**Design for Health Literacy: Transitions in Women’s Health**

**Abstract**

Health literacy can be understood as a person’s ability to understand, process and act on health-related information to support informed decision-making, translating onwards into improved health outcomes. However, inequalities in health literacy creates significant complex challenges across individual, family, community and national contexts. While health literacy is recognized as a driver for improved service delivery, policy development, community participation and education, Batterham *et al,* (2016) acknowledge that the translation of health literacy principles into practice can be a challenge.

The role of women in shaping the health outcomes of their own family and of the wider community is recognized (DeWalt and Hink, 2009) and the subsequent potential impact on generational health outcomes highlights women’s health as an interesting perspective for consideration. By focusing on transitions in women’s health as key heath learning points, it may be possible to enable meaningful and sustainable health literacy and promote wider health improvement.

This paper presentation introduces health literacy, the relationship to health outcomes for women and their families and the role of health transitions in positively affect women’s health literacy. Using two case studies of design-led Experience Labs, led by the Digital Health and Care Institute, this paper explores peri-natal depression support and breastfeeding decision making as transitional points in women’s health and presents the Labs examples of *design for health literacy*.

The paper highlights the inherent learning potential of co-design as an enabler of change across health systems. By engaging health practitioners, policy makers, communities and individual citizens, opportunities and challenges for women’s health literacy can be identified and through design can be reframed from a shared perspective, transforming services and delivering better health outcomes for both women and their families. The ability of design to empower and to enable informed decision-making has significant potential to respond to low health literacy and improve access to health care as well as and responding to health equity.

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