Health Literacy & Patient Understanding

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Today’s topic

- Has a direct impact on an individual’s ability to achieve and maintain good health

- Impacts an individual’s ability to effectively use the healthcare system

- Is a stronger predictor of an individual’s health status than age, income, employment status, education level, or racial/ethnic group
The ability to read and write

Literacy
A 40 year-old gentleman has multiple medical problems including polycystic kidney disease with CKD4, HTN, an unusual knee effusion that after multiple drainages and a synovectomy turned out to be just gout, and poly substance abuse. He sees multiple specialists and struggles with adherence and coordination of care.
So, our 40 year-old gentleman with multiple medical problems who struggles with adherence and coordination of care.....

“It took me about a year to figure out that he could not read.”
Your naicisyhp has dednemmocer that you have a ypocsonoloc. Ypocsonoloc is a test for noloc recnac. It sevlovni gnitresni a elbixelf gniweiv epocs into your mutcer. You must drink a laiceps diuqil the thgin erofeb the noitanimaxe to naelc out your noloc.
The ability to read and write

Health Literacy

The ability to read, understand and act on health information
Health Literacy

The ability to read and write

The ability to take in, understand and act on health information
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

Source: Institute of Medicine and the National Assessment of Health Literacy
Take in, understand, act appropriately
Take in, understand, act appropriately

Obtain, process, understand
What can happen if the chain is disrupted?

The mother of a 3 year-old boy called the pediatric primary care office late one weekday afternoon. She explained that her son was complaining of left ear pain and thought he might have an ear infection. The physician instructed the mother to give Tylenol for the ear pain and scheduled an appointment for 8:30 am the next morning.
What can happen if the chain is disrupted?
Dr. House & the Asthma Patient https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvR74XpKUM
A retired computer programmer in his late 70’s had major abdominal surgery at SMH. The patient was discharged to home with visiting nurse follow up scheduled.

- Patient has 30 day supply of low-dose heparin to prevent DVT/PE
- Nurse explained to patient’s wife, a retired real estate agent, how to give the heparin injections.
My, those injections don’t seem to hurt at all.

Hmmmm....
Screening


“How confident are you filling out medical forms by yourself?”
(Not at all / A little bit / Somewhat / Quite a bit / Extremely)

“How often do you need to have someone help you when you read instructions, pamphlets, or other written material from your doctor or pharmacy?”
(Never / Rarely / Sometimes / Often / Always)
Nice to know? -or- Need to know?
Dispensing Information

- LIMIT
- CHUNK
- REPEAT
You’re a bus driver and at your first stop, 6 people get on and none get off. At the second stop 4 people get on and 1 gets off. At the third stop, 5 people get on and 3 get off. What color are the bus driver’s eyes?

A. Blue
B. Green
C. Brown
D. Hazel
Teach

Teach back
Use “Living Room” language

What is this called?

Abrasion
Emesis
Ingest
Pruritis
Subcutaneous
Write in PLAIN LANGUAGE

“...elucidate the occurrence...”

“... figure out how often this happens...”

“...contact your physician...”

“... call your doctor... “
CAN I PLEASE TALK TO PIG?

THIS IS PIG.

HI, PIG... I HAVE YOUR TEST RESULTS.

OH MY GOODNESS. WHAT ARE THEY?

THEY'RE NEGATIVE.

OH, GAWD, NOOOOO... HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE LEFT?

RELAX, PIG. IT'S A POSITIVE THING.

NEGATIVE IS POSITIVE?

YES.

THEN WHAT'S A POSITIVE RESULT?

A NEGATIVE THING.

POSITIVE IS NEGATIVE?

YES.

ARE YOU SURE?

I'M POSITIVE.

OH, GAWD, NOOOOO... HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU HAVE LEFT?

NEXT TIME, YOU CALL HIM.

YOU LIVED A GOOD LIFE, DOC.
Employees must depurate their metacarpal phalanges
Employees must depurate their metacarpal phalanges
This is bad enough https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3tJ-MXqPmk
SHAME

TEACH BACK
RECAP: What to do?

1. Slow down
2. Use living room language
3. Draw or show pictures
4. Limit the amount of information provided – and repeat it
5. Use the “Teach Back” technique
6. Create a shame-free environment
7. Encourage questions
A Word about WRITTEN materials

Grade level for reading?
A Word about WRITTEN materials

Grade level for reading?

How to judge?
Fry?
SMOG?
Flesch-Kincaid?
Flesch Reading Ease?

And what about those online Services?
A Word about WRITTEN materials

Caution

Education ≠ reading skill

Reading skills change over time

Understanding
A Word about WRITTEN materials

READABILITY
What to concentrate on going forward
1. What is my main problem?

2. What do I need to do?

3. Why is it important for me to do this?

http://www.npsf.org/?page=askme3
Health Literacy

Getting Started

- “What Did the Doctor Say?” Improving Health Literacy to Protect Patient Safety
- Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient- and Family-Centered Care: A Roadmap for Hospitals
- CDC Health Literacy Page
- Culture, Language and Health Literacy
- Health Literacy Interventions and Outcomes: An Updated Systematic Review
- JAMA Health Literacy Tools
- MedlinePlus Health Literacy
- National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy
- National Network of Libraries of Medicine
- NIH Health Literacy
- The Health Literacy of America’s Adults: Results From the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy
- Understanding Cultural and Linguistic Barriers to 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.”

Healthy People 2010

Measuring Health Literacy

- Mini Mental Status Exam (MMSE)
- Newest Vital Sign (NVS)
- Overview and Methods for Measuring Health Literacy
- Overview to Tools and Publishers
- (REALM-SF) Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine—Short Form

Subject Guide

Karen Liljequist, MLIS, AHIP

Contact Info
Liaison Program Manager
Edward G. Miner Library
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Rochester, NY 14642
585-273-4860
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Links:
Profile & Guides

Toolkits

- AHRQ: Health literacy universal precautions toolkit 2nd edition
- Environment of Hospitals and Health Centers
- Making Your Health Library Work for You: Evidence-Based Tools and Tips
- National Center for Healthcare Communication
- Teach-back Toolkit
  Includes an interactive learning module, coaching tips, and more

http://libguides.urmc.rochester.edu/healthliteracy
We all have health literacy issues – at one time or another

We all have to work together to make sure we communicate with patients and with each other in a way that is clear to all parties.

*Did they hear what you think you said?*
Read More About Health Literacy


Quick Guide to health Literacy
http://www.health.gov/communication/literacy/quickguide/factsbasic.htm

Health Literacy: Accurate, accessible and actionable health information for all
http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/

Health Literacy (NIH)
http://www.nih.gov/clearcommunication/healthliteracy.htm

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

Health Literacy (NN/LM)
http://nnlm.gov/outreach/consumer/hlthlit.html

Health Literacy (AMA)

Health Literacy (MedlinePlus)
Teach Back

Teach-back Training Toolkit

http://www.teachbacktraining.org/using-the-teach-back-toolkit

Blog posting: Teaching clinicians the teach-back for patient education

Need help with Health Literacy?

Miner has a Health Literacy resource page with tools and information. Or use the ASK button to contact a librarian

http://libguides.urmc.rochester.edu/healthliteracy