How to write diaries (and taking photos)

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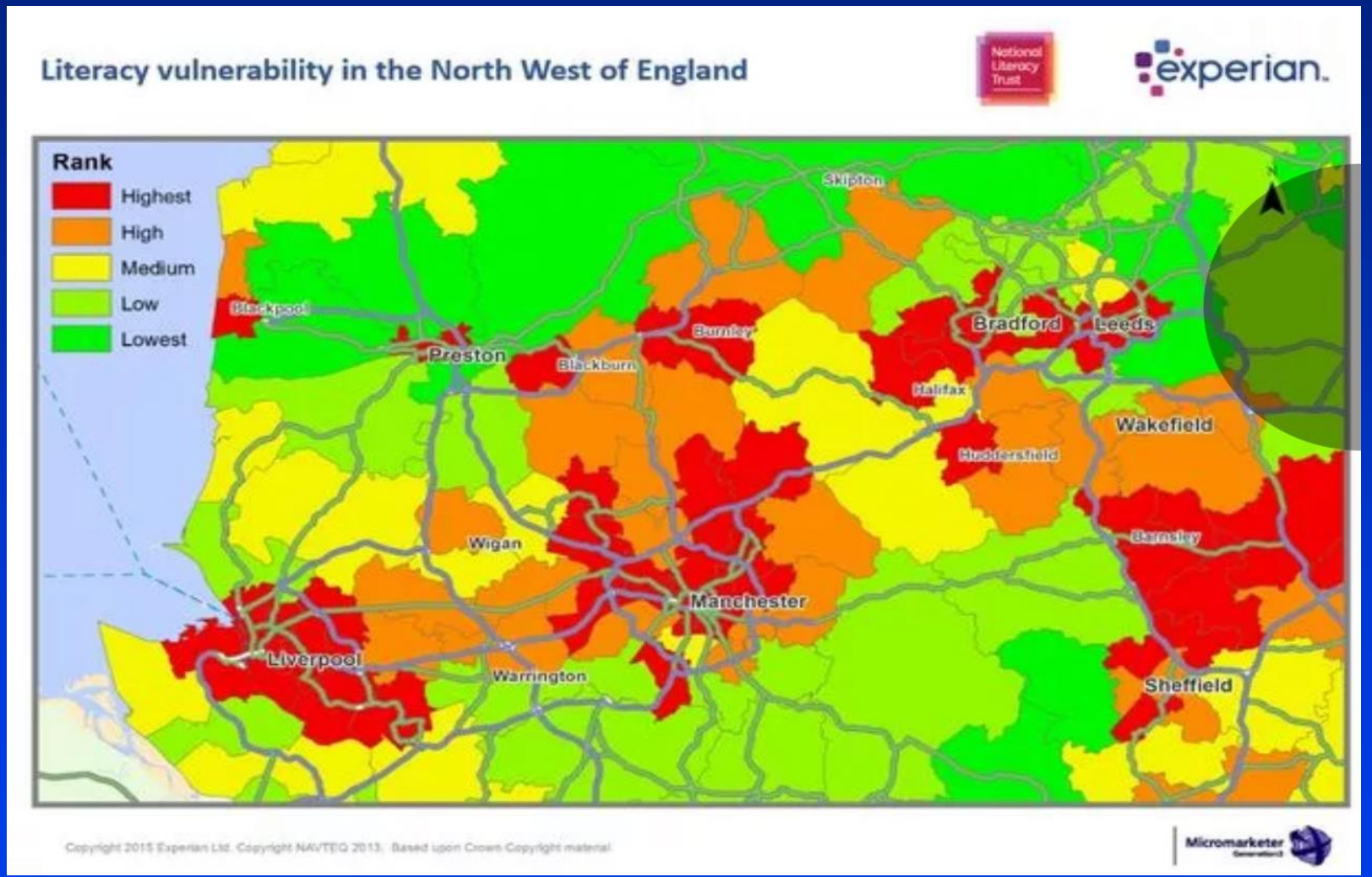
Reading age in local area



Writing diaries

- Longest entry is the start of a diary
  - Explain how patients came into hospital

*This diary is to help you understand what has been happening while you've been a patient in ICU. When you became unwell with your breathing you were admitted to ** Hospital. You were treated on a ward there at first, and then when your breathing was getting worse you went to the High Dependency Unit (HDU) there. They supported your breathing with BiPAP, which is given through a tight-fitting facemask to help get oxygen into your blood.*

Starting a diary

- How did the patient end up in ICU

*Your breathing got worse and you became very tired. The doctors realised that you needed help from a breathing machine (ventilator). Unfortunately ** Hospital doesn't have an ICU so you had to be transferred to Whiston Hospital.*

Writing diaries

- Daily updates, improvement & deterioration

At times it's been very difficult to settle you on the ventilator and as well as sedation we needed to give you drugs to keep you still so that you didn't try to breathe against the ventilator.

You went for a CT scan of your chest and tummy this morning. In the afternoon you had a tracheostomy. This involves a small operation where a tube is put into your windpipe through a cut in the skin of your neck. This is then connected to the ventilator and is much more comfortable than a tube in your mouth.

Glossary of terms

PATIENT DIARY EXPLANATIONS

Arterial line: Most ICU patients have an arterial line, usually in the wrist. Arterial lines are connected to a monitor and show your blood pressure. It also allows us to take blood samples.

Bronchoscope: This procedure is carried out using a fibre-optic camera device. The bronchoscope is passed through the breathing tube into the air passages leading to the lungs allowing the doctor to see into the airways of the lungs, wash out secretions and sometimes take samples.

