



Atlantic Summer
Institute on
Healthy and Safe
Communities
l'Institut d'été
sur les collectivités
sûres et en santé au
Canada atlantique

Atlantic Canada Showcase Presentation

Literacy and Health: An Innovative Way of Meeting the Challenge in Northeastern New Brunswick

Description of Presentation

The Francophone population of northeastern New Brunswick participated in the development of a media campaign designed to facilitate access for all Francophones to clear, relevant information such that they can make the best possible decisions regarding their health.

From August 2005 to March 2007, 85 key informants were consulted and 13 discussion groups bringing together more than 165 persons were held in order to identify topics about which information was needed. A number of regional health authority professionals, members of community organizations, and residents agreed to write a health spot, record a health spot, or contribute as a member of the community committee that revised all of the spots produced.

A community development strategy and a media campaign carried out by and for the target audience were the methods used for this initiative. Funding was provided under Health Canada's Primary Health Care Transition Fund (PHCTF) (through the Société Santé en français), making it possible to implement initiatives facilitating access to health services for Francophones in order to improve their health. The high illiteracy rates among New Brunswick Francophones were the catalyst for the initiative.

The issues addressed during the initiative were people's ability to exercise control over their health in a context where they have trouble reading, writing, and understanding the information they are given. This indicated a pressing need to work on developing a strategy to help them assimilate information. The search for and

Presenter

Nathalie Boivin



A nurse by training, Nathalie earned a Master's degree in Community Health (health promotion option) from the Département de Médecine Sociale et Préventive, Faculté de Médecine, Université Laval. She then completed a Ph.D. in Nutrition at the Faculté des Sciences de l'Alimentation, Université Laval.

Since 1998, she has been a professor at the Université de Moncton, Shippagan campus, Bathurst site, in the nursing sector. Her research interests lie in health promotion, community health, and health literacy.



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exchange of tips enabled them to take a first step towards assuming responsibility for their health and recognizing their ability to exercise some control over their individual and collective health. This all resulted in a feeling of collective pride and a desire to share other tips and to talk about tips heard in the media.

It is important to actively involve the population in each stage of developing such an initiative, to go at their pace, and to work in partnership.

Using the Circle of Health©, Nathalie will engage participants in reflecting on the means needed to offer plain and pertinent information in their environment.

How you will benefit

- Good way to work on promoting the health of a underliterate population;
- Links between low literacy rates and health; and
- Implementation of primary health care principles in order to contribute to the success of an initiative by and for people.

Handouts

Available during the presentation

Resources

Available during the presentation

Contact Information

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