The Language of Health

Promote Health Literacy

http://www.hrsa.gov/healthliteracy/

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This resource list is helpful in raising awareness around health literacy, developing health literacy programs and in providing training and technical assistance. In addition, the resources address issues in cultural competency, patient safety and quality health care.

THE MATERIAL IN THE FOLLOWING LISTING HAS BEEN FAVORABLY REVIEWED. FAVORABLE REVIEW MEANS THAT THE INFORMATION IS ACCURATE, BUT DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT.

- Academy for Educational Development (http://www.aed.org/Youth/US/iom_health_literacy_story.cfm)

Community YouthMapping is a process, developed by the AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, through which young people canvass local businesses and organizations and document where to find different kinds of resources. In the past, youth have mapped educational, after-school, and employment resources. This time, the teams of youth identified places and institutions within their communities where citizens, educators, and health professionals can go to get help with their health literacy needs. Two groups of youth—one from Tampa, St. Petersburg, and Clearwater Fla., and the other from Harlem, N.Y.—worked over the summer of 2005 to tackle this problem by participating in Community YouthMapping© focused on health literacy.

- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality: Health Literacy and Cultural Competency Browse Page Research and Quality (http://www.ahrq.gov/browse/hlitix.htm#Literacy)

AHRQ’s web page on health literacy and cultural competency contains an overview of health literacy and consumer/patient resources, funding opportunities, and newsletters.

- AIDS Education and Training Centers (AETCs) National Resource Center (http://www.aidsetc.org/)

Provides a central repository for AETCS program and contact information and for training materials developed within the AETCS network. Materials include Patient Information Fact Sheets developed by AIDS Info Net, a well-respected educational project affiliated with the New Mexico AETC. AIDS Info Net updates all its fact sheets regularly in both English and Spanish, and publishes them in PDF and Microsoft Word formats.
The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) is one of the largest national medical organizations, representing more than 94,000 family physicians, family medicine residents, and medical students nationwide. The site has a link to familydoctor.org and various health literacy patient safety health disparities resources. You can access the peer-reviewed Journal of the AAFP, American Family Physician. The August 1, 2006 Issue includes: Health Literacy: The Gap Between Physicians and Patients.

The Charles B. Wang Community Health Center (http://www.cbwchc.org/cbwchc.asp)

Has developed an education handbook for low-literate Chinese people with diabetes that incorporate National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) messages. The health center also conducts health literacy training for physicians, nurses, health educators and others on how to improve health communications and incorporate health literacy principles in health materials. For more information on the work the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center is doing on diabetes, visit http://www.cbwchc.org/project/special/special.html.

Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (http://www.cal.org/caela/)

To help professionals working with adult English language learners understand and address health literacy issues, this site includes resources developed for using health information within curriculum for English language learners: http://www.cal.org/caela/esl%5Fresources/Health/healthindex.html.

“Communicating Health: Priorities and Strategies for Progress” (http://odphp.osophs.dhhs.gov/projects/HealthComm/)

This Department of Health and Human Services’ publication describes the “Action Plans to Achieve the Health Communication Objectives in Healthy People.” Objective 11-2 is Improvement of Health Literacy and Objective 11-6 is Healthcare Providers’ Communication Skills.

Hablamos Juntos Resource Library (http://www.hablamosjuntos.org/resource_guide_portal/)

This Resource Library serves to disseminate tools and resources developed by Hablamos Juntos. Explore their Organizational Readiness Guide to find solutions that
can be applied in your setting (this is a work in progress). Venture into their specialized website for **Signage Using Universal Symbols**, Twenty-eight health care symbols are available. These symbols are in the public domain, and free to anyone who wishes to use the symbols, thanks to generosity of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

- Harvard School of Public Health Department of Health and Social Behavior Health Literacy Studies  
  (http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/cite.html)

An excellent web site that includes an overview of HL, HL literature, information on HL research and policy, innovative materials and other resources.

