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COMPREHENSIVE DELIVERY OF MEDICAL INFORMATION: PRINCIPLES OF SIMPLIFIED LANGUAGE

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Abstract:

The article analyzes the importance of simplified language in the process of delivering medical information to patients and the general public. The principles of conveying complex terms and scientific expressions in a simple, understandable form in medical communication are considered. Also, recommendations are developed for Uzbek medical discourse based on international “plain language” standards. The results of the study serve to increase patients' knowledge about health, prevent medical errors, and ensure reliable communication between doctors and patients.

Keywords: medical communication, simplified language, medical information, patient concept, health discourse.

Medical information is any information about health that is provided by a doctor, medical professional or health care institution to the population, patients, their relatives or organizations promoting a healthy lifestyle. This information can be presented orally, in written, electronic or visual form.

The main purpose of medical information is to inform the patient or the public about a specific health problem, measures to prevent the disease, to understand the treatment process and to encourage them to follow healthy lifestyle habits.

The effectiveness of medical information communication is determined by the degree to which it is fully understood by the recipient. That is, if the scientific information provided by the doctor is not fully understood by the patient, it will not have a practical effect. Therefore, medical information is considered not just information, but a communicative event that directly affects human health.



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In the process of delivering information, it is necessary to establish a dialogue based on mutual trust, cooperation and empathy between the communicator (doctor or medical professional) and the recipient (patient or the general public). In this case, the doctor must have not only clinical knowledge, but also a culture of medical speech. Studies show that 40–50% of patients do not fully understand or misinterpret the recommendations given during a medical conversation (Nutbeam, 2008). This situation leads to many medical errors and a deterioration in the outcome of treatment.

The communicative value of medical information is directly related, first of all, to the concept of health literacy. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) defines health literacy as the ability of a person to find, understand and apply information about health. From this point of view, simplifying medical information is an important factor in increasing the patient's health literacy. Medical recommendations given in simple and clear language increase the patient's responsibility for his own health, he begins to make his decisions consciously. The psychological, social and linguistic aspects of the doctor's speech also play an important role in the process of medical communication. Excessive scientific terms, complex medical explanations or words in the doctor's speech may be incomprehensible to the patient. For example, if information is simplified using expressions such as “high blood pressure” and “heart attack” instead of terms such as “arterial hypertension” and “myocardial infarction”, the patient will understand it faster and this will make communication more effective.

Plain language is a communicative approach aimed at expressing complex scientific, official or technical texts in a form understandable to a wide audience, especially non-specialists. This concept began to be widely used in the second half of the 20th century, primarily in the USA and European countries, in official documents, healthcare, education and social services. The “Plain language” movement was formed with the aim of conveying information from government agencies and healthcare organizations to people in a simple, concise and clear way. The main principles of plain language:



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Comprehensibility: Sentences should be short, clear and logical. Each sentence should express one main idea.

Simplicity: Using common words instead of complex terms. For example, "asthma" instead of "bronchial asthma."

Explanation: When necessary, terms or medical abbreviations are explained (for example, "MRI – magnetic resonance imaging").

Active form: The text uses active, not passive, sentences. For example, instead of "The patient needs to take the medicine," it is said "The patient takes the medicine."

Visual aids: It is recommended to support the information with graphs, tables, colored symbols, and pictograms.

Logical structure: The text is organized step-by-step using headings, subsections, and bullet points.

This approach is extremely relevant in the medical field, since health information directly affects people's lives. Simplicity of medical information intended for patients increases their level of health literacy, increases positive motivation for treatment, and reduces the risk of medical errors.

Another advantage of using simplified language is cultural adaptability. Taking into account the language and culture-specific vocabulary of each nation, as well as the popular variants of medical terms, makes information more natural and reliable. For example, expressions such as "sugar disease" instead of "diabetes", "microbe infection" instead of "infection" are examples of simplification in a folk, but understandable language.

In the context of Uzbekistan, medical communication faces multi-layered linguistic and social problems: in official medical literature and professional speech, a mixture of Latin, Russian and folk terms is often observed. Different segments of the population - urban and rural residents, people with different levels of education, non-medical professionals caring for relatives - show significant differences in the perception of medical information. Therefore, presenting medical information in a clear and simple language is necessary to increase the efficiency of the national healthcare system.

In the Uzbek language, medical terms are mainly borrowed from Latin and Russian, most of which are difficult for ordinary patients. For example:



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- ✓ “Hypertension” – “high blood pressure”
- ✓ “Dermatitis” – “skin inflammation”
- ✓ “Prophylaxis” – “prevention”

Providing these terms with simplified explanations in medical documents, instructions, and promotional materials can significantly improve health communication. Medical texts in Uzbek are often characterized by:

- ✓ direct use of technical and Latin terms without adapting them to the patient’s context,
- ✓ giving complex legal or clinical terms without abbreviations,
- ✓ relying solely on written descriptions with insufficient visual aids (pictograms, diagrams).

As a result, patients may misunderstand instructions, miscalculate drug doses and times, and be uncertain about preventive measures. This negatively affects health outcomes and increases health care costs.

Simplification is not just lexical substitution; It also requires cultural adaptation. For example, explaining the term “diabetes” as “sugar disease” will be more understandable among patients. Awareness strategies should also be developed that take into account traditional health expectations, family decision-making cultures, and gender roles. Information is more likely to be received with confidence through phrases, pictures, and examples adapted to each region or ethnic group. The introduction of simplified language has the following positive consequences: patient compliance increases, readmissions and medication errors decrease, and the coverage of health campaigns expands. All of this improves the quality of health care and contributes to optimizing system costs.

For the effective implementation of simplified language in Uzbek medical communication, a combination of the following measures is appropriate:

1. Terminological dictionary and synonym list - development of a list of simplified Uzbek variations for medical terms (for example, "arterial hypertension" → "high blood pressure").
2. Training modules in medical education - introduction of special training for doctors and nurses on communicating with patients in plain language.



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3. Standardized instruction templates - use of simplified language standards in outpatient cards, warning sheets and medication instructions.
4. Visual and multimedia resources - visualization of complex processes through pictograms, infographics, video instructions.
5. Public participation - pre-testing the understandability of materials by involving patient and civil groups in the development of information.
6. Implementation of assessment mechanisms - tests, focus groups and health literacy indices to measure the comprehensibility of materials.

Clear communication of medical information is one of the main principles of the modern health system, which plays a direct role in improving the health of patients and the public. Research results and theoretical analyses show that the conceptual and practical implementation of simplified language principles increases the health literacy of patients, improves the level of adherence to treatment instructions and reduces the risk of medical errors. This, in turn, allows for the optimization of clinical outcomes and the efficient use of health resources.

In general, the simplification of medical information is an integral part of the implementation of the principle of patient-centered medicine, and its systematic implementation increases the quality and equity of health services. This approach makes a positive contribution not only to the health of the individual, but also to the health of the entire society. In this regard, the development and implementation of national policies and practical programs that incorporate plain language principles will significantly improve the effectiveness of the health system in the long term.

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