As with the BC Ministry of Health (MOH) website, the MOH has created the HealthLink website in 2001 with the stated goal of “providing British Columbians with the tools they need to make better health decisions” (QUILTS Collaborative & British Columbia, 2006, p. i). The QUILTS Collaborative looked at several measurements from awareness of Healthlink services in BC to usage statistics to looking at the affect these services are having. Awareness was found to be 80% in some respects. Usage and benefit have been lower or harder to measure.

One thought provoking paper I found discussing telehealth in Canada took a critical stance. I appreciate how it made the connection between neoliberal policies in Canada leading to increased expectations of individuals to take responsibility for their own health (Harris & Bella, 2010). In contrast to all the positive news stories, government press releases and even scholarly articles this paper by Harris & Bella reminds us that HealthLink is not just an information service but also hopes to be a healthcare cost containment strategy. This move in healthcare towards self help and individual responsibility for their own health was discussed in the our readings from Rootman & O’Niell (2012).

A detailed and unrelentingly boring and uncritical review of Healthlink services by MacLeod (2009) does give a clear detailing of the services and possible benefits that HealthLink BC Provides.

A final remark I might make about HealthLink is to make it clear that it is a public private partnership between the province of BC and one American company Healthwise Inc. who is providing most the content aside from the medication data which is bought from a Canadian company, MediResource Inc. (Bureau of Public Affairs, n.d.; Healthwise Incorporated, n.d.; MacLeod, 2009; QUILTS Collaborative & British Columbia, 2006). It is important to maintain our skeptics lens that we honed when discussing the effects of the pharmaceutical industry no healthcare when we look at HealthLink.

I find there is a lot of rather good information on Healthlink. There are good disclosures to point out that it is not a substitute for professional health providers. It is updated every year to 2 years (MacLeod, 2009). Healthwise uses a peer review process to write and approve their content (MacLeod, 2009). Healthlink services seem very much like Uptodate for lay persons.

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