(W14) STAYINGSMART: AN ONLINE COGNITION RESOURCE FOR PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS, CARERS, AND PROFESSIONALS
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Background: Many people with multiple sclerosis (MS) experience cognitive problems and report adverse effects on their quality of life. Good-quality information about cognitive difficulties is not easily accessible. Although a few good pamphlets and books are available, they have to be located by people with MS. This may be limited by mobility, finance, or knowledge. The person with MS also has to realize and acknowledge that he or she has cognitive difficulties, in a formal, explicit way, to request or purchase printed information about cognition. Objectives: To produce an online resource on cognition in MS. Methods: A multidisciplinary team, including a person with MS, developed the website, which was reviewed by 100 MS nurses and then in detail by 20 members of the MS community, including people with MS and health professionals, before the launch on World MS Day 2009. Results: To meet the needs of the Google generation, the web-based tool StayingSmart has been developed (www.StayingSmart.org.uk). It starts with frequent everyday problems, such as “I lose my keys,” which when “clicked” leads the website user through multilayered information targeting the relevant cognitive domain. The listing of everyday concrete problems on the home page allows users to access relevant information about cognitive problems from the starting point of their personal day-to-day experience. Cognitive information relevant to each problem is organized in layers. These are accessed by clicking tabs, which allows quick access to required information and gives the user control over how much information they read. “Tips and Tricks” lists simple, practical strategies to overcome daily difficulties; “Brief Info” and “More Info” summarize how MS affects the particular cognitive domain; “Evidence Base” reviews the scientific evidence; “Gadgets and Gizmos” lists items that may help; “Further Resources” lists relevant books and other publications; and there is a section on “Getting Professional Help.” There is also a Fast Track stream to allow health professionals to access and print all information in one document. There are links to Facebook and Twitter. Conclusions: The website is used globally. Within the UK it is used by people with MS, their carers, and health professionals for clinical and educational work.

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