

# Health Literacy

Link to recorded presentation:  
<https://youtu.be/CddYqfBzdjM>



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# Agenda

1. What is health literacy and why is it crucial to patient care?
2. A look at examples in action
3. Evaluate the health literacy of our organizations
4. End goals and next steps

# What is Health Literacy?



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The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, Title V, defines health literacy as the degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions.

# EVERYONE needs health literacy skills to:

- Find information and services
- Communicate their needs and preferences and respond to information and services
- Process the meaning and usefulness of the information and services
- Understand the choices, consequences and context of the information and services
- Decide which information and services match their needs and preferences so they can act

# Anyone who *provides* health information and services to others to needs skills to:

- Help people find information and services
- Communicate about health and healthcare
- Process what people are explicitly and implicitly asking for
- Understand how to provide useful information and services
- Decide which information and services work best for different situations and people so they can act

# *Talking Points About Health Literacy:*

*We are health literacy ambassadors. It is up to us as providers to make sure our colleagues, staff, clients, and community is aware of the issues*

- 9 out of 10 adults struggle with understanding their own health information when it is new, complex, and jargon-filled.
- Limited health literacy costs the healthcare system money and results in higher than necessary morbidity and mortality.
- “Clear communication” means familiar concepts, words, numbers, and images that are presented in ways that make sense to your target client
- Testing forms and information with your audience before they are release company-wide, and getting feedback, is the best way to know if we are communicating clearly.

# Why is there a health literacy problem amongst our consumers and in our country?

When organizations create and give others health information that is too difficult for them to understand, we create a health literacy problem. When we expect them to figure out health services with many unfamiliar, confusing or even conflicting steps, we also create a health literacy problem.



# Examples of Health Literacy in Action



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# COVID-19 Signage; Stop the Spread

## 10 STEPS TO PREVENTING CORONAVIRUS (OR COVID-19)

A new coronavirus, COVID-19, has been identified as the cause of a cluster of severe pneumonia cases that emerged in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in Dec. 2019. Since then, the virus has spread to several other countries and the U.S.

Let's make sure we stand with our communities and stop any forms of targeting people of Asian descent. COVID-19 has the potential to affect all communities, regardless of race or ethnic background. Let's make sure we are supporting one another.

**HERE ARE 10 STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19:**

1. **Stay calm.** Think carefully about how you can help your community and loved ones.
2. **Stay at home if you're sick.** We want everyone to stay as healthy as possible.
3. **If you believe you were exposed to COVID-19,** or have a fever, cough, or shortness of breath, call your healthcare provider immediately.
4. **Cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze.** Make sure you use tissues and throw them away in a lined trash can.
5. **Avoid sharing household items.** This applies to cups, eating utensils, bedding, and towels.
6. **Disinfect objects and surfaces in your home and at work.** Use an alcohol-based sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
7. **Sleep well.** Your immune system is working best if you are well-rested.
8. **Wash your hands. A lot.** Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds and wash often.
9. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.** This helps reduce the chances of you getting sick.
10. **Get a flu shot.** It's still flu season so it's best to stay at full health.

**SEIU**  
Stronger Together

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: FOLLOW THE CDC ON FACEBOOK OR TWITTER ON @CDCGOV OR AT CDC.GOV**

Source: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/what-you-should-do.pdf](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/what-you-should-do.pdf)

# STOP

## the spread of coronavirus

1. **HANDS** Wash them often
2. **ELBOW** Cough into it
3. **FACE** Don't touch it
4. **FEET** Stay more than **6ft** apart
5. **FEEL** sick? Stay home

**Northern Light Health.**

# COVID-19 Signage; Symptoms?



**NOTICE**

TO HELP KEEP OUR STAFF SAFE DURING THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC

**PLEASE DO NOT ENTER**

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS FEVER, SHORTNