

The Skilled for Health Programme In Action

Healthy Prisons Network Meeting
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Defining Health Literacy

- Arising from the clinical care paradigm
 - HL as a basic skill the lack of which is a ‘risk’ to the ability to achieve and maintain good health = ‘deficit model’
- Arising from the Health Promotion paradigm
 - HL as the outcome of Health Promotion activities = ‘asset model’

Nutbeam D. The evolving concept of Health Literacy. Social Science and Medicine. 2008 December;67(12):2072-8.



How big is the problem?

Functional literacy in England

- Functional literacy = level 1 and above
- Level 1 = GCSE grades D-G. Adults with skills below this level may not be able to read timetables or letters containing polysyllabic words
- 15% (=7.45 million people) of the population are below this level
- Entry level 1 = national school curriculum for attainment at age 5-7 yrs. Adults below Entry Level 1 may not be able to write short messages to family or select floor numbers in lifts
- 5% (=2.5 million people) are at this level

2011 Skills for Life Survey: Headline findings. Department of Business Innovation and Skills.



How big is the problem?

Functional numeracy in England

- Functional numeracy = entry level 3 and above
- Entry Level 3 = national school curriculum attainment at age 9-11. Adults with skills below this level may not be able to understand price labels on pre-packaged food or pay household bills
- 23.7% of the population are below this level
- 6.8% are at entry level 1 or below

2011 Skills for Life Survey: Headline findings. Department of Business Innovation and Skills.



The Response: Skilled for Health

- Literacy Links to Health
- Development of SfH – 2 Phases 5000 participants
- SfH is a Health Literacy programme for adults which embeds language, literacy and numeracy skills learning into a wide range of health topics

Phase 2 Prison Sites

- HMP Doncaster
- HMP Durham
- HMP Holloway (Sexual Health Materials)
- HMP Pentonville

Phase 2 – Offender Settings

- Northumberland
- Warwickshire
- Doncaster

Evaluation of Skilled for Health

Key Findings – all settings

- 100% increased health knowledge in all topics studied
- 85% adopted healthier eating behaviour
- 66% increased their physical activity levels
- Assisted prisoner weight loss
- Increased prisoner self esteem/confidence

What prisoners reported

A friend approached me about doing Skilled for Health and with an open mind I agreed. [The] first session was a surprise to me because I realised that I had issues with communicating the simplest bit of information to a group of strangers...I have got a lot of helpful information telling me how to boost my confidence and maintain a healthy balanced lifestyle physically and mentally. A lot can be learned from this course because I feel comfortable and would be very proud of promoting Skilled for Health to my friends on the wings.

[The course] teaches you to deal with stress and anxieties you will suffer in prison life, getting a balance to carry you forward. In prison it is the little things that count.

Focusing on mental health was as important as learning maths and english.

It was important to be treated as a human being.

Skilled for Health in the North West

What we did

- **Commissioned by NHS Bury**
 - 16 Approved Premises in the North West
 - HMP Styal
- **Introduction to Skilled for Health**
 - 3 hour workshop for Approved Premises staff
 - 4 sub regions
- **1:1 Follow up support**
 - 3 days support for each setting
 - Enable staff from the Approved Premises to deliver the sessions



Skilled for Health in the North West

The Impact

- Residents enjoyed attending (motivation)
- Overall wellbeing of residents improved
- Residents developed skills and confidence to be more independent when:
 - Managing medication
 - Making phone calls e.g. to GP, benefits office etc

(Views of Approved Premises staff)



Any Questions?



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