



## **Consumer Health Library Panel (CHLP)**

### **Information Therapy March 2006**

Information therapy is described as the “prescription of specific evidence-based medical information to specific patients at just the right time to help them make specific health decisions or behavior changes.” (Kemper DW, et al. Information therapy: a tale. Health Forum Journal 2002 Jan-Feb; 45(1): 16-20). Studies have demonstrated that the provision of consumer health information at the point of medical care can increase compliance with treatment regimens, satisfaction with the health care provider and medical facility, and improve the ultimate health outcome for the individual. Health care costs are also a factor; patients who do not understand their treatment instructions, disease management, or prescription requirements are more likely to mishandle their health, be hospitalized more frequently, and have much higher medical costs than their more involved counterparts.

In this new era of patient-centered care and VHA’s emphasis on shared decision making, health care providers should understand the importance of consumer health information and education to their patients, and be able to find and/or refer their patients to current, reader-appropriate and evidence-based information.

Professional VA librarians are already aiding clinicians by facilitating the dissemination of appropriate resources to patients. They are already engaged in consumer health information services, and are well-versed in providing evidence-based, reading-appropriate materials to patients and their families. Some librarians have more formal programs with actual “information prescription” pads and the ability to document encounters in the electronic medical record, and others are more informal with word-of-mouth referrals and drop-in visits.

This bibliography provides resources to clinicians, patient educators and librarians on Information Therapy. While most VA libraries provide consumer health information to veterans and their families, those VA libraries that have been identified as providing more formal Information Therapy services are also listed.

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## Journal Articles

**Add 'infotherapy' to your list of medical terms.** Immunotherapy Weekly via NewsRx. 2001 Jun 13.

Anonymous. **Information prescriptions (Ix): bring internet-based health content into the treatment process: patients to your site.** Internet Healthcare Strategies 2005 Apr; 7(4): 4-8.

Arevalo JD **Information therapy moving from theory to practice.** Orthopedics Today. 2005 Mar; 25(3): 38, 86.

Bader SA, Braude RM. **"Patient informatics": creating new partnerships in medical decision making.** Academic Medicine 1998 Apr; 73(4): 408-11.

Bell C. **Prescription-strength information.** Modern Physician. 2002 Jul; 6(7);11.

Calabretta N. **Consumer-driven, patient-centered health care in the age of electronic information.** J Med Libr Assoc. 2002 January; 90(1): 32–37.

Edlin M. **Making information easy to grasp is what makes better care possible.** Managed Healthcare Executive. 2002 Jun; 12(6)44-45.

**Information helps patients partner with doctors to improve outcomes.** Health & Medicine Week via NewsRx 2001 Dec 31 p.11.

**Information therapy offers providers a new avenue of patient education.** Medicine on the Net, 2002 Mar; 8(3):8-9.

Kemper DW, Mettler M. **Information therapy: a tale.** Health Forum J. 2002 Jan-Feb; 45(1):16-20. PMID: 11828596

Kemper DW, Mettler M. **Information therapy: prescribing the right information to the right person at the right time.** Manage Care Quarterly 2002; Fall;10(4) 43-6. PMID: 12561393

Kemper DW. **Information therapy provides new competitive benefit: tools for each moment in care appeal to members who want to make smarter decisions.** Managed Healthcare Executive. 2003 Nov; 13(11)47.

Kemper, DW. **Trust on the Health Internet.** Managed Care Quarterly. 2001 Winter 9(1) 9-10. PMID: 11252399

Klein-Fedyshin, M. **Collaborating to enhance patient education and recovery.** J Med Libr Assn 2005 Oct; 93(4): 440-5.

Mettler M, Kemper DW. **Information therapy: health education one person at a time.** Health Promot Pract. 2003 Jul 4(3):214-7. PMID: 14610991

Mettler M. **Prescribed information is powerful medicine.** Business and Health 2003 Jul 1; 21.

Mitchell DJ. **Toward a definition of information therapy.** Proc Annu Symp Comput Appl Med Care. 1994; 71-5

**New on the net. Site promotes Information therapy.** Medicine on the Net. 2003 Nov; ((11): 14.

**NewsRx Network chosen as source for 'information therapy'.** Medical Letter on the CDC & FDA via NewsRx; 2001 May 27.

O'Kane ME. **A strong dose of information: health plans as infomediaries.** Manage Care Q. 2002 Spring; 10(2):1-2. PMID: 12148475

Schneider, J. **Information therapy and librarians: quality prescriptions for health.** Journal of Hospital Librarianship 2005; 5(4):73-80.

Schneider, S. **Information therapy answers the Institute of Medicine's harsh report.** Managed Care Quarterly 2002 Winter; 10(1):7-10. PMID: 15988949

Tarby W. Hogan K. **Hospital-based patient information services: a model for collaboration.** Bulletin of the Medical Library Association. 85(2):158-66, 1997 Apr.

