

# Health Promotion in Women with Intellectual Disability

*Development of an educational resource kit for women, carers, support workers and clinicians*



CENTRE FOR EDUCATION  
& RESEARCH ON AGEING



**NSW Council for  
Intellectual Disability**



# How did “Being a Healthy Woman” start?

- 2009: NSW Health allocated \$30,000 to women with ID
- working party set up
- Aim: develop an easy read, **colour** illustrated resource focusing on health promotion messages covering the life span + develop an education seminar for GP's



# Why do “Being a Healthy Woman”?

- **Women with an Intellectual Disability**
  - are less likely to participate in preventative health screening
  - are less aware of health promotion messages targeted at the general population
- **Health Professionals report**
  - they lack the skills, knowledge, resources to offer health promotion and screening to women with an intellectual disability

# Health Literacy

- “The ability to understand **how** and **where** to get health related **information**, **understand** it, **use it** correctly to improve health and act on it to make behaviour change”. *Joan Guthrie Medlen*

- Focus on what the person can do!



# Challenges

- Message needed to be relevant to more than 1 audience:
  - Women with ID
  - Family/ carers/ support workers
  - Health professionals
- Time
- Lack of research into designing health promotion material for people with ID



## • *Advisory Committee*

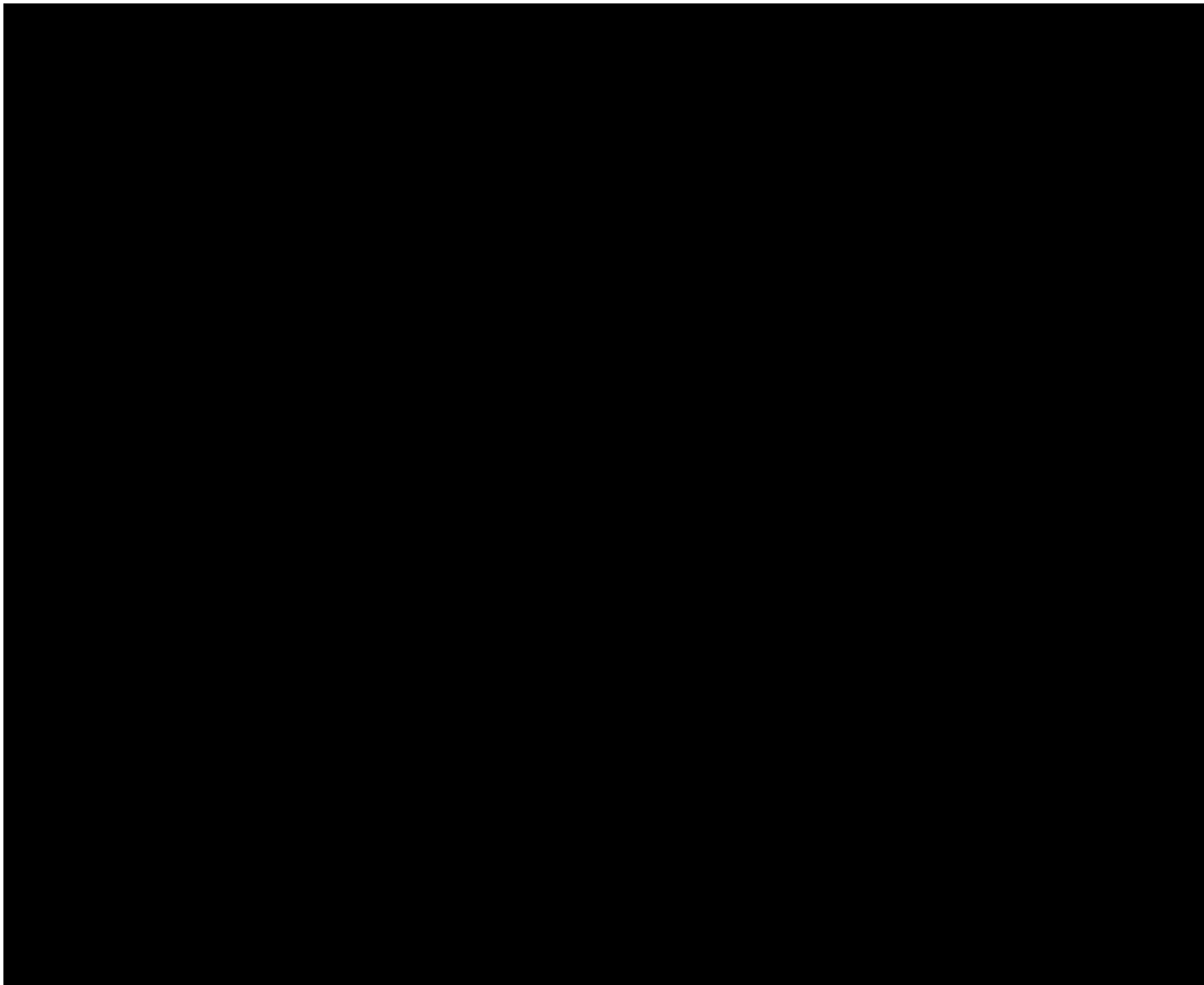
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# Literature Review

