

4-20-2016

Agriculture for Life: A Guide for Health Promotion and Participation for Farmers with Health Challenges

Macaela Gomez

Tim Neugebauer

Carla Wilhite

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/ot>

Recommended Citation

Gomez, Macaela; Tim Neugebauer; and Carla Wilhite. "Agriculture for Life: A Guide for Health Promotion and Participation for Farmers with Health Challenges." (2016). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/ot/7>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Health Sciences Center Student Scholarship at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Occupational Therapy by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

Agriculture for Life: A Guide for Health Promotion and Participation for Farmers with Health Challenges

Macaela Gomez, MOTS
Tim Neugebauer, MOTS
Research Advisor
Carla Wilhite, OTD, OTR/L

Purpose

A literature review was conducted to establish evidence-based principles of health literacy and web accessibility for *Agriculture for Life* content. The established health literacy and web accessibility principles will guide the development and implementation of *Agriculture for Life* web-based content.

Background

With a growing number of people using the Internet to access health information, reliable and accessible content is increasingly important.

Challenges in health literacy and web accessibility can significantly decrease one's ability to prevent, treat, or adapt to illness or injury. Increasingly, agricultural producers are utilizing computers and technology, as Internet access becomes more widespread through rural areas.

Farmers and ranchers are at a high risk for injury and disability due to the physical nature and long hours of the occupation. *Agriculture for Life* aims to provide reliable and accessible web-based health information for New Mexico agriculture producers, so they may remain productive in agriculture throughout the lifespan.

Methods

- Databases for the literature review included: *EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS)*, *PubMed*, *CINAHL*, *WorldCat*, and *ScienceDirect*.
- Research articles regarding health and internet literacy were found using combinations of the following search terms: *health, literacy, agriculture, elderly, rural population, ehealth, older adults, aging farmers, internet use, older adult disability, and health services in rural areas*.
- Web accessibility articles were found using combinations of the following search terms: *web accessibility, disability, website design, accessibility, rural, agriculture, and health information*.
- Twenty articles and fifteen websites were used to contribute to the literature review.
- Due to the limited number of recent articles, research was expanded to include reputable government and nonprofit websites containing reliable health literacy and web accessibility information.

Results

Research has shown that health literacy and web accessibility are important to consider when developing eHealth content. To reach an audience effectively, web-based health content should utilize the following principles:

- Concise and simple language
- Avoid the use of medical jargon
- Use photos or demonstration
- Design must allow access for those with disabilities
 - large and easy-to-read fonts
 - utilize white space on the page
 - high contrast between fonts and background colors
 - avoid bright colors or busy patterns
- Constructed with compatibility for assistive technology
 - screen readers
 - speech recognition
 - screen magnifiers
 - alternative point-and-click devices
- The use of experienced website developers is essential to the development, design, and evaluation of an accessible website.

Discussion

Agriculture for Life is a conceptualized product of online health promotion for New Mexico farmers and ranchers. *Agriculture for Life* will provide health information to promote occupational competence through disability prevention and adjusting to aging or an acquired disability. This research serves as an example of the process involved in designing research-supported, web-based health promotion.

Implications

Occupational therapists have the skills, knowledge, and expertise to provide online health information to support positive health outcomes and occupational performance. This can allow New Mexico agriculture producers to remain engaged and productive.

Online content can allow OTs to:

- provide reliable health information to individuals in rural communities
- reach New Mexico farmers and ranchers to prevent or adapt to injury or disability
- present task adaptations and equipment modifications to farmers and ranchers

References available upon request