

Better Health from Better Health Literacy



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Literacy Volunteers of Charlottesville / Albemarle –
2nd Annual Tutor Retreat

Background & Data

- What is health literacy (HL)?
- Patient voices –
AMA Foundation video
- Virginia data

What's It Like for Patients & Families?

- Patient Ed handout exercise

What You Can Do to Help

- Use “universal precautions” for HL
- Always use “teach-back”
- Non-English and easy-to-read
English health information sources

What is “health literacy”?



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Word-cloud image: 2017 Community Healthcare Network NYC <http://www.chnny.org/events/improving-patient-materials-201-using-health-literacy-strategies-to-create-effective-health-materials>

What is “health literacy”?

Health Literacy has been defined as the cognitive and social skills which determine the **motivation and ability** of individuals **to gain access to, understand and use** information in ways which promote and maintain good health.

Health Literacy means more than being able to read pamphlets and successfully make appointments. By improving people's access to health information and their capacity to use it effectively, health literacy is critical to empowerment.”

-WHO 7th Global Conference on Health Promotion

See also: U.S. DHHS definition

WHO Health Promotion: 7th Global Conference on Health Promotion, track themes
<http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/7gchp/track2/en/>

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Why does it matter?

patients with low **HEALTH LITERACY...**



Are 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



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CDC Infographic: Health Literacy

<https://www.cdc.gov/phpr/infographics/healthliteracy.htm>

Risk factors for low HL

- Age >65
- Male
- Non-English primary language
- Low or no insurance
- Poor/poverty
- Racial/ethnic minority

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2003 NAAL National Assessment of Adult Literacy – health literacy subset

Kutner, M., Greenberg, E., Jin, Y., and Paulsen, C. (2006). The Health Literacy of America's Adults: Results From the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NCES 2006–483). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Patient voices – AMA Foundation Health Literacy video (4 mins)

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AMA Foundation Health Literacy
<https://youtu.be/ubPkdpGHWAQ>

Video interviews with low HL patients

- Any surprises?
- What emotions can be seen in the speakers?

“There are so many smart people up there, doctors and nurses, and I don’t want to show how stupid I am. What does [x] mean?”

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Health Literacy Levels

- Quartile 4 (highest)
- Quartile 3
- Quartile 2
- Quartile 1 (lowest)

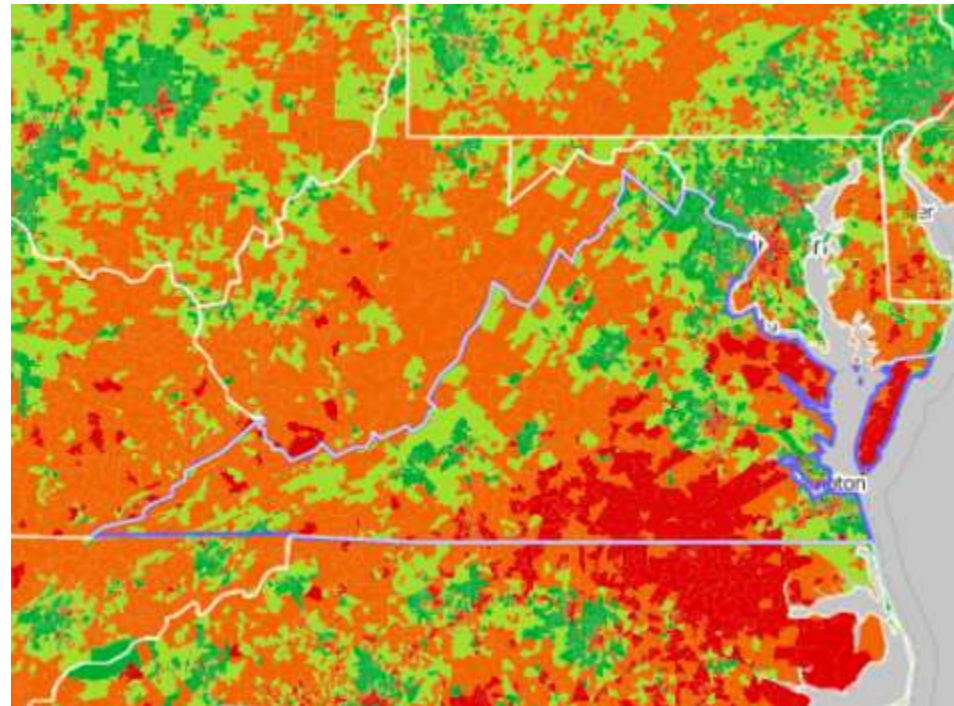
Display Options

- Base Map
- NAAL Categories
- National Quartile
- State Quartile



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

Health Literacy Data Map



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National Health Literacy Mapping to Inform Health Care Policy (2014). Health Literacy Data Map. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Retrieved June 2, 2017, from <http://healthliteracymap.unc.edu/>

What's It Like for Patients
& Families?

- Patient Ed handout exercise

ERUTCNUP SITE CARE

- How long does it take you to read the passage?
- Do you know the most important problem to watch out for?

How can this be improved?

