

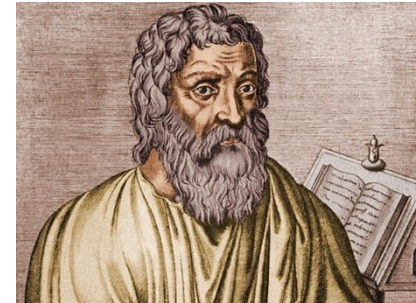
Health Literacy and personalised medicine – an Austrian perspective

Peter Nowak

3. October 2018, European Health Forum Gastein,
Workshop „Health Literacy and personalised medicine –
New technologies, new questions, new skills“

Personalized medicine is primarily a communicative task

- » „Personalized medicine“ **was always the core** of good healthcare
 - » Individual communication between physician and patient was and is the basis to find the best diagnosis and care
- » The **communicative framing is decisive** for patients benefit and acceptance
 - » the individual psychosocial and personal processing of the patients needs to be in the center of clinical implementation
 - » Support to understand, appraise, reflect and self-determine this treatment = **Health Literacy**



Core questions for the success of personalized medicine

Does the doctor understand the individual person?

→ What is the patient's concern?

→ Does the doctor recognize,

- » what the patient understood (or not)?
- » if this makes sense in the patient's life?
- » if the patient can handle it?

← **Understanding**

← **Meaning**

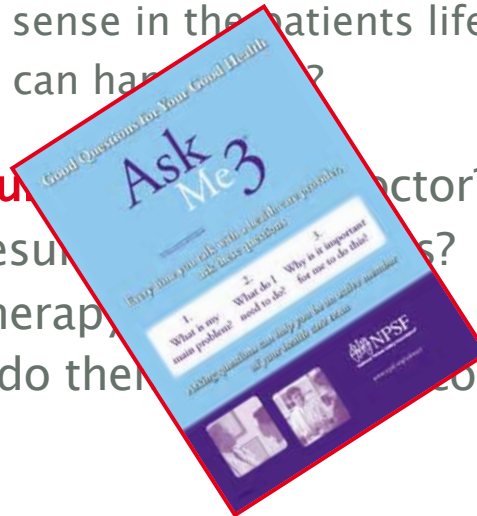
← **Workability**

Does the patient understand the doctor?

→ What are the results?

→ What are the therapies?

→ What they can do themselves to become healthy?



The Case of Austria: Quality of Healthcare Communication

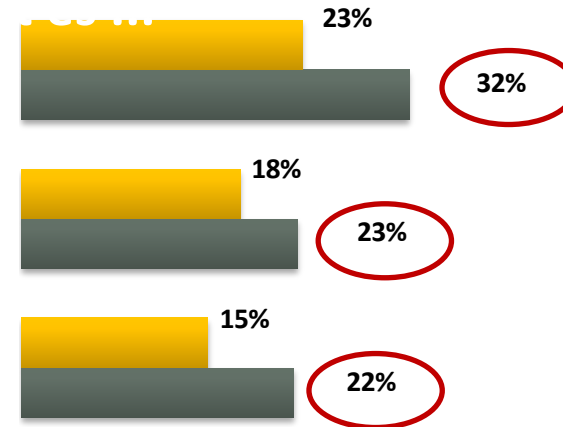
On a scale from very easy to very difficult, how easy would you say it is to: ...

... **use information the doctor gives** you to make decisions about your illness

... judge how information from your doctor **applies to you?**

... **understand what your doctor says** to you?

Percentage of persons who find it **difficult** to ...



Status quo
requires action!

Means 8 european
contries

Austria

Source: HLS-EU 2012

National strategy for personalized communication: major fields of action

- Developed 2014–2015
- Approved 2016
- Implemented 2017...



Re-orienting healthcare on a broad
basis towards patient-centred culture
of communication!

