Health Literacy in Pennsylvania

A Collaborative Approach

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Health Literacy Training SEPA READS - Jefferson
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Why Health Literacy?
What is health literacy?

The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.

Health Literacy is the ability to read, understand, and act on health information effectively.

Functional health literacy is the ability to apply reading and numeracy skills in a health care setting.
Impact of Health Literacy

Health literacy is a stronger predictor of individual health status than age, income, employment status, education level or racial/ethnic group.¹

Almost everyone is at risk.

Only **10% of adults** have the skills needed to use health information that is routinely available in healthcare facilities, retail outlets, and the media. **What about the other 90%?**
Why collaborate?

Health literacy is **complex**—far too complex for any single organization to address on its own.

It takes a **collaborative approach** to build and sustain measureable regional improvement.
Programs and Initiatives
SEPA-READS

Leadership

- Health Care Improvement Foundation
  Grant and project management
- Thomas Jefferson University & Hospitals
  Expertise in health literacy training and evaluation

Funding

- Preventive Health & Health Services Block Grant through PA Department of Health
- October 2010 – June 2015
Collaborative Partners

- Nine health systems (12 hospitals)
- Five senior-serving organizations
- Five organizations serving immigrant and refugee groups
“The overarching objective of the SEPA-READS Initiative is to enhance the capacity of health care systems and health professionals to address literacy needs and improve adults’ (aged 50+) understanding of cardiovascular health information.”

Cardiovascular Health Literacy Proposal, 2010
Key Components

- Consumer education and patient activation through training of seniors as peer educators on Ask Me 3™
- Patient empowerment in immigrant and refugee groups through peer education
- Health care provider health literacy training and support for organizational changes
Consumer Education & Activation

Patient activation through Ask Me 3™, a patient education program designed to promote communication between health care consumers and their providers.

Ask Me 3™ encourages healthcare consumers to ask the following questions in encounters with health care providers:

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?
Consumer Education & Activation

**Outreach:** Recruit individuals interested in receiving peer educator training based on the Ask Me 3™ curriculum

**Training:** Peer educator trainings held at each participating senior serving organization

**Peer Activation:** Consumer education sessions led by peer educators to members of their centers and communities
Provider Training Curriculum

Train-the-trainer model

Comprehensive full day training, including activities and discussion

- Health literacy overview and effective oral communication, including teach-back, plain language
- Written materials development
- Website development and additional topics as requested by partners (e.g., informed consent and wayfinding)
Other Programming

- Regular Cardiovascular Health Literacy Coalition events
- Educational webinars
- Networking opportunities
- Shared portal and newsletter
Looking Back:
Our Accomplishments
100 Peer Educators have taught 650 peers how to use Ask Me 3™ to engage with their health care providers.
250 health care professionals have taught health literacy techniques to 7,100 colleagues…
…resulting in 65 organizational changes within participating health systems.

A health literate workforce fosters a health literate health care environment.
Success and Expansion

 الحرية والتوسع

في جنوب شرق بنسيلفانيا، أصبحت النجاح ناجحاً من خلال زيادة التمويل لتمكين برنامج من تقديم البرامج على مدار بنسيلفانيا.

 עוד وأيضًا، تم إنشاء جمعية سلامة بنسيلفانيا للغة للدعم في تعميق البرامج الدراسية.
Looking Forward: Our Vision
Our Future

Three-Year Funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Health
July 2015 – June 2018

- ✔ Pennsylvania Health Literacy Coalition
- ✔ Online Training Modules
- ✔ In-Person Trainings
- ✔ Becoming a Health Literate Organization Toolkit
- ✔ Health Literacy Website
- ✔ Sustaining Health Literacy Beyond 2018
Pennsylvania Health Literacy Coalition
Health Literacy: A Priority for Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Health Literacy Coalition is working to create a culture of health literacy in the commonwealth.

Funding provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.
Health Literacy is Happening Across PA

And many others:

- Hospitals, health systems, practices, clinics
- Community organizations
- Researchers and academic institutions
- Advocacy organizations
- Patients and consumers
- Government
What’s next for the Coalition?

Host meetings so people can talk to and learn from each other.
Form work groups to focus on key topics.
Write mission, vision, and action plan.
Create a shared agenda.
Online Training Modules
Online Training Modules: Proposed Course Sequence

- Fundamentals of Health Literacy
  - Health Literate Communication: Make it Plain
    - Teach Back and Oral Communication
    - Written Communication I
      - Written Communication II
        - Health Literate Web Design
    - Culturally Competent Care*
    - Navigation and Wayfinding
    - Becoming a Health Literate Organization*
      - Refer learner to public website Toolkit for stories and examples
The Health Literacy: Why It Matters

Drag and drop the pills and/or spoons into the appropriate columns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medication</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drug A</td>
<td>Take one tablet by mouth once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug B</td>
<td>Take one teaspoonful by mouth three times a day</td>
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Health Literacy: Why It Matters

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If you struggled to complete the exercise correctly, or were confused, do not worry. The exercise is intended to simulate some of the difficulty that actual patients experience with remembering and following directions for scheduling and dosing. It is particularly confusing when taking multiple medications that carry different instructions for when to take the medication, how to take the medication, and the duration of the prescription.
In-person Trainings
In-Person Trainings

Train-the-Trainer
Current full-day format will continue to be available to all partners
Partners to identify new unit, team, or health literacy champions who would benefit from training

New Training Modules
“Advanced” training topics for health care professionals who have already attended a SEPA-READS training
Topics to be identified by partner needs
Half-day (2-3 hour) trainings
Becoming a Health Literate Organization
Becoming a Health Literate Organization

Examples from hospital partners collected via semi-annual activities reports

The “story” told by the reports is filled in during annual site visit to each hospital

Final product: a toolkit for other organizations to learn how to implement effective health literacy strategies
Health Literacy Website
Health Literacy in Pennsylvania

In October 2010, the Health Care Improvement Foundation (HCIF) was awarded a grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Health to improve cardiovascular (CVD) health literacy in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Since then, HCIF, in partnership with Thomas Jefferson University and Jefferson University Hospitals, has been leading a regional coalition aimed at enhancing health care providers' ability to communicate effectively with their patients and to enhance healthcare consumers' ability to understand healthcare instructions.

Healthliteracypa.org is the website for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Enhancements Addressing Disconnects (SEPA-READS) in Cardiovascular Health Communication health literacy project. The initiative draws on best practices in the field, including national standards, communication techniques such as Ask Me 3TM, and the American Medical Association's train-the-trainer program for health literacy.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION
Health Literacy in Pennsylvania

Care Improvement Foundation (HCIF) was awarded a grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Health to improve cardiovascular (CVD) health literacy in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Since then, HCIF, in partnership with Jefferson University Hospitals, has been leading a regional coalition aimed at enhancing the ability of community health centers to communicate effectively with their patients and to enhance healthcare consumers' ability to understand healthcare instructions.

The coalition has developed a website for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Enhancements Addressing Disconnects (SEPA-Health Communication) health literacy project. The initiative draws on best practices in the field, such as Ask Me 3TM, and the American Medical Association's train-the-trainer program for health literacy.
Sustaining Health Literacy
Sustaining Health Literacy

Partners will be asked to consider how to institutionalize health literacy at their organizations, for a **lasting impact** beyond the grant.
The First Step is Engaging Your Health Literacy Heroes

Be a Health Literacy Hero!
Collaborate for good communication.

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