

Who is More Death Literate?

Bus Drivers

Students

OR



A pilot of the Death Literacy Index in Scotland

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BACKGROUND

Death Literacy is “the knowledge and skills that people need to make it possible to understand, and make informed choices about end of life and death care options”¹.

Originally developed in Australia, the Death Literacy Index (DLI) is designed to measure death literacy within populations with hopes that it can help inform targeting of future interventions to address gaps in death literacy, measure the impact of interventions, and make comparisons across different communities.² The DLI questionnaire gathers information about four key areas:

Community Knowledge

Factual Knowledge

Practical Knowledge

Experiential Knowledge

OUR AIM AND HOW WE APPROACHED IT

We wanted to explore the use of the Death Literacy Index in Scotland, in the context of two distinct groups. We chose university students and bus drivers. An email offered a £10 Amazon voucher in return for participation. 20 University Students and 40 bus drivers completed the DLI online. The survey sizes were too small to allow very firm conclusions to be drawn.

WHAT THE SURVEY RESULTS SUGGEST



The group of bus drivers had a higher death literacy score than the group of students. This is likely to be due, at least in part, to the higher average age of the bus driver group, indicating that death literacy increases with age.



While most people know what a ‘will’ is, there’s a general lack of awareness of other ways that people can plan ahead and get support with death, dying and bereavement.



Some people feel very able to have conversations with others about death and bereavement, while others feel unable to talk about these issues – there’s no ‘typical’ level of comfort in talking about death.



People who have experienced grief or other significant life events often feel more prepared to cope with, and help others through, similar events in the future.