Major fields of action

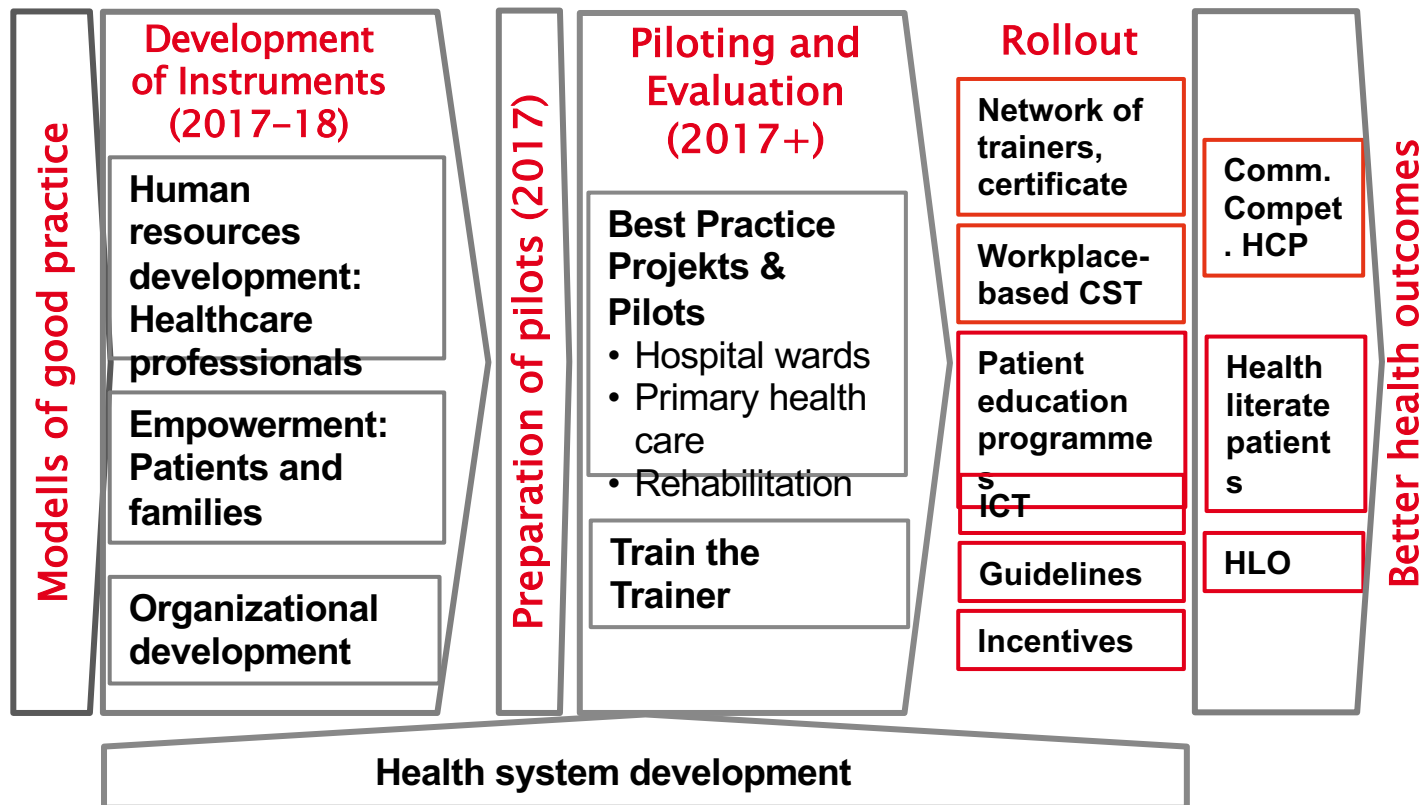
Empowerment:
Healthcare
professionals

Empowerment:
Patients and
families

Organizational
development

Health system
development

Implementation of the national strategy 2017–2020



Conclusions

- » Good communication is a prerequisite and central element of personalized medicine
- » Good communication is crucial for the health outcome

BUT: 1/5 – 1/3 of patients do **NOT** understand their doctor

- Good communication can **be taught and learnt**
- Good communication needs the **support of senior doctors**
- Good communication requires **supportive organizational processes** and framework conditions
- Good communication needs **re-orientation** in the basic paradigm of medicine