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Libraries in New England Working to Develop Healthy Communities and Increase Health Literacy

Michelle L. Eberle
University of Massachusetts Medical School, michelle.eberle@umassmed.edu

Javier Crespo
University of Massachuetts Medical School

Deborah Clark
Stephens Memorial Hospital

See next page for additional authors

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Libraries in New England Working to Develop Healthy Communities and Increase Health Literacy

Authors
Michelle L. Eberle, Javier Crespo, Deborah Clark, Caroline Marshall, and Margot Malachowski

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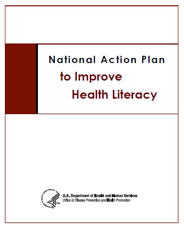
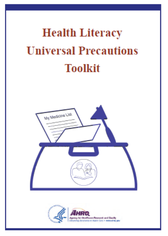
Libraries in New England Working to Create Healthy Communities and Increase Health Literacy

Michelle Eberle, Javier Crespo, Deborah Clark, Caroline Marshall, Margot Malachowski
National Network of Libraries of Medicine, New England Region

The National Network of Libraries of Medicine, New England Region created five Communities of Interest to cultivate learning networks for major trends in health sciences librarianship. Major trends identified by Network Members at the NER's Regional Advisory Council include: Health Literacy; Healthy Communities; Healthcare Workforce; Health IT; and E-science. COIs are facilitated by NN/LM NER staff in collaboration with a Network Member Leader. The COIs joined together for a Health Information Equity Program Day in March 2012. The Healthy Literacy and Healthy Communities COIs report the following results of the pilot year and plans for year two.

Health Literacy Community of Interest





The Health Literacy Community of Interest (COI) uses the HHS National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy and the AHRQ Universal Precautions Toolkit to inform and guide our work.

Activities:

- Assessed learning needs via Survey Monkey for year one.
- Offered three webinars to over 90 Participants in our pilot year.
- Webinars included: Ten Ways Your Library Can Contribute to Health Literacy and a MedlinePlus Train-the-Trainer. Participants shared that the programs helped them to teach a class to ESL students on communicating with the health professional; to create health literacy courses for community health workers; and to incorporate health literacy principles as a part of cultural competency training.
- Members also attended the Straight Talk with Your Doc webinar by Health Literacy Missouri, which resulted in this project for year two:

Clear Conversations Project:

NN/LM NER's Health Literacy COI funded five Network Members to participate in a working group to offer Health Literacy Missouri 's Clear Conversations Program at their organization. The Clear Conversations Program helps patients communicate with their health care providers; and teaches how to ask for simple language, a brown bag review, use teach-back, and focus on key messages. Participants view a role play between a health professional actor and a patient. Then, the group discusses what went well and what could be improved.

Healthy Communities Community of Interest

The NN/LM NER Healthy Communities, Community of Interest (COI) uses the NN/LM Outreach Evaluations Resource Centers' Guides to Planning and Evaluating Health Information Outreach Projects to inform and guide our work.

Activities:

- Met with members via teleconference to identify learning needs.
- Offered three webinars to over 135 participants at each in the pilot year.
- Webinars included: Planning a Health Information Outreach Project; Contributing to Your Hospital's Community Benefit; and Clever Evaluation.
- Conducted a learning needs assessment for year two.

Upcoming Programs:

1) **How to Create an Effective Health Information Handout:** a series of webinars teaching tips and tricks to create easy-to-read and understand patient education materials using the concepts of plain language and good document design. Participants will create their own handouts with support from mentors and peers. At the second session, participants have the opportunity to share their creations.

2) **Creative Ideas for Outreach:** a series of webinars to help libraries and community groups plan and implement a health information outreach project. Participants will learn from three successful projects and get training from the Outreach Evaluation Resource Center. Network Members can compete for NN/LM NER funding.

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