Update: Vancouver Public Library
Presentation for ACTION for Health Team Meeting
April 2006

ACTION for Health

Document Status:

☐ Published Paper  ☐ Practitioner’s Pointers
☐ Working Paper  ☐ Briefing Note
☐ Report  ☐ Research Tool
☐ Draft  ☐ Overview
☒ Presentation  ☐ Other

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Work during the past year

- I started working on this project with Judith Krajnak in the fall of 2005.
- Conducting telephone interviews with:
  - Those who attended Vancouver Public Library public workshops on how to use the internet to search for health information
    - Sessions: fall/early winter of 2004; fall of 2005
    - Participants recruited at the workshops, then followed up with phone call
  - Completing follow-up interviews (ideally six months, but as long as 10 months) around: info sources, internet use, interaction with intermediaries, website evaluation, info use, personal health status and demographics.
- A secondary purpose of this research is to pilot test an telephone interview script for future work with the Canadian Health Network (CHN) in the late spring and summer of 2006
Preliminary findings

I have interviewed 6 women and 2 men

Findings:

- Sources for health information included:
  - Internet, library books, newspapers, doctors and pharmacists
- None of the respondents had internet access at home
  - Used the internet at the library or the homes of friends
- Six of the 8 spoke confidently of their ability to evaluate the trustworthiness of the online info.

- Evaluation methods:
  - Look at the source, used judgment, cross-referenced on different websites and looked for commercial interests
Preliminary findings

- Two weren’t confident in their ability to judge the accuracy and trustworthiness of online health info.

- Six (of 8) shared the information with their physicians
  - Four (of 6) had a positive experience
  - Two physicians weren’t receptive
  - One interviewee visited websites recommended to her by doctor

- Dissemination:
  - To VPL staff and Canadian Health Network community partner (who sponsors the classes)
  - Presentations at the Canadian Public Health Association and Canadian Communication Association conferences in the spring.