

a multilingual leaflet to promote a public health issue

C A Woods PhD[¥], M D Anjou MScOptom[¥], AJH Hall MD[°], A Nankervis MB BS[°], D Campbell MD[°], R Audehm MB BS[#], L

Watson BA[#], AK Harris BScOptom[^], A Dash BSc^{*} and NA McBrien PhD[‡]

Western Melbourne Retinopathy Screening Project*

Clinical Vision Research Australia, Victorian College of Optometry, University of Melbourne, Australia



Introduction

The WMRS project set out to improve the delivery of retinal screening to a local communities living in the Western suburbs of Melbourne; the cities of Brimbank, Hobson's Bay and Maribymong.

The message⁶

In English:
 "Diabetes can cause eye disease and vision loss. Diabetic eye disease is the leading cause of blindness in people between 20-65 years. Vision loss can be prevented if diabetic eye disease is detected early and treated. You need to have your eyes tested at least every two years. Speak to your general practitioner, local optometrist, ophthalmologist, endocrinologist or diabetes nurse about getting your eyes tested."

Translating #1

Language *Australis* helped translate the language into the 11 chosen languages.

initial problems

Endocrinology has no literal translation in some of the languages chosen.

Consultation

All translations were distributed to local culturally appropriate community groups for comment and correction. Some groups felt the message too complex:

- at least every two years
- general practitioner
- ophthalmologist

- were replaced by:
- every one to two years
 - family doctor
 - eye specialist

Translation #2

Endocrinologist remained a problem. All suggestions and corrections were incorporated.

Needs analysis

A multilingual leaflet to promote regular eye examinations for people with diabetes was developed because:

- Diabetic retinopathy is the commonest cause of blindness in Australians aged 20 – 64 years.¹
- Recent studies indicate that approx. 40% of people with diabetes in Melbourne are not being screened on a regular basis.²
- 98% of people with diabetes develop retinopathy during their lifetime. The incidence of significant visual loss is 19%.³
- 49% of people living in the western suburbs of Melbourne have a language other than English (LOTE) spoken at home.⁴
- The Department of Human Services, Government of Victoria had recognised that promotion of screening should focus on LOTE communities.
- Community based ethnic groups felt current literature tried to deliver messages that were too complex.⁵

The languages

11 languages other than English were selected based on:

- Population size.
 - Prevalence of diabetes within that community group.
 - Years since initial migration of that group.
- Languages selected were:
Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, English, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Maltese, Serbian, Somali and Vietnamese

Distribution

The leaflet was distributed throughout the region to:

- Ethnic/Cultural community centres
 - General medical practitioners
 - Diabetes nurse educators
 - Community health centres
 - Optometrists
 - Ophthalmologists
 - Endocrinologists
- A leaflet drop to 60,000 residential homes

Utilisation

This leaflet design was used in posters to promote *Diabetes Awareness Week* (August) and *World Diabetes Day* (November) during 2000 in the State of Victoria.

The leaflet

The design was kept simple to reduce production costs; 3 colour printing, no images, on one sheet of A4 paper.



References

- 1 Leese GP, Broadbent DM, Harding SP and Vora JP. "Detection of sight-threatening diabetic eye disease." (1996) *Diab. Med.* 13, p850-853.
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- 3 Harper CA. "Treatment of diabetic retinopathy." (1999) *Clin. Exp Optom.*, 82, p98-101.
- 4 1996 National census data. Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- 5 Personal communication.
- 6 "Management of diabetic retinopathy: Clinical practice guidelines. (June 1997) National Health and Medical Research Council.

WMRS project*

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Address for correspondence

Craig A Woods, CVRA, Victorian College of Optometry, University of Melbourne, Cnr Keppel and Cardigan Sts, Carlton 3053, Victoria, Australia.
 c.woods@optometry.unimelb.edu.au