

Slide 1: The Tortoise and the Hare: When Media and Practice Collide

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Slide 2: Two Significant Issues With Media Coverage of Health

- When to report on scientific research?
 - Basic science?
 - Epidemiology?
 - Clinical trials?
 - Reviews?
- What to report?
 - Conflicting perspectives?
 - Limitations/caveats/uncertainties?
 - Context (if so, how much?)
 - Lexically complex information?

Slide 3: A Few Known Problems With the Media

- Focus on emerging research
- Omit context and favors conflict
- Omit uncertainty

Slide 4: A Few Known Problems With the Public

- Is exhibiting signs of information overload
- Is exhibiting signs of fatalistic thinking
- Struggles to place research in a proper context

Slide 5: Impact of Media on Evidence-Based Care

- Providers have to field phone calls, e-mails, and conversations about news stories of emerging research.
- Patients initiate behavior change without consulting with their provider.

Slide 6: Example 1: News Coverage of Mammography Guidelines

- What is the evidence base?
- The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force makes a population-level argument (about lives saved).
- Can providers make a population-level argument to individual patients?

Source: Eisenberg Center Conference Series 2012: Supporting Informed and Shared Decision Making When Clinical Evidence and Conventional Wisdom Collide. Effective Health Care Program Web site.
(<http://www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov>)

Slide 7: Example 2: Say “No” to Child Vaccines

- A Facebook sensation
- A parental rights issue
- Seeing the health care system as “other”

Slide 8: Solutions

- Increased training for science journalists
- More unified messaging approaches from health organizations
- Educational interventions for children/adolescents
- Health communication specialists to manage patient communication

Slide 9: Future Research Questions and Courses of Action

- Death of traditional journalism = new model?
- Provider fatigue issues
- Information overload issues