Health Literacy: Making knowledge powerful

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Health Literacy: Making knowledge powerful

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Community Engagement Coordinator
All of Us Research Program
National Institutes of Health
Nation’s research agency
27 institutes and offices

National Library of Medicine
World’s largest biomedical library

National Network of Libraries of Medicine
Program of the NLM comprised of 8 Regional Libraries (RMLs) and 5 offices

New England Region (NNLM NER)
Serves Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Vermont
All of Us Research Program
Course Objectives

Improve

Improve the knowledge of literacy as it pertains to health and wellness

Develop

Develop strategies to promote health information while advancing literacy skills.

Demonstrate

Demonstrate a more diverse understanding of NIH’s online resources to promote health and wellness
Health Literacy Description
The Healthy People 2010 and 2020 health literacy definition focuses on individual skills:

- Health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information needed to make appropriate health decisions.
Health literacy requires...

• Navigation with
  • Caring for ourselves and others
  • Prevention of disease
  • Understanding medical direction
patients with low health literacy...

- More likely to visit an emergency room
- Have more hospital stays
- Are less likely to follow treatment plans
- Have higher mortality rates

www.cdc.gov/phpr
Health Literacy Factors to Success
- Adults over the age of 65 years
- Racial and ethnic groups other than White
- Recent refugees and immigrants
- People with less than a high school degree or GED
- People with incomes at or below the poverty level
- Non-native speakers of English

Universal Precautions for Health Communication/Literacy

You can’t tell by looking.
Developing the plan

Readability, plain language, and health literacy are different

• Each is unique.

• Each is related.

• Each is important.

Each term means something different.
Readability *

• Readability is how easy (or not) something is to read. Readability formulas measure this by looking at the length of the words and sentences in a document. They can tell you what grade level your document is written for, and they’re everywhere—Microsoft Word even has one built in. Formulas don’t take into account plain language principles or the user’s context.

*We ❤ Health Literacy wehearthealthliteracy@communicatehealth.com
Readability and Plain Language and Health Literacy — Oh My!
Plain language*

• Plain language is writing that people can understand. It ensures that people can easily grasp your message the first time they read it.

• Plain language principles:
  • Using familiar terms not jargon, acronyms, or medical terms
  • Chunking information
  • Writing in a conversation form vs. academic or research

• But…. something written in plain language won’t improve health literacy if people don’t know what to do with the information.

*We ❤️ Health Literacy wehearhealthliteracy@communicatehealth.com
Readability and Plain Language and Health Literacy — Oh My!
Health Literacy*

• It’s a complex concept that depends on the quality and clarity of the communication as well as the skills and experience of the user. On the communication side, plain language is important—but writing for health literacy also means making the content relatable and actionable for your audience.

The bottom line: Readability, plain language, and health literacy are all important—so it is important to understand what makes each unique.

*We ❤ Health Literacy wehearhealthliteracy@communicatehealth.com

Readability and Plain Language and Health Literacy — Oh My!
Making Connections

• Assist a patron who needs information

• Identify where to get this information

• Find reliable, evidence-based information

Factors to increase literacy

▪ Using a PowerPoint - Keep the information to not more than four main points
▪ Check for understanding – Ask for the user to repeat or describe the information back to you
▪ Provide a varied amount of resources – consider graphic novels or videos
Tips to improve usability and increase understanding with materials

1. Provide plain language forms in multiple languages
2. Is the information recent and clear of any hidden agendas?
3. Offer professional development opportunities to learn about health and wellness resources
Libraries

These resources will help you begin or expand your educational and community health literacy activities with libraries. Libraries of all types, including public and medical libraries, are important partners in community-based health literacy efforts. Many libraries support basic literacy programs for children and adults. Librarians provide health information to patrons through a variety of methods—including helping with public Internet access and searching, printing resources, referring patrons to local health services, and distributing and posting information. The resources on this page can help librarians and other information professionals recognize and respond to community members' health information and communication needs. The resources may also help other individuals and organizations identify common interests and opportunities to work with libraries.

