Getting the message across: Effective Communications and Pharmacovigilance

a presentation

by Bruce Hugman

Communications consultant to

Uppsala Monitoring Centre
Communications failures in everyday life

• Friends
• Family
• Shopping
• Driving
• Safety
• Health
• …more…
Why do communications matter in drug safety?

• Welfare of hundreds of millions of people worldwide

• Extreme dangers of failure

and

• Communications are commonly poorly-executed, second-rate and ineffective
We took a breezy excursion and gathered jonquils from the river slopes. Sweet marjoram grew in luxuriant profusion by the window that overlooked the Aztec city. Jaded zombies acted quietly, but kept driving their oxen forward.

from www.fonts.com
Malabar type family released
BY DAN REYNOLDS

Last week, Linotype released my newest typeface family, Malabar. With six fonts for the Latin script, Malabar is a sturdy oldstyle serif. Designed for extensive reading, Malabar was originally part of a larger design project conceived for Indian newspapers, and a Devanagari addition will be released at a later date. After that, who knows?

Es tut mir Leid
aber von Deiner Arbeit bekomme ich manchmal »echt Bauchweh«
Background is an A4 sheet
Background is an A4 sheet

- Too many words
- Font too small
- Little white space
- No structure
- No priorities

Pretty much useless for most people
The January 2011 posting includes 43 drug products with safety labeling changes to the following sections: BOXED WARNING, CONTRAINDICATIONS, WARNINGS, PRECAUTIONS, ADVERSE REACTIONS, PATIENT PACKAGE INSERT, and MEDICATION GUIDE.
Communication challenges!

- The importance of ADRs and reporting them
- Information about benefit – harm and effectiveness – risk
- Encouraging rational drug use/adherence
- Communicating uncertainty
- Dealing with traditional beliefs and practices
- Involving patients; reaching informed consent
- Preventing or resolving crises
Problematic issues in drug safety: all reliant on communications for safety

- Adverse effects: ‘no drug 100% safe’
- Risk as a concept in medicine
- Safety and medicines (prescribing, dispensing)
- Benefit-harm
- Effectiveness-risk
- Public health and commercial goals
- Public health and individual welfare
- Access to medicines
- Uncertainty

continued...
More problematic issues in drug safety:

- Individual patient variation and susceptibility
- Polypharmacy/polytherapy
- Interactions
- Relationship of allopathic and traditional medicines
- Resistance
- Diagnostic, prescribing and dispensing errors
- Correct use and compliance/adherence issues
- Labelling and storage
Medicines - a major part of everyday life

- In the US approx 3 billion prescriptions annually: 10 for every person in the population (pop. 300m)
- In the UK approx 750 million community prescriptions annually (pop. 61m)
- ADRs and adverse interactions increase exponentially with 4 or more medications
- Tens of millions of patients are self-medicating: OTCs, trad meds, internet
What is an effective communication?
‘ But I sent her an email...’
An effective communication is a message which has been sent, with evidence that it has been received, understood and has prompted appropriate change or action.
An Effective Communication

Clear message

Feedback

Received and understood

Prompts change or action
Principles of Effective Communications

- Be clear about your message and purpose
- Know your audience(s): empathy; tailor the message
- Choose appropriate methods/media
- Present message with impact
- Make benefits clear
- Pre-test and revise message
- Repeat message
- Repeat message
- Seek feedback, monitor effects, start again
This is the competition...
JUMP ON!

Social media Bandwagon

Bruce Hugman, Uppsala Monitoring Centre
Bruce Hugman, Uppsala Monitoring Centre

59cm long
Targeting

Audience segmentation
Doctors and nurses are all different
Pharmacists are all different
Patients are all different

- Age, gender
- Education, ability
- Intelligence
- Role, job
- Location, lifestyle
- Income, debt
- Attitudes, values
- ...more
Partners and audiences in drug safety

- Manufacturers
- Regulators
- Politicians
- Employees
- **Health professionals**
- Academics
- Bosses/managers
- The public
- **Patients**
- Consumer and lobby groups
- Lawyers
- The media
- International community
Literacy and health literacy

- Percentage of population at or below basic literacy (US 20-30%)
- Percentage of population with poor health literacy (US maybe 50%+)
- Percentage of population with poor numeracy and health numeracy skills – measurement, risk - (at least 50%+)
Empathy

What’s it like for them?
Know your audience

• Watch
• Listen
• Research
• Ask
• Test
Communicate competitively
Getting attention, changing beliefs, values, feelings and behaviour is very difficult
STOP!
PAY ATTENTION!
REMEMBER!
ACT!
Malaysian ADR poster
COUNTERFEIT DRUGS KILL!

WORKING TOGETHER FOR SAFE DRUGS:
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Associations (IFPMA)
- International Generic Pharmaceuticals Alliance (IGPA)
- World Self-Medication Industry (WSMI)
- CHMP/Pharmacists Sans Frontières
I HAVE AIDS
PLEASE hug me

I can't make you sick
A STEP CHANGE IN ECZEMA TREATMENT

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET
For more info please visit www.dreamskinhealth.co.uk

What are Dreamskin Health clothes?
Dreamskin is an exciting and unique new clothing technology which has been designed for dry, itchy and sensitive skin. Dreamskin garments are made from the highest grade medical silk and have been coated with a special polymer which stops irritants from reaching your skin and helps your skin regulate its temperature and moisture levels.

What will Dreamskin Health clothes do for me?
Dreamskin clothes will help keep your skin cool and reduce the itching associated with dry skin conditions. This should help you to stop scratching as much and give your skin a chance to recover and heal.

