

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW INTO THE HEALTH LITERACY EXPERIENCES OF THOSE LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

Authors: Tayla J. Degan^{1,2}, Peter J. Kelly^{1,2}, Laura D. Robinson^{1,2}, Frank P. Deane^{1,2}, Anna M. Smith¹

¹*Illawarra Institute for Mental Health, School of Psychology, University of Wollongong, Australia.* ²*Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute, University of Wollongong*

Presenter's email: tjd589@uowmail.edu.au

Introduction and Aims: Health literacy is one's ability to use cognitive and social skills to access, understand, and appraise health information. This systematic scoping review aimed to synthesize research examining health literacy of people with substance use disorders and/or other types of mental health conditions.

Design and Methods: We conducted an in-depth search of published literature in databases Pubmed, Scopus, Web of Science, Psycinfo and CINAHL, up until February 2019. One reviewer screened the titles, abstracts and keywords of identified publications and together with a second reviewer, the eligibility of all full-text publications was assessed for their inclusion in the review. Two reviewers independently rated the quality of the included studies against a pre-defined criterion.

Results: Fourteen studies were included in the review. Most studies took on the common unidimensional functional health literacy view. Rates of health literacy varied across studies and health literacy measures. However, it is evident that low/inadequate health literacy levels and health literacy skill weaknesses are present in this population. Variances in health literacy levels across characteristics and outcomes (i.e. gender, mental health condition, education) were evident. Most studies were of cross-sectional design, with limited studies taking on a longitudinal approach. Limited studies have addressed health literacy in this population.

Discussions and Conclusions: This review highlights the presence of low health literacy levels of people living with substance use disorders and/or other mental illnesses. Limited research exists which emphasises the need for further investigation into studies which will help address the gap for this population.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *There are no conflicts of interest to disclose*