- Health Disparities Collaborative  
  (www.healthdisparities.net)

The Health Disparities Collaborative Web site is home for a community of learners who are committed to improving health care. Using the methodology of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Breakthrough Series Model.

- Health Information Partners  
  (http://connectforhealth.gwu.edu/)

HIPS brings reliable information to our communities to promote health literacy and health advocacy. They teach community members how to find and use online health information. Their goal is to lessen health information gaps that contribute to health inequalities.

- Health Literacy Current Bibliographies: Understanding Health Literacy and its Barriers (CBM 2004-1)  

This web site at the National Library of Medicine contains 651 citations on Health Literacy. It also includes an Introduction on “Understanding Health Literacy and its Barriers.”

- Health and Literacy Compendium  
  (http://www.worlded.org/us/health/docs/comp/)

An annotated bibliography of print and Web-based health materials for use with limited-literacy adults.
• **Health Literacy Month**
  (http://www.healthliteracymonth.org/)

Join with health literacy advocates around the world to promote the need for understandable health information. Health Literacy Month is a grassroots campaign. This means that individuals, organizations, and communities can participate in whatever ways make sense for them.

• **Improving Health Literacy - National Institutes of Health (NIH)**
  (http://www.nih.gov/icd/od/ocpl/resources/improvinghealthliteracy.htm#healthliteracy)

The National Institutes of Health has a web site on improving health literacy including topics on the definition, why it is an issue for health care professionals, resources and many other topics.

• **Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report: Priority Areas for National Actions: Transforming Health care Quality**
  (http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10593.html)

This report identifies 20 priority areas for quality improvement. Two areas identified as crosscutting are care coordination and self-management/health literacy. To read some of the book free: http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10593.html#toc

• **Institute of Medicine Health Literacy Roundtable**
  (http://www.iom.edu/?id=32782)

Building upon the 2004 report *Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion*, the Institute of Medicine has convened a Roundtable on Health Literacy. The Roundtable brings together leaders from academia, industry, government, foundations and associations, and representatives of patient and consumer interests who have an interest and role in improving health literacy.

• **Institute of Medicine (IOM) Health Literacy Study**
  (http://www.iom.edu/IOM/IOMHome.nsf/Pages/NBH+Health+Literacy)

“Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion” includes recommendations to address the problem of health literacy within a public health/public education framework.

• **Let Everyone Participate**
  (http://www.lep.gov/about.html)

Promotes a positive and cooperative understanding of the importance of language access to federal programs and federally assisted programs.
• “Literacy and Health Outcomes” (http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/epcsums/litsum.htm)

Under its Evidence-based Practice Program, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has developed scientific information for other agencies and organizations on which to base clinical guidelines, performance measures, and other quality improvement tools.

• National Center for Cultural Competency (http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/nccc/index.html)

The mission of the National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) is to increase the capacity of health and mental health programs to design, implement, and evaluate culturally and linguistically competent service delivery systems.

• National Medical Association (http://www.nmanet.org/)

Focuses primarily on health issues related to African Americans and medically underserved populations, however its principles, goals, initiatives and philosophy encompasses all ethnic groups. Resource: NMA Cultural Competence Primer


Describes 14 individual standards and outlines the development, methodology and analysis undertaken to create the national standards. The 14 standards are organized by themes: Culturally Competent Care (Standards 1-3), Language Access Services (Standards 4-7), and Organizational Supports for Cultural Competence (Standards 8-14).

• National Network of Libraries of Medicine (http://nnlm.gov/outreach/consumer/hlthlit.html)

An on-line manual for consumers on health literacy including the definition, background, research findings, listservs and more.
• The Health Literacy Style Manual
  (http://coveringkidsandfamilies.org/resources/index.php?InfoCenterID=194)

The Health Literacy Style Manual is a resource for developing and improving applications, notices and other print materials related to government programs. It includes examples from real programs and can be used to make materials more client-centered, thus increasing consumers' capacity to find and understand health information and services and to make informed health-related decisions.

• The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
  (http://www.hrsa.gov/)

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the primary Federal agency for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated or medically vulnerable.

