KISS me with Health Literacy: Reading is Not Enough

The Next Wave Kiss Health Care

KISS was the term the federal minister of science and technology used to explain to me what matters in communication and scientific and health literacy. It is an acronym for Keep It Simple Stupid.

Health literacy is championed in the cause of plain language for consumers and debated in the realm of how we share statistics with numeracy poor populations. Do we respond best to numbers, pictures, vignettes, talking to friends, medical professionals or just not bothering with our health at all because..well..its complicated. We are missing the biggest problem of all, systems literacy is not consistent across platforms and is not taught like reading and writing and arithmetic, we are forced to wrestle the enemy alone. How much worse is it for those who have memory, motor and mobility problems. We can 3D print digital limbs, grow skin tissue in a dish, and make world class microscopes out of origami. Why can’t we use this power to make health systems easy?
One of the areas I work in is helping people with brain dysfunction and neurological problems to recover functionality so they can do what they did before or at least improve and maintain quality of life as much as possible. I used to be able to use the IPAD and train even those with moderate dementia to use technology to improve their lives. Sadly systems have taken over and they can seldom get through a process without having to log in, learn to get rid of advertising or not install malware, and because of all the steps it takes just to be digitally functional once people get into a program they are afraid to shut it down because one memory slip or bungled swipe or key stroke means losing the program until someone else can be paid or begged to navigate. We are losing autonomy in the battle to continually master unfamiliar technology that does little more than what we could already do before. Am I impressed that my cell phone has more technology than it took to get to the moon? Sure, but I would be more impressed if it would just work without complications. Please someone stop this train, we all want to get off.
Technology is Great But it is Not Human Contact

Technology is not human contact and sometimes the communication we need the most comes in the form of a familiar voice or a human body. Instead we are assaulted with commands to “text me”, “just email” or “Tweet’ and get the family news good or bad via Facebook along with the rest of the world. To some people these are lifelines of contact but to others it shuts them out. Complexity and technology stressed families, colleagues and friends communicate online instead of doing what they really want to which is seeing people face to face.

Digital Literacy In the Information Age Count People In!

It seems that reading and counting is not enough for health literacy anymore, now we need computer and digital literacy as well. How can we KISS and keep it warm and compassionate. Real Health Care needs people.
Lets Insist on Systems That KISS

Tricia Price from the University of Cardiff gives us the real cost of ignoring the needs and limitations of people while building complexities into systems.