

Health Literacy in China

Liming Lee

Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences
& Peking Union Medical College

Health literacy in our opinion

- Health literacy is part of the scientific literacy
- Health literacy consists of three dimensions as defined for scientific literacy by Jon Miller
 - An understanding of the norms and methods of science (i.e., the nature of science)
 - An understanding of key scientific terms and concepts (i.e., science content knowledge)
 - An awareness and understanding of the impact of science and technology on society

Scientific literacy of Chinese

- Survey of scientific literacy of Chinese
 - Since 1992, six surveys have been done

Chinese	Y1996	0.2%
	Y2003	1.98%

12 countries in European Communities	Y1989	4.4%
Japanese	Y1991	3%
American	Y2000	17%

Scientific literacy of Chinese

- Survey of scientific literacy of Chinese (2005)
 - Scientific information sources

TV, radio	94.25%
Newspaper, magazine	23.58%
Introduction by friends and relatives	7.90%
Internet	6.23%
Professional books	4.75%
Others	3.69%

Scientific literacy of Chinese

- Survey of scientific literacy of Chinese (2005)
 - Public understanding of impact of science and technology

Contribute to the development of a country	81.0%
Contribute to the self improvement	77.0%
Contribute to the health improvement and maintenance	58.6%
Contribute to the world peace	51.8%

Factors which might contribute to the improvement of health literacy of Chinese

- Government pays much attention to scientific popularization
 - Policy support
 - Fund support
 - Develop education
- The professionals pay attention to scientific popularization
 - Produce and evaluate scientific evidence
 - Present scientific knowledge (by scientist, doctors...)
 - Present the information in a form which is readily understandable by public

Factors which might contribute to the improvement of health literacy of Chinese

- Mass media support
 - In the right form
 - With the right content
 - At the right time
- Employer responsibilities
 - On-the-job training
 - Human resource development
 - Reduce medical expenses and insurance expenses

Factors which might contribute to the improvement of health literacy of Chinese

- Self-perception

- Demands
- Development

- Culture and tradition

- Culture and values
- Social economic development situation
- Traditional custom

Thinking of the improvement of public health literacy

- Strengthen.....

- Government's leadership
- Social mobilization
- Professional team building(capacity building)
- Collaboration mechanism
- Project extension
- Scientific popularization

Community Interventions for Health (CIH) · China · Hangzhou

- **Individual approach**

- Focus on the individuals' changes in knowledge, attitude and skills
- Health education as a mean

- **Structural approach**

- Focus on infrastructure and policy changes
- Multisectoral collaboration



Structural change is the key ...

- Build supportive environments for individuals to use health information and make appropriate health decisions
- Achieve sustained health improvement