• HRSA Primary Health Care Programs
  (http://bphc.hrsa.gov/pinspals/pals/2005-05.htm)

HRSA Primary Care Programs are committed to a comprehensive approach to quality assurance. A key component of this approach is a Web-Based Clinical Risk Management Resource Initiative for Health Centers. RMFinteractive (http://www.rmfinteractive.com) is an online, interactive health care risk management website and library where individuals can register to access articles, participate in interactive exercises, listen to audio news, and stay informed about managing risk in key target areas. Modules include health literacy and cross cultural communication.

• HRSA Cultural Competency
  (http://www.hrsa.gov/culturalcompetence/)

HRSA's Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities provides resources for health care providers. This site includes links to assessment tools, culture/language, health professions education, technical assistance and training curricula.

• HRSA Health Literacy
  (http://www.hrsa.gov/healthliteracy/)

The HRSA Center for Quality serves as the HRSA contact for Health Literacy Information and maintains a library of resources and grantee information.
• The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Health Communication Activities (http://www.health.gov/communication/)

This site provides the HHS Quick Guide to Health Literacy and other tools, resources, and reports to improve health literacy.

• The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health (http://www.omhrc.gov/)

This department works to develop the capacity of health care professionals to address the cultural and linguistic barriers to health care delivery and increase limited English-speaking individuals’ access to health care. This site includes a continuing medical education activity titled “A Family Physician's Practical Guide to Culturally Competent Care." You can access this training at: https://cccm.thinkculturalhealth.org/

• Partnership for Clear Health Communication (http://www.p4chc.org/)

A coalition of national organizations that are working together to promote awareness and solutions around the issue of low health literacy and its effect on health. Site includes a patient education program: Ask Me 3 and information on health literacy.

• Plain Language Action & Information Network (http://www.plainlanguage.gov/)

A government-wide group of volunteers working to improve communications from the federal government to the public.

• “Prevention: A Blueprint for Action” (http://aspe.hhs.gov/healthiness/blueprint/)

This report was released by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tommy G. Thompson.

• Steps to a Healthier US Summit (http://www.healthierus.gov/steps/).

Improvement of health literacy is one of the five topics addressed in this report.
• **The America Medical Association Foundation** ([http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/8115.html](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/8115.html))

Includes Train the trainer program, health literacy toolkits, news and grants and how to get involved.


This curriculum includes lessons developed to meet the educational and health needs of students attending El Paso Community College/Community Education Program. Lessons can serve as a guide and may be replicable in entirety in certain communities. Note ideas for collaboration and online resources on this site.

• **The Institute for Healthcare Advancement** ([http://www.iha4health.org/](http://www.iha4health.org/))

This California non-for-profit has published a “What to Do for Health Series”. The series is a set of books written at the 3rd-5th grade reading level for pregnant women, parents, seniors and caregivers. There is a link to a fact sheet on Research-Supported Solutions under “Research Shows What to do for Health Series Works”.

• **The National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL)** ([http://nces.ed.gov/naal/](http://nces.ed.gov/naal/))

These surveys are nationally representative and continuing assessment of English language literacy skills of American adults.


A federal organization that shares information about literacy and supports the development of high-quality literacy services so all Americans can develop essential basic skills. View special health and literacy collection at: [http://lincs.worlded.org/](http://lincs.worlded.org/)

• **Plain Language Initiative; Plain Language Action and Information Network** ([http://www.plainlanguage.gov/](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/))

Resources and tools to improve communication and writing skills.
• “The Providers Guide to Quality and Culture”
  (http://erc.msh.org/mainpage.cfm?file=1.0.htm&module=provider&language=English)

A web resource designed to assist health care professionals in providing quality culturally and linguistically appropriate services to multicultural populations.

• Project SHINE
  (http://www.projectshine.org/healthliteracy/index.htm)

Health Literacy Initiative funded by MetLife Foundation, designed to promote healthy aging and improve access to healthcare for older immigrants and refugees. Some learners, especially those with limited English proficiency, may find it easier to access health information in their native languages. This site offers a variety of links to health education resources in more than a dozen different languages.

