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CREEDS®

How to explain health information

At Health Literacy Solutions we use the acronym **CREEDS®** as a reminder of the techniques health professionals can use when explaining health information to their clients. Explaining is a lot more than just telling. Using **CREEDS®** can allow you to present information so all clients can walk away from their appointments having increased their health knowledge and feeling empowered and valued.

CREEDS®

Chunk - group key points together into a single point

Repeat - key points or skills you have demonstrated

Examples – provide examples to give your information context

Experiences – link information to client experiences to make it more personally relevant

Double Up - use visual aids, props, gestures and written material to reinforce verbal messages

Summarise - at the end summarise the information in no more than 3 - 5 key points. You could even write out the key messages for your client

Remember, explaining is part of the questioning cycle, so don't forget to ask different styles of questions and use teach-back. This can determine the amount and type of information you need to provide.

Peer Review

Use this peer review sheet when you would like to get feedback on your skills in explaining. Have a trusted colleague sit in on one of your appointments and review your use of **CREEDS**® using the steps below.

Step 1: (During the appointment) The trusted colleague to complete the table below, commenting on aspects of your explaining that were done well, and those that may need more practise.

CREEDS ®	Comments
C hunk	<i>Were key points grouped together or large chunks of information broken into smaller points? Were skills broken down into smaller steps?</i>
R epeat	<i>Were key points or skills repeated to emphasise their importance.</i>
E xamples	<i>Were examples given to help put the information into a context and add meaning?</i>
E xperiences	<i>Did the clinician link the information or skills to the client's experiences? Did it appear that the information was specific and personally relevant?</i>
D ouble Up	<i>Were other modes of communication such as props, pictures, written material etc used to help reinforce the verbal messages?</i>
S ummarise	<i>Was the information provided summarised at the end into key points? Was the summary verbal as well as written dot points? Teach-back can be used to help summarise and get shared understanding of key points/messages.</i>
Other comments	

Step 2: Determining key points/messages. (After the appointment)

a) The trusted colleague to write down what they think are the key points/messages provided to the client. Remember, sometimes only 1 key point is suitable.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

b) Trusted colleague to ask clinician what were the main points/messages they think they gave the client.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Step 3: Checking for agreement. Compare the responses in step 2. If there is agreement, well done. The explaining has been done well. If the key points/messages are different keep practising **CREEDS**®. When you have shared understanding of the information, you know that learning has occurred.

Challenge yourself

Once you feel you are confident in using **CREEDS**® to explain information, check to see how well your clients understand your explanations. Do steps 2 – 3, but ask your client to write down the key points/messages from the appointment rather than a trusted colleague. After the client has left, compare their responses to your own to check for agreement.