The Patient Profiling Tool (PPT): A new approach to treatment planning in the health profession

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Introduction /Aim: Adherence in health care refers to the degree in which an individual follows established preventative and management recommendations. Much attention has been placed on improving adherence rates; however no single method has made significant progress in achieving this aim. Previous solutions have used questionnaires after treatment has commenced to identify reasons for non-adherence. This study aimed to develop a new approach based on examining adherence-related behaviours prior to the initiation of treatment. Methods: A review of literature was conducted to identify different definitions of adherence across the health care profession, and to identify factors associated with adherence rates. The search covered the ERIC, MEDLINE, PsycINFO and Web of Science databases. Based on the literature review, the Patient Profiling Tool (PPT) was developed and trialed in a pilot study using 24 patients of a physiotherapy clinic. Results: The PPT is proposed as a new approach to treatment planning in the health profession. It provides health care professionals with a single instrument that can be used across various health disciplines. It facilitates interdisciplinary work and treatment planning by providing a common language in patient treatment. The PPT provides information on: patient motivation type; stage of change; perceived pain level; health value scale; personality type; and, learning style/educational approach. The trial of the PPT showed that it was sensitive to patient differences in variables related to adherence. Conclusion: It is suggested that health care professionals utilise the PPT at the commencement of any patient consultation. Information gained from the PPT informs the professional about important patient characteristics that are related to adherence. Health care professionals can adapt their treatment approach to better meet individual needs, increasing adherence rates, optimise health outcomes, and reduce the significant burden to the health care system.