We have considered whether this can be attributed to Hashimoto’s encephalopathy as a post-inflammatory neurological manifestation of SARS-CoV-2.

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568 RETINOPATHY OF PREMATURITY: READABILITY ASSESSMENT OF ONLINE PATIENT INFORMATION

Pei Sen Tee, Yu Jeat Chong, Abison Loganwaran. Queen Elizabeth Hospital King’s Lynn NHS Foundation Trust; Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust; Topol Digital Health Fellow, Health Education UK

Background Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) is one of the leading causes of childhood blindness with increasing incidence as survival rates of premature infants improve over the years. Parents and families are increasingly using the internet to access health information to supplement information and confirm their understanding from healthcare professionals and with rather extensive conditions associated with prematurity, it is important that information accessed is accurate, easy to read and comprehend.

Objectives We aim to evaluate the readability of online health information regarding ROP.

Methods Readability assessment of online ROP information was evaluated using two validated readability instruments by two independent reviewers: Flesch-Kincaid grade level (FKGL) and Simple Measure of Gobbledygook (SMOG). Top 20 websites returned by a Google.co.uk search were analysed and only relevant body texts or bullet point texts related to parental information were analysed. Webpages intended for healthcare professionals were excluded. These scores were then compared to the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) reading-level categories: easy to read (below 6th grade level), average difficulty (7th to 9th grade level), and difficult (above 9th grade level).

Results 17 websites were analysed. More than 60% of the websites were classified as difficult to read for both FKGL and SMOG scores. Less than 10% of the websites were easy to read for both FKGL and SMOG scores. The median FKGL scores of were 9.9 and 9.8 for reviewers 1 and 2 respectively and the median SMOG scores were 9.3 and 9.7 for reviewers 1 and 2 respectively. Intraclass correlation coefficient for both scores were 0.99 (high).

Conclusions The World Wide Web has revolutionized parental education and when presented effectively, is a powerful tool that has great potential for health professionals to increase health literacy among the general population. The readability of online patient-oriented material for ROP is not consistent with the average public reading capability which could potentially result in confusion, poor understanding and misinterpretation. This could lead to suboptimal adherence to follow-up appointments and refusal of treatment. We recommend that health professionals should consider using readability scores when producing patient information resources. We also suggest that recommendations, guidance and standards for publishing