Health Information and Library Professionals

- Find a Literacy Program [3] (ProLiteracy)
PLA’s Project Outcome helps libraries measure four key patron outcomes—knowledge, confidence, application, and awareness—in seven key library service areas:

- Civic/Community Engagement
- Digital Learning
- Economic Development
- Education/Lifelong Learning
- Early Childhood Literacy
- Job Skills
- Summer Reading

http://www.ala.org/pla/initiatives/performance-measurement
MedlinePlus

- Links to reliable, authoritative health websites
- Health Topics on children/teens, seniors
- Easy-to-read articles
- Lab test information
- Medical encyclopedia
- Recipes
- Links to local services
- Information in > 45 languages
- No advertisements or endorsements
Welcome to the new NIA website!

We've changed our look to make it easier for you to find health information, get help with funding, and browse news.
Genetics Home Reference
Programming Resources

- Community Engagement Network Public Library health and wellness program toolkits
- NNLM training opportunities (in person and online)
- ALA Programming for Librarians
Free Training Sessions

Review the current Consumer Health Classes that are being offered across the network:

- MedlinePlus for Public Librarians
- Substance Use Disorder Celebrity Webinar Series
- Getting the Right Information to Patients Using MedlinePlus Connect
- Trusted Health Resources for Parents and Caregivers
- Graphic Medicine: Beyond the Books

CEN Program Kits!

Need programming ideas for your library? Check out our Program kits!

[Learn More]

https://nnlm.gov/all-of-us
Beyond an Apple a Day: Providing Consumer Health Information at Your Library

This hands-on class will cover the health information seeking behavior of consumers and the role of the librarian in the provision of health information for the public. Come learn about the evolution of consumer health, health literacy and the e-patient. Participants will leave equipped with knowledge of top consumer health sites. We will discuss creative ideas for health information outreach. The class will wrap up with an opportunity to explore effective marketing approaches and develop an elevator speech.

Objectives: This class teaches you the basics of providing consumer health information at your library. We will cover:
- Challenges of providing consumer health information
- Planning a consumer health service
- Consumer health on the Internet
- The reference interview
- Ethics
- Outreach
- Project development / marketing

Class Length: 2, 3, or 4 hours

Course Owner(s):
Savan Woods, Education and Outreach Librarian - Nebraska

Instructor(s):
Catherine Martin, M.Ed., Health Education, All of Us Coordinator

https://nnlm.gov/classes/apple
Stand Up For Health: Health and Wellness Services for Your Community for Public Libraries

https://nnlm.gov/classes/stand-up-for-health
Activate, Collaborate, and Educate: Health Outreach and Programming in Your Community

This course will provide an overview of ideas to conduct health outreach and create health programs for libraries and community/faith based organizations. Participants will learn how to integrate resources from the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and other reputable agencies to introduce community members to NLM resources in fun and engaging ways. Examples of programs for children, teens, adults and seniors using NLM and other National Institutes of Health center and office resources will be shared.

Additional Materials:

Health Outreach and Programming Class Guide

Objectives:
This presentation provides an overview of planning health programs for organizations incorporating resources from the National Library of Medicine. By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Locate county level information on health needs within their community
- Locate relevant NLM consumer health resources for specific target populations
- Identify organizations for health outreach partnerships
- Outline a potential health outreach or health program for their organization

Course Materials: [ACE Slides March 2019](#)
- [Resource List](#)
- [Resource List](#)
- [Logic Model Class Exercise](#)
- [Establishing Partnerships Class Exercise](#)
- [ACE Emergency Preparedness Sample Program (Rev Dec 2018)](#)

Class Length:
60 minutes, 2 hours, 3 hours. Variable credit class. The number of CE credits is tied to how much time and effort is expected of the learner to complete the class. A higher credit class goes deeper into the content.

Course Owner(s):
[Michael Balkenhol](#), MLS, Health Programming Coordinator

Upcoming Classes
There are no upcoming classes
Programming Librarian
Health Literacy!

- Achieve self-empowerment
- Feel understood
- Be happy and able to talk to medical staff
- Be able to make the right decisions
- Be able to access the right information
- Be well-informed

Photo from: http://compare-phc.unsw.edu.au/content/compare-phc-health-literacy-symposium-2016
Please feel free to contact me

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Developed by NNLM staff. This project has been funded in whole or in part by the National Library of Medicine (NLM), National Institutes of Health (NIH) under cooperative agreement number UG4LM012342 with the University of Massachusetts Medical School.
References

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• Quick Guide to Health Literacy Fact Sheet (https://health.gov/communication/literacy/quickguide/factsbasic.htm)


• https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/education-support/libraries.html

• http://www.ala.org/pla/education/onlinelearning/webinars/ondemand/literacy