



First EBook To Help People With Intellectual Disabilities Learn About Relationships and Health Launched in Queensland

The first EBook to help people with intellectual and learning disabilities learn about relationships, health and hygiene is being launched in Queensland, Australia.

The Me EBook has been developed by New Zealand company Health Click for use on computer tablets like the iPad, to make the most of emerging mobile technology. Mobile technology is increasingly becoming the learning tool of choice for people with intellectual/learning disabilities.

A trial study of iPad use with children with special needs by Queensland Education in 2012*(see note) found the trial received ‘overwhelmingly positive feedback’ from teachers, students and parents. Many parents went on to buy an iPad for home use with their children as a result.

Annette Milligan, MD of Health Click, is launching the Me EBook at the Spectronics Inclusive Learning Technologies Conference 2014 (20th – 23rd May, Pavilion Convention Centre, Gold Coast).

The Me Ebook uses touch screen technology, pictures, animation and voiceover to explain and inform on important and challenging topics such as masturbation, contraception, and inappropriate touching.

Annette is a registered nurse and District Health Board Director who has worked in sex and health education for 25 years. She says it is a scandal there has not been more support to help intellectually disabled people learn about their bodies and sex.

Annette says: ‘Intellectually disabled people are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and victimisation, often because they haven’t been taught about their bodies, about relationships, or about what is and isn’t appropriate when other people touch them. Many parents and caregivers are very concerned about it.

‘When I first started in the sex education field the idea that disabled people should be taught about their bodies, and that they had a right to a sex life when they grow up, was completely taboo.

‘Thankfully we have moved on since then, but there is a lot more to do. We have developed the Me EBook and made use of emerging technology to provide crucial education on sex and health education to people with intellectual and learning disabilities.’

In her study **Sexual Violence Against Intellectually Disabled Victims**, Associate Professor Susan Hayes, University of Sydney, said: ‘Overall, there seems to be an alarmingly high incidence of sexual assault against people with an intellectual disability. But even more

alarming is the apparent lack of action to address the problem . . . those with more knowledge about sexual behaviour are less likely to be victimised.’

INTERVIEW AVAILABILITY

For a phone interview with Annette Milligan please contact Liz Crawshaw on +6422176 6953 or liz@venturecommunications.co.nz

Annette will be in the Gold Coast from 20th – 23rd May and in Brisbane on 19th May 2014 for any media who would like to interview Annette face to face. Contact Liz to arrange.

PICTURES: There are pictures available of Annette Milligan and of the EBook. Contact Liz Crawshaw.

NOTES AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

* **iPads in Special Education Trial Report**, September 2012, Department of Education, Training and Employment.

Annette Milligan is Managing Director of Health Click, Managing Director of INP Medical, a sexual health clinic in Nelson, and Clinical Director of Women, Child, Youth Services for the Nelson-Marlborough District Health Board, New Zealand.

Health Click: Health Click provides health education resources for young people and people with intellectual disabilities. Its products are:

Sex Smart: CD Rom Sex Smart (for 13-18 year olds)

Puberty Changes: CD Rom Puberty Changes (for 9-15 year olds) has just launched and is targeted at schools and caregivers.

Me: The Me Ebook is part of a collection of Me resources for people with intellectual disabilities aged 11 and above which also includes a CD Rom, Story Books, and Wall Guides.

Parents in Australia can purchase products at www.healthclick.co.nz