Taking photographs

- Should be close enough to see patients' face
- Include nurses and family where possible
- Retrospective consent
  - Relatives may give a decision the patient doesn't later agree with
- Our legal department - only one copy

Patient is in recovery; wife visits him (note the paintings done by grandchild on the walls).

Patient returns for follow-up visit.

Photos Courtesy of Patient Björn Roback; ICU stay 49 days

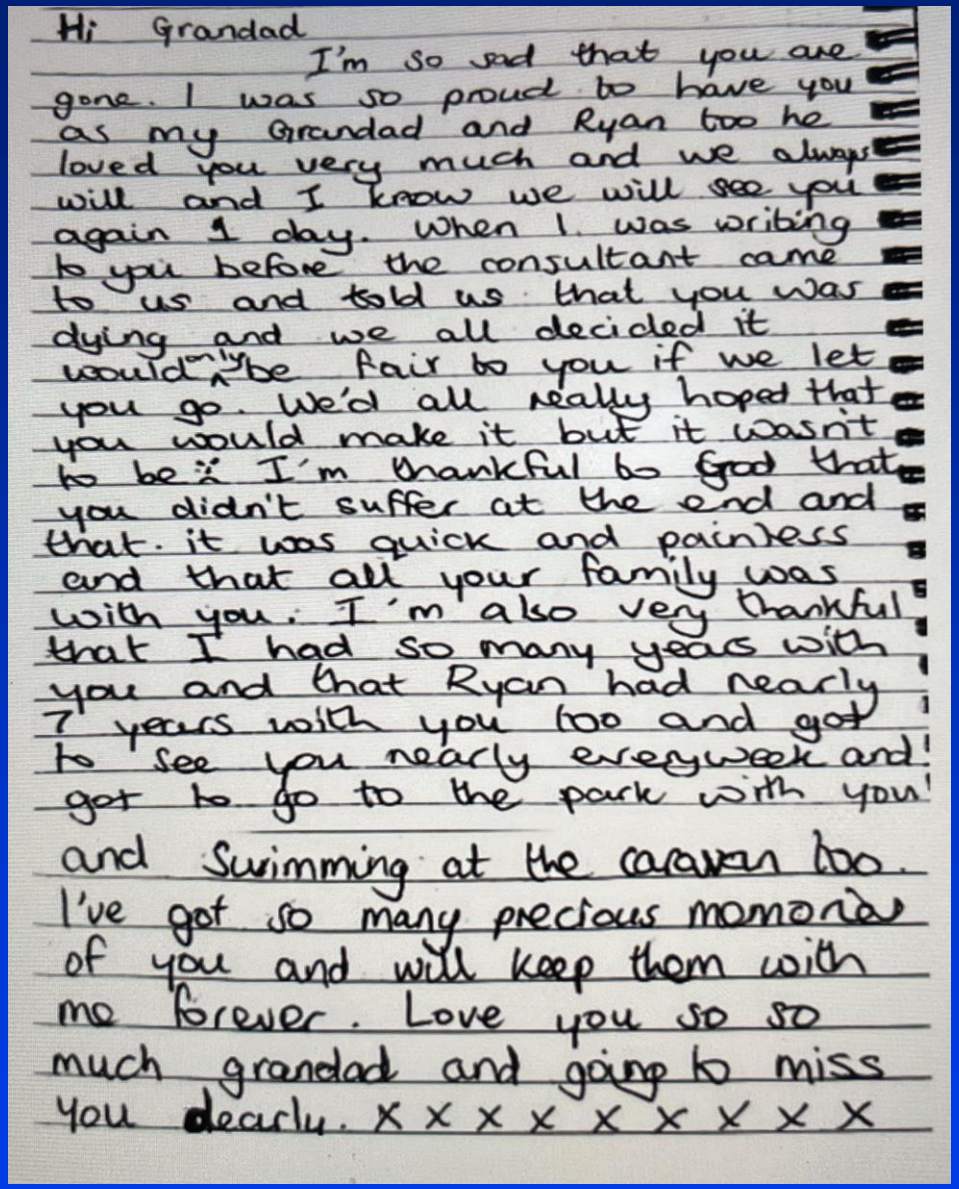
Bäckman C, Jones C. ICU Management 2011;11(3):10-16

Taking Photographs

- At start of diary and points of change, e.g. tracheostomy
- Use to help patients understand why amputations had to happen
- Include burns patients
- Transfer to specialist beds e.g. spinal beds
- Patients should be supported to view their photographs

Writing about a dying patient

- Write about decision to withdraw treatment and why (important for relatives)
- Encourage the family to say their goodbyes in the diary if they can
- Write about the patients' death and who was there
- Ensure that relatives know that they can have the diary when they want it



Hi Grandad

I'm so sad that you are gone. I was so proud to have you as my Grandad and Ryan too he loved you very much and we always will and I know we will see you again 1 day. When I was writing to you before the consultant came to us and told us that you was dying and we all decided it would only be fair to you if we let you go. We'd all really hoped that you would make it but it wasn't to be :(I'm thankful to God that you didn't suffer at the end and that it was quick and painless and that all your family was with you. I'm also very thankful that I had so many years with you and that Ryan had nearly 7 years with you too and got to see you nearly everyweek and got to go to the park with you and swimming at the caravan too. I've got so many precious memories of you and will keep them with me forever. Love you so so much grandad and going to miss you dearly. X X X X X X X X X X

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Further information

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