High-efficiency Strategies to Improve Health Information of the General Population

Dear Editor,

Obviously, the health of each community and health-related behaviors are the results of the attitudes and health knowledge of the people.[1] Subsequently, people's health knowledge is promoted through various ways. The most important tools include TV and radio channels, newspapers, cybercafé, and widely used applications such as telegrams, and banners and billboards in each country.[2] Few people may also receive scattered information through academic or non-academic workshops. Despite the usefulness of each of these methods, it seems that the health system of Iran should seek new strategies to transfer health information to the general population.

Based on these considerations, we propose a practical high-efficiency approach. In the first step, we recommend that health information is delivered to people in a health-related setting.[3] One of the most suitable settings for the task includes hospitals and health centers. Because people in these places seem to be more prepared to receive and memorize information. For example, in a hospital or outpatient clinic, people in the waiting room may read the posters. In such a situation, fresh information is better memorized and will probably be used effectively in the future. However, the problem is that most people do not have enough literacy or patience to study these writings. Meanwhile, they should stand up to the wall for a long time and study this content. Another limitation is that there are only a number of generalizations on these posters and generally do not provide accurate information on health issues.

An alternative or complementary approach that we recommend is to use audio files at the right time.[4] For example, health messages can be broadcast when patients and their entourages are waiting for the visit to a doctor at an outpatient clinic. These strategies do not have the above limitations. In addition, these voicemail messages can be broadcast to relatives during a meeting of the hospitalized patients. Based on this strategy, playing health-related sound files in hundreds of hospitals around the country can increase the health knowledge of thousands of people every month.

Another practical suggestion is that related audio files will be delivered to each department of the hospital. For example, information on lung health and smoking cessation is provided in the lung ward. Probably, the use of this strategy can be effective in improving the health of the whole country in the medium- to long-term. Therefore, we recommend using this strategy in the health system of the country.

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