

**HEALTH**

**PROMOTION**

**AUDIT**

**DIABETES**

**LEAFLETS**

## Main Role

Leaflets are used extensively in pharmacy health promotion but they are not always used efficiently. How these resources are used and the quality of the material is equally important.

An Aston consumer study in 1991 looked at whether 427 high users of pharmacies and 358 of the general population had noticed health promotion literature or booklets in pharmacies, whether they had read them and whether they had found them useful. Two thirds of high users and 48% of the general population had noticed the leaflets and 37% and 23% respectively had read them. Ten per cent more women than men had read them, only 20% of retired people had taken leaflets. Percentage uptake increased slightly with educational attainment but those with degrees being less likely to rate leaflets as useful.

Twenty five per cent did not recommend any improvement in the leaflets 12 per cent asked for more and 10 per cent for leaflets in different languages

Those who had not read the leaflets tended not to take them away because they were not relevant to them personally, they could not be bothered or were not interested. They concluded that there was a need for information on staying healthy as opposed to illness and disease. Passively displayed leaflets are missed by nearly half of all consumers. Readability studies show they are meaningless to over half of the adult population. There is a need to increase readability, and the number of illustrations and target market segments.

In a consumer survey carried out in 1995 in Barnet, nearly everyone had noticed leaflets on display in the pharmacy, and about a third of respondents had taken them away to read. Forty per cent of those who were coming to get a prescription dispensed had taken away a leaflet to read compared with 20% of those coming for non-medical goods and 14% of those buying OTC medicines.

## Leaflet readers

In the Barnet survey leaflet readers were more likely to have the following characteristics:

- Frequent visitors to the pharmacy
- Long term conditions-asthma, diabetes, coronary heart disease
- Those who think media is most convenient to get advice
- Have asked pharmacist about general health
- Think it is usual job of pharmacist to give health advice

Audit of the use of leaflets is important for pharmacy and could be linked to essential service 4 of the pharmacy contract: campaign based service.

### **Audit of leaflets:**

- demonstrates good practice
- promotes higher standards of practice
- demonstrate quality
- identifies gaps in knowledge and skills and stimulates the uptake of education and training.
- improves effectiveness
- increases efficiency
- examines activities
- improves procedures
- develops protocols
- demonstrates activity to paymasters and professional organisations
- improves patient care thus improving health status and health gain
- increases credibility and status of the role of the pharmacist as a health promoter

### Evaluate Leaflets

It is decided that only leaflets that have been evaluated should be displayed, that they should be appropriate for the particular pharmacy and that they are sympathetic to the current health promotion activities in the pharmacy. Leaflets may be evaluated using the following check list.

### Structure

- leaflets obtained, delivered/collected on time
- display in suitable leaflet rack(s)
- position of display
- train a member of staff to tidy them daily and throw away out of date and damaged leaflets

### Process

Evaluation of all leaflets using Health promotion material evaluation checklist, see below.

- know about local and national campaigns, ask to be put on mailing lists e.g. local health promotion unit, National Asthma Campaign, British Heart Foundation and other charities
- special displays six times a year to tie in with local campaigns

### Output

- how many times do you and your assistants give out a leaflet to accompany advice
- how many leaflets are taken by your customers and patients

### Outcome

- how many ask for more information, phone calls etc.
- do posters cause them to ask for more information
- criteria may be developed, e.g. a suitable leaflet should be given to everyone who requests treatment for headlice or cystitis.
- future planning - aware of local health schemes and future plans and tie in with them. Be proactive not reactive in doing this
- local surgery - tie in with them on an annual campaign, talk to practice nurses, GPs joint training about health promotion
- tie in poster/window campaign e.g. national no smoking day, national asthma campaign (address for leaflets), local head lice campaign

## Health promotion material evaluation check list.

### Attraction

Does the leaflet create interest?      yes  no

Does the leaflet catch people's attention?      yes  no

What do you like least about it?

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What do you like most about it?

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Is the artwork appealing?      yes  no

Is the artwork appropriate for the people the leaflet is trying to reach?      yes  no

Would anything in the pictures offend people?      yes  no

### Comprehension

What is the message the leaflet is trying to put across?

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Does it recommend people to take certain actions?      yes  no

What actions?

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Is the leaflet easy to understand?      yes  no

Is there anything confusing in the leaflet?      yes  no

What is the readability of the leaflet when you apply the gobbledegook test?

## Gobbledegook test

The test is a rough measure of readability for adults based on the principle that a combination of long sentences and polysyllabic words is usually difficult to understand. Many word processing software packages include a readability test in the grammar check tool. This test was based on R.F Gunning's FOG (Frequency of Gobbledegook) formula and was adapted by the plain English campaign.

- Count a 100 word sample
- Count the number of complete sentences in the sample
- Count the total number of words in the complete sentences
- Divide the total number of words by the number of sentences. This gives the average sentence length
- Count the number of words with three or more syllables in the 100 word sample. (Numbers and symbols are counted as short words; hyphenated words are counted as two words; a syllable for the purposes of the test, is a vowel sound. So 'advised' is two syllables and 'applying' is three.
- Add the average sentence length to the percentage of long words to give the test score: the higher the score the lower the 'readability'.

It is usual to do this three times for three different 100 word samples, one from the beginning, one from the middle and one from the end, these scores can then be added together and divided by three to give the average score.

Tests carried out in 1980 by the National Consumer Council show that the following publications have these scores

Woman Magazine	25
The Sun	26
Daily Mail	31
The Times	36
The Guardian	39

A gobbledegook score of around 25 should be aimed for if the leaflet is to be understood by the majority of people.

Acceptability

Is it appropriate for your patients and customers?

yes  no

Does it reflect their culture?

yes  no

is there anything irritating or offensive in the leaflet?

yes  no

Does it reflect their values and socio economic status?

yes  no

Does it take age and sex into account?

yes  no

Personal  
Involvement

Does the leaflet seem to be directed to the reader personally?

Is it talking to all people?

yes  no

if no, is it talking to a particular target audience?

Persuasion

Is the leaflet convincing?

yes  no

Is there anything about the message which is hard to believe?

yes  no

If yes what? \_\_\_\_\_

Does it seek to persuade the reader to do something?

yes  no

Reliability

Is the information reliable?

yes  no

accurate?

yes  no

up to date?

yes  no

unbiased?

yes  no

controversial?

yes  no

complete?

yes  no

Does it contain advertising?

yes  no