ERUTCNUP SITE CARE

- A lump the size of a quarter is not lamronba and will get smaller with time. If the lump gets larger call your yramirp care naicisyhp.
- Bruising at the site is normal. The bruise will go through many color changes. It may take lareves weeks to go away yletelpmoc.
- Soreness will go away within a few days.
- If you poleved bleeding or sudden swelling at the niorg site: lie down, apply direct pressure above the site. If you poleved bleeding or sudden swelling at the wrist or elbow erutcnpup site: sit down and raise your arm above the level of your heart, apply direct pressure above and below the site with the etisoppo hand. If elbanu to stop the bleeding call 911 or have someone drive you to the closest ycnegreme room.
- Numbness and tingling of the detceffa ytimertxe should be detroper to your yramirp care naicisyhp.
- Remove dressing (if elbacilppa) 24 hours after your erudecorp.

Always use “**universal precautions**”

- Assume low health literacy in all people, e.g. even if they have a PhD
- Even if they don't have any risk factors, still use universal precautions – there are always outliers
- Adapt teaching method and materials to individual's needs
- Remember: even good readers benefit from audio/visual, e.g. video of the nurse changing a bandage

What You Can Do to Help

- Use “universal precautions” for HL
- Always use “teach-back”
- Non-English and easy-to-read English health information sources

Always use “teach-back”

- What is teachback?

<https://vimeo.com/165241622>

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UVA Health System and Claude Moore Health Sciences Library. UVA Health Literacy Workgroup. 2016.

Non-English health information resources

Online

- MedlinePlus.gov medlineplus.gov/
 - *Always my starting point! Fully searchable in Spanish.
- Health Information Translations healthinfotranslations.org/
- EthnoMed (search Google/internet)
- UVA Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, “Culture, Communication, and Ethics” page hsl.virginia.edu/culture

Local walk-in health library (open to public)

- UVA Patient & Family Library hsl.virginia.edu/pfl

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John Visits Clinic

Doctor Asks Question

Which way will John go?

What questions do you have?

John says no, because he feels rushed, but he really does have a concern. He will probably be losing his insurance soon and he's worried he won't be able to afford his hypertension (HTN) medicine.

John loses his insurance and stops taking his medication. His HTN gets worse but he doesn't know it, and he doesn't return to the doctor's office because he's afraid of the cost.

John Responds

Actually, I'm a little worried I won't be able to afford my pills for high blood pressure, if I lose my insurance.

Emergency Room

Nearly two years later, John thinks he has a bad flu, so his wife brings him to the Emergency Room (ER). He is diagnosed with atrial fibrillation (afib) and acute decompensated heart failure, due to his uncontrolled HTN. John is admitted to the hospital.

Here's a copy of the paperwork to apply for financial screening; I'll help you fill this out.

Financial Services

Home

Pharmacy

Drug Company and UVA Patient Care Assistance

Cardiac Unit - Day 1

John is started on 5 new medications include an expensive one. The nurse tells John he is about to have a TEE and cardioversion, but he doesn't know what that means. When the doctor comes in to obtain consent for the procedure, the doctor uses teachback and finds that John hasn't understood. The doctor slowly explains again, then asks John to describe to his wife what is going to happen. John says, "They are going to shock me to try to get a good rhythm, but it might not work."

Social Worker

The social worker helps with his financial concerns and the financial screening process, and John is given a verified financial status that allows him to get his medications at a reasonable price. John reschedule his follow-up appointment with the cardiologist he sees now for his heart failure.

Which way will John go?

✓

You can get the application for financial screening -- just go online to the website.

John and his wife go to the UVA out-patient pharmacy to pick up his medications, and John receives a pending financial screening status that allows him to get his first month of meds for free. He is referred to UVA Patient Care Assistance and is enrolled in an program to receive the expensive medication for free from the drug company.

✓

Can you tell me in your own words how you're going to take care of yourself at home?

Nurse includes John's wife in her teaching, and uses color coding and teach-back to check their understanding.

Cardiac Unit - Day 2

The nurse gives John a brochure to read about self-care strategies and warning signs and symptoms of flare-up. He has eaten and seems ready to learn, but when the nurse returns, John quietly tells her that he can't read. The nurse asks if he'd like his wife, who is his care partner, to help him remember. He says yes. The nurse documents in the education assessment part of the medical chart, noting John's barrier to learning, and adds his wife as the second learner.

Home Healthcare Nurse

There is no internet at the home, so the home health nurse can't see the hospital nurse's documentation about John's barrier, but she finds that John and his wife can't remember how many pounds of weight are too many to gain in a day or a week. The nurse marks the scale with tape showing where John's weight is, and puts down another mark for 2 pounds over, and another mark for 5 pounds over.

✓

Cardiac Unit - Day 3

The nurse checks John and his wife's understanding by asking them how they will manage his weight, and his liquid and sodium (salt) intake. John is given a scale to measure his weight, a blood pressure cuff, and a pill box with slots for morning, midday, and evening.

Which way will John go?

✓

Nurse gives John a stack of written handouts to read.

Do you understand the discharge instructions for

Now imagine this journey for a non-English speaker.

Questions?

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