How do I use them?
Dreamskin Health clothes can be worn just like any other. They are comfortable against your skin, and are very thin and light and can easily be worn under your normal clothes without being seen. If you currently use any creams or medications you should continue as usual and just put the clothes on after application of your existing treatment.

How to look after Dreamskin Health clothes
Dreamskin clothes are very easy to care for. You can wash them by hand or in a washing machine and they are suitable for tumble-drying. We suggest that you use a non-biological washing powder - which is recommended for sensitive skin - and wash with other light colours.

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Tel: +44 (0) 1989 567 890 Fax: +44 (0) 1989 567 891
www.dreamskinhealth.co.uk
KENACOMB® CREAM

DESCRIPTION
Kennacomb® Cream is a blend of ointments, mineral oil and propylene glycol in a petrolatum base. The active ingredients are 12.5% benzyl benzoate, 10% benzyl alcohol, 1.25% camphor, 0.5% menthol, 0.25% menthyl salicylate, 0.25% menthyl 2-pyrrolidone-5-carboxylate, and 0.25% propylene glycol. The cream is used for the treatment of skin infections caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites.

INDICATIONS
Kennacomb® Cream is indicated for the treatment of skin infections caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites. It is also effective in the treatment of skin irritations caused by chemicals, radiation, or other irritants.

CONTRAINDICATIONS
Kennacomb® Cream is contraindicated in patients with known hypersensitivity to any of its components. It should not be used in individuals with skin diseases such as eczema, psoriasis, or dermatitis.

SIDE EFFECTS
Kennacomb® Cream may cause skin irritation, such as redness, itching, or burning. It may also cause discomfort in the treated area.

PHARMACOLOGY
Kennacomb® Cream contains several active ingredients that work together to treat skin infections and irritations. Benzyl benzoate and benzyl alcohol are effective in killing bacteria and fungi. Camphor, menthol, and menthyl salicylate are analgesic and anti-inflammatory agents. Propylene glycol acts as a humectant, moisturizing the skin.

PRECAUTIONS
Kennacomb® Cream should be used with caution in pregnant or breastfeeding women. It is not recommended for use on premature infants or children younger than 6 months of age.

HOW SUPPLIED
Kennacomb® Cream is supplied as a 50g tube. It is available in various strengths and formulations, such as ointment or cream.

DOSE AND ADMINISTRATION
Kennacomb® Cream should be applied to the affected area 2-3 times a day, or as directed by a healthcare provider.

DIRECTIONS FOR USE
Kennacomb® Cream should be applied to the affected area 2-3 times a day, or as directed by a healthcare provider. It should be applied to a clean, dry skin surface. The skin should be gently cleaned and dried before applying the cream to prevent the cream from drying out.

Storage
Kennacomb® Cream should be stored at room temperature, out of the reach of children.

Manufactured by:
[Company Name]
[Address]
[City, State, Zip Code]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

DATE REVISED:
[Month, Day, Year]

SEE PACKAGE LABEL FOR COMPLETE DOSING AND SAFETY INFORMATION.
Qualities of modern communications:

- Intimacy
- Immediacy and high impact
- Peer-to-peer
- Addressing competition and low attention levels
- Benefits
Carlsberg

Probably the best beer in the world.
Planning communications:

- Today’s modern standards and methods
- Simple, clear message
- Stimulating motivation and offering benefits (including rewards and feedback)
- The use of specialist skills and creative imagination
Monitor, measure and evaluate effects

Does it work?
If so, why?
If not, why not?

If not, change it
An Effective Communication

Feedback

Clear message

Prompts change or action

Received and understood
Dear Friends,

As your personal representative, your support is crucial. A positive outcome is only possible if we work together. I want you to understand that we share a common goal and we must all work towards it.

Now, let's look at your situation. You have a lot of potential, but you need to focus on your strengths. I suggest that you start by setting clear goals and working towards them.

And for that reason, I am sending you a list of tasks that need to be completed. I hope you will be able to do your part.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,
Bruce Hugman
The heart of good communications is understanding all your audiences and tailoring messages precisely to them.
Branding

Repetition

Location

Bruce Hugman, Uppsala Monitoring Centre
Stop the spring flu germs

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- Put your used tissue in the rubbish bin or in a plastic bag
- Wash and dry your hands often, especially after coughing or sneezing – use soap
- Stay away from others if you’re sick

www.moh.govt.nz/pandemicinfluenza

Protect your family/whānau from inFLU

Symptoms of Swine flu

**Systemic**
- Fever

**Psychological**
- Lethargy
- Lack of appetite

**Nasopharynx**
- Runny nose
- Sore throat

**Respiratory**
- Coughing

**Intestinal**
- Diarrhea

**Gastric**
- Nausea
- Vomiting
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Summary

• Our communications must:
  – Be strong and visible
  – Be precisely targeted and tested
  – Change attitudes, values, behaviour
  – Be followed up and revised
  – Embrace modern standards and skills
almost

The End

of this presentation...

and the beginning

of the challenges for you.
Crisis management and communication

- Crises will happen (fire, death, ADRs…)
- Assess risks
- Anticipate and plan for all likely and unlikely events
- Create, rehearse and revise crisis plans
- In crisis, communicate
  - Quickly
  - Openly and honestly
  - Express regret, apologise
  - Explain what is being done to solve the crisis and prevent repetition
Read

*Expecting the Worst*

The UMC’s crisis management and communication manual
If you think I have something useful to say, you might like to read...

www.pharmpress.com
www.amazon.com
www.brucehugman.com
The end

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