• Rural Health Technical Assistance Center
  (http://www.raconline.org/info_guides/healthliteracy/)

A product of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Rural Initiative, the Rural Assistance Center (RAC) was established in December 2002 as a rural health and human services "information portal." RAC helps rural communities and other rural stakeholders access the full range of available programs, funding, and research that can enable them to provide quality health and human services to rural residents. The RAC Health Literacy pages include frequently asked questions, resources and sources of funding for health literacy projects.

• State Official’s Guide to Health Literacy
  (http://www.csg.org/pubs/Documents/ToolKit03HealthLiteracy.pdf)

Reports the results of a 2002 national survey conducted to find out what states are doing to improve health literacy or to make the health care system easier to navigate. The Guide provides an understanding of the problem, what can be done to improve health literacy and access to health care.

• Virginia Adult Education Health Literacy Toolkit
  (http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/healthlit/)

This Toolkit is a resource to help adult education instructors and administrators better understand the problem of health literacy as it affects their learners. It is designed to support creative approaches to help learners increase health literacy as they engage in sound, productive adult literacy instruction.
Health Education and Health Literacy: The following organizations provide appropriate health care information to improve health literacy.

- **American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation**
  ([http://www.aafpfoundation.org/x433.xml](http://www.aafpfoundation.org/x433.xml))

  Administered by the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation, the Health Education Program for Patients (HEPP) produces a listing of health education materials, which have been reviewed favorably for scientific accuracy and other criteria. The HEPP listing includes items in various formats covering a variety of topics.

- **American Association for Health Education**

  The American Association for Health Education (AAHE) serves health educators and other professionals who promote the health of all people. AAHE encourages, supports, and assists health professionals concerned with health promotion through education and other systematic strategies.

- **National Diabetes Education Program**

  NDEP has also developed materials in 15 Asian and Pacific Islander languages for people with diabetes.

- **Healthyroadsmedia.org**
  ([http://www.healthyroadsmedia.org/](http://www.healthyroadsmedia.org/))

  This site contains free audio, written and multimedia health education materials in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Somali, Bosnian, Russian, Hmong, and Khmer.

- **National Health Education Standards**

  Standards are critical to the healthy development of children and youth. National Health Education Standards (NHES) improve student learning across the nation by providing a foundation for curriculum development, instruction, and assessment of student performance. NHES provides a guide for enhancing preparation and continuing
education of teachers; in addition to addressing recommendations in the IOM Health Literacy Report.

- **Society for Public Health Education** (http://www.sophe.org/content/mission_statement.asp)

  The Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) provides leadership to the profession of health education and health promotion and contributes to the health of all people through advances in health education theory and research, excellence in health education practice, and the promotion of public policies conducive to health. The [Medical Care Health Education Resource Guide](http://www.sophe.org/content/mission_statement.asp) is available in PDF on the SOPHE website. The Guide offers resources on many aspects of Medical Care Health Education. The Guide was primarily developed for those new to providing health education within medical care settings.

- **Federal Drug Administration** (http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/7lowlit.html)

  The FDA provides easy-to-read health brochures in both English and Spanish. These brochures are available on this Website in both PDF and HTML formats.

- **Newborn Screening Tests for Parents** (http://www.medicalhomeinfo.org/screening/Screen%20Materials/Newborn%20screening%20tests.pdf)

  This pdf brochure contains information to parents about newborn screening tests and is written in very simple English.

- **Newborn Screening Disorders** (http://www.medicalhomeinfo.org/screening/Screen%20Materials/Newborn%20screening%20disorders.pdf)

  This brochure tells health care professionals about seven things parents want to know about newborn screening.


  Health literacy facts concerning healthcare settings and Medicare patients.

Resources on NCLIS and health literacy including awards; meetings; experts; health literacy, empowerment and AIDS; and other topics.