Versel, N. **Feel empowered, feel better.** Modern Physician. 2002 Dec; 6(12):21  
PMID: 10981845

**White paper shows how patient-centered informatics improves health care delivery.** Biotech Week via NewsRx.com 2004 Aug 25.

Williams MD, et al. **The Patient Informatics Consult Service (PICS): an approach for a patient-centered service.** Bulletin of the Medical Library Association. 89(2):185-93, 2001 Apr.

Woolfe S, Chan ECY. **Promoting informed choice: transforming health care to dispense knowledge for decision making.** Annals of Internal Medicine. 2005 Aug 16; 143(4): 293-300. (98 ref)

## **Book**

Kemper, DW, Mettler, M.

**Information therapy: prescribed information as a reimbursable medical service.** Boise, ID: Healthwise Incorporated. 248pp.

## Internet Resources

### **The Center for Information Therapy**

<http://www.informationtherapy.org/cit.html>

The Center is “an independent, not-for-profit that aims to advance the practice and science of information therapy to improve health, consumer decision making and healthy behaviors.” While primarily supported by large medical organizations (commercial) such as Kaiser Permanente and HealthWise, a variety of information can be found at the site including white papers:

Gwinn BR, Seidman J. **The Ix Evidence Base: Using Information Therapy to Cross the Quality Chasm.** <http://www.informationtherapy.org/whitepapers/e0726.pdf>

Kemper DW. **The Business Case for Information Therapy**  
<http://www.informationtherapy.org/whitepapers/e0678.pdf>

Kemper DW. **The Business Case for information therapy in hospitals**  
<http://www.informationtherapy.org/whitepapers/e0678.pdf>

Kemper DW, Mettler M. **The strategic role of information therapy in long-term care.**  
[http://www.touchbriefings.com/pdf/14/lth031\\_r\\_kemper.PDF](http://www.touchbriefings.com/pdf/14/lth031_r_kemper.PDF)

Leonard E. **The prescription of the future: How information therapy is putting the focus back on the patient.**  
[http://www.mdnetguide.com/departments/may\\_jun2004/cover.htm](http://www.mdnetguide.com/departments/may_jun2004/cover.htm)

Seidman J. **The Arrival of 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Health Care: Group Health Cooperative Reengineers Its Delivery System Around Information Therapy and Patient-Centered Informatics.**  
<http://www.informationtherapy.org/whitepapers/e0067.pdf>

Seidman J, Wallace P. **Improving Population Care and Disease Management Using Ix Principles.**  
<http://www.informationtherapy.org/whitepapers/e0192.pdf>

Seidman J, O’Kane ME. **Turning on the Light: Illuminating the Care Experience Through a New Consumer Paradigm for Quality Measurement.**  
<http://www.informationtherapy.org/whitepapers/e0131.pdf>

### **The Information Rx Store (National Library of Medicine)**

<http://www.informationrx.org/>

The Information Rx Program from The National Library of Medicine “provides physicians an easy way to refer their patients to an authoritative, user-friendly and commercial-free Internet site for health information.” Ordering information for free prescription pads and other materials, promotional suggestions for clinicians and librarians, and more is available. A new release on the program is available at

[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/news/press\\_releases/images/prescription\\_pad.jpg](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/news/press_releases/images/prescription_pad.jpg)

## VA Libraries with Information Therapy Programs

**San Francisco, CA:** Clinicians in the main hospital and CBOCs can request consultation for information from the Health Education Library for Patients in CPRS. This is a popular feature with the CBOCs. If a clinician requests Diabetes information, for example, a packet of information prepared by our Diabetes Nurse Educator (either Type 1 or Type 2) is sent. If there is a request for carbohydrate counting in diabetes, the request is usually forwarded to one of the dieticians to arrange a consultation either by phone or in person with the patient. Requests and materials sent are reviewed by a nurse and cleared from CPRS.

**Bay Pines, FL:** Librarians and clinicians use a combination of “prescription” pad and verbal referrals. There are occasional formal electronic consults plus many patients and family members “self-refer”. Information supplied or viewed plus any patient concerns are documented in the Patient Education Note in CPRS by the appropriate library staff. Information packets are prepared and are given directly to the patient or mailed to their home address depending on circumstances.

**Gainesville, FL:** Librarians go to staff meetings and provide a handout of service for staff and veterans. Mini-presentations are given at Morning Reports to the incoming residents and students. While an informal process, patients tell the Librarians that they are sent by their providers.

