The Alpha-Health Plan: health literacy and health navigation as a strategy for training Brazilian Health System workers

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Background

- In Brazil there isn’t a national survey regarding its population health literacy.
- Some studies point insufficient health literacy with prevalences varying from 31.7% to 66.7% in some regions.
- There isn’t a specific training concerning this topic targeted to health professionals.
- Health professionals must be empowered about this theme in order to improve their daily practice as well as to recognize themselves as health navigators.

Objective

- To create, implement and evaluate the Alpha-Health Plan as a strategy for training Brazilian Health System workers based on the assumptions of health literacy and also on the creation of health navigators.

Methods

- Population group: 290 Community Health Agents (CHA)
- Place: Brazil – Ceará - Four strategic cities
- 7 groups (about 40 CHA per group)
- Training time: 16 hours
- Contents:
  - Health Literacy (4 hours)
  - Health Navigation: (4 hours)
- Non-Transmissible Chronic Disease - Prevention and Control (8 hours) – according to the book: Strategic Actions Plan for Fighting Non-Transmissible Chronic Diseases (NTCD) in Brazil 2011-2022 (Brazil, 2011)
- Strategy: Study Circles adapted according to Rudd et al. (2005), Soricone et al. (2007) and Freeman & Rodrigues (2011)
- Evaluation: Performance in questions before and after the training and evaluation through the Alpha Doll

Results

- From the 29 questions: there was an improvement in 25 of them, with a significance in 13 of them.

Table 1. Professional’s performance according to themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Before Training</th>
<th>After Training</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Literacy (Concept)</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>&lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Navigation</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>0.465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Knowledge</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>0.035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

- The Alpha-Health Plan contributed to empower the CHA to a much more adequate and effective approach of the user of the public health system based on the assumptions of health literacy and health navigation

Financial support