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Comparison of English and Spanish Medical Information Sheets

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Comparison of English and Spanish Medical Information Sheets

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Background: Low health literacy increases costs and negatively affects outcomes. According to recent surveys, Hispanics comprise the lowest scoring ethnic group. To increase understanding, information is provided in Spanish. Question: How do select English and Spanish medication information sheets compare? Purpose: The purpose of this study was to determine whether medication information given to a patient in English had the exact same formation and readability level as that given in Spanish. Design: Case Study. Methods: Two drug information sheets, one on Warfarin and one on Amoxicillin from two different pharmacies, were chosen for comparison. We translated the Spanish drug information sheets into English to compare and contrast the information and readability. Results: Many of the English information sheets were easier to read due to page layout and word choice than the Spanish-to-English. Also, some of the information in the English version was different than the Spanish-to-English version. Conclusion: Medical personnel need to be knowledgeable about the information given to their patients in order to provide the best care. They cannot assume that the translated versions contain the same information as the English version. More research needs to be explored about this topic so that practice can be improved.

Information about the Authors:

Jenessa Franco, Jacob Hoffman, Lily Salinas, and Theresa Whalen are senior nursing students. Jessica Coapstick and Ila A. Jackson are sophomore nursing students. Graciela Payan is a freshman nursing student. All are interested in how low health literacy impacts health outcomes and ways to minimize this impact.

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