**Tampa, FL:** Clinicians and Librarians collaborate in both formal and informal processes. “Prescription” pads are available to clinicians, and highlighted in new employee orientations. Electronic alerts are used via CPRS; emails and telephone calls are also frequent methods of requesting information. When the clinician provides the patient’s name and last four of the Social Security number, the Librarian documents materials given and any comments/questions voiced by the patient or family in the medical record. Clinicians also refer patients less formally; patients also self-refer. Materials may be picked up in the library, mailed to clinicians or patients, or delivered electronically.

**Topeka KS:** The Librarian and the Patient Education Coordinator work together closely. The PHE Coordinator has made up packets of pamphlets for the most frequent diagnoses (approximately one dozen) such as diabetes, hypertension, etc. Physicians have been given a type of prescription pad with the names of the packets, so they can just checkmark the packet or packets they want the patient to pick up. Patients also self-refer for information, or are sent without a prescription.

**Lexington, KY:** A Patient Education Resource Center is contained within the Medical Library. Clinicians refer patients daily. Librarians keep a log book that lists the questions asked, status of person (patient, family member, or volunteer), date, and what source met the need (i.e. Micromedex, Health & Wellness database, medical reference section, video, etc.). The log is also divided into sections of medical vs. non-medical type questions (medical reference or general reference). The log has helped tremendously when Librarians revisit types of materials for which patients ask.

**Northampton (Leeds), MA:** Referrals are informal and not tracked. It is noted that the personal contact of the Librarian with the patient is important for evaluating learning preferences and comprehension levels.

**Battle Creek, MI:** Patient Consults are sent electronically to the library. After a veteran has had an appointment with their doctor, or when a veteran is first admitted as an inpatient, the clinician sends a Patient Health Information Request in Vista requesting information for the veteran on his/her diagnosis. Using library reference books, pamphlets or articles from website databases, information (at a level best understood by the veteran) is printed, then delivered to the veteran on the ward, mailed to the home, or picked up by the veteran (or spouse) at the library, whichever is appropriate. After this is done, the library staff that provided the information uses a template in CPRS to update the patient's record.

**Detroit, MI:** Librarians work closely with the PERC, which is staffed by an education person. Patients are sent to the learning center by clinicians with verbal orders, 3x5 cards, or formal consults generated in CPRS. The cards are multicolored and kept each exam room. On one side it give directions to the PERC with basic information (hours, location, phone, names) and on the other side there are check-off boxes and a space for the provider to write a brief note. Patients also self-refer.

**Albany, NY:** The Librarians participate in the Cardiac Rehab and Pulmonary Rehab education programs. They conduct classes about quality health information resources and services that they can provide to the patients. They also have the My HealtheVet/Planetree Health Resource room under the Library, and *MOVE!* patients coming in to complete the questionnaire. "Non-formal" information requests are filled.

**Northport, NY.** Information "prescription" pads are offered to clinicians. The librarian explains the program and distributes the pads at every new employee orientation. There is also an outreach service whereby recreational reading materials are delivered to inpatients and nursing home residents; at the same time, the patients are asked if they have any questions regarding their health, medications, etc.

**Salisbury, NC:** Some clinicians refer patients/family to the Patients' Library for information about their disease/treatment in an informal process.

**Portland, OR:** Outpatient clinicians use the Library Consult on CPRS for their patients. Upon receipt of the consult, the librarian locates information from MedlinePlus or other sources that have been previously approved by the local PHE committee. The patients may be called and interviewed at the discretion of the librarian; material is then mailed.

**Coatesville, PA:** While self-referrals are most prevalent, clinicians do refer through telephone/emails or by having patients come to the library with the request. The Librarian documents through progress notes in CPRS, so all clinicians can see what

types of educational material have been given to the patient, and whether the patient was referred by a clinician or was a self-referral.

**Wilkes-Barre, PA:** The Librarian receives many referrals from its champion gastroenterologist. An effort is under way to build up the PERC and encourage other physicians to refer patients. An increasing number of self-referrals has been noticed.

**Mountain Home, TN:** Its PERC has "information Rx" forms that providers can fill out to refer patients to the center in order to see a video, receive brochures or request an Internet search for information on diseases and treatments from MedlinePlus and other PHE websites available at the medical center. Assistance with My HealthVet is also available. The "information Rx" form is returned to the provider after the visit explaining what information was given to the veteran. If the veteran is unable to wait, the PERC staff mails information to the patient. Patients can visit the PERC with or without an "information Rx" form. Veterans and their families can also register at the PERC to attend CPR for Family and Friends. The Patient Health Education Coordinator in Learning Resources Service oversees the operation of the PERC and staffs the PERC, along with the Librarian and 2 volunteers whose background is medical education.

**Dallas, TX:** The Librarians have distributed the information prescription request pads last October to Ambulatory Care providers, although they are not well utilized at the present time.