean, 2006).

Discussion and Conclusions

Portuguese news media concentrated their attention on a few subjects (health policies and medical treatments- around 45%)

the curing of existing diseases and public health (health policies – the active role of institutions)

in detriment

a higher encouragement of preventing health risks or having a healthier lifestyle and promoting the individual autonomy of the Portuguese on health matters (the active role of user – patient)

Discussion and Conclusions

Media information whose nature does not substantially enhance the autonomy of the citizens in the management of their own health

News media coverage that generates an insufficient and deficient vision for the development and empowerment of the Portuguese in their health literacy

