**Information Chains, Uses of Social Media Technologies and their Impact on Health Decision Making for People with Low Literacy**

Making decisions about health requires access to legitimate and credible sources of health information. People with low literacy, which can include people with disability or immigrants not speaking a local language, are at high risk of not receiving the right information to make decisions concerning their health, including assistive technology needs. Their access to information may be limited and sometimes information is transferred by long information chains with diminishing reliability, such as by word of mouth (e.g. with subjects receiving 2nd, 3rd, 4th hand knowledge) or unchecked data sources. Networks, including social media play an important role in sharing information in societies. While many studies focus on critical linkages between persons (nodes) of networks, Burt (1992) introduced the concept of "structural holes". He noted that networks can emerge and grow out of ongoing relationships. Such networks might be intended to accomplish a specific task such as sharing health information but may have structural holes, or gaps. Such gaps can provide both opportunities and challenges. We reflect on the use of technology such as social media applications and their potential impact on decision making. These include the typical chains of information from source to subject; how can social media (or alternative) technologies be used to maintain credibility of the information and what can be done for people of limited access to health information.

**(Abstract text – 228 of 250 words used above)**

**References**

1. Burt, R. S. (1992). Structural Holes, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.