- How do women with ID want to receive Health Promotion messages?
  - Pictures: facial expressions, gestures, props
  - Be positive
  - Use a personal tone
  - Use active tense
  - Use colour
  - Keep it short and simple
  - Use an easy to read font





# Topics

1. Asking Questions About You
2. Being Healthy and Happy
3. Healthy Eating
4. Feeling Sad and Feeling Happy
5. Puberty
6. Having Your Periods
7. Growing Up
8. Close Relationships and Sex
9. Safer Sex
10. Deciding to Become a Parent
11. Being Pregnant
12. Having Pap Test
13. Breast Health
14. Menopause
15. Getting Older
16. Grief and Loss
17. Additional resources



# Language

## What you can do to feel better

Talk to your friends, family, advocate or support worker. They can support you to make choices that feel good for you. Build a strong group of friends who can look out for you.



You may feel better if you exercise or do more fun things so you aren't bored.

# Illustrations



# Focus Groups

- 7 groups with a total of 36 participants.
  - ❖ 22 Women with an ID
  - ❖ 6 Parents of women with an ID
  - ❖ 5 staff members from ADHC
  - ❖ 3 staff members: day activities/ advocacy services
- 3 Fact sheets per group- each fact sheet being tested by 2 groups
- Feedback incorporated

# GP Package

- Fitting Disability into Practice: A PowerPoint presentation incorporating ways to use Medicare items to map out a year of good health care for people with intellectual disability.
- Partners in Action: Teaching and learning resource including DVDs, student workbooks, tutors guide and knowledge base developed by CDDH Victoria and Monash University.

# Take Home Messages

- Realistic time frame- 6months was not long enough
- Finalise text before you do illustrations
- Use colour
- Get an enthusiastic dedicated team around you!

# Where to from here?

- Study of:
  - Health Literacy pre and post 8 week women's health intervention program
  - 6 week nutrition program
- GP evaluation
- Development of a Men's Health Book
- Fact Sheets on specific health topics: Diabetes, osteoporosis

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- ✓ NSW CID- Kim Walker and Yvette Proud
- ✓ Focus Group Participants
- ✓ Advisory Committee

# Where can you get “Being a Healthy Woman”

## Electronic Copies

- ✓ Family Planning NSW [www.fpnsw.org.au](http://www.fpnsw.org.au)
- ✓ NSW Health website [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)
- ✓ NSW Council for Intellectual Disability [www.nswcid.org.au](http://www.nswcid.org.au)
- ✓ GP Synergy [www.GPsynergy.com.au](http://www.GPsynergy.com.au)
- ✓ Centre for Disability Studies [www.cdds.med.usyd.edu.au](http://www.cdds.med.usyd.edu.au)
- ✓ Ageing Disability and Home Care, Dept. of Human Services NSW [www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au)

Limited hard copies are available from NSW Health Better Health Centre  
Phone: 02 9887 5450

For GPs – for information about the training package  
contact GP Synergy at [www.GPsynergy.com.au](http://www.GPsynergy.com.au) or phone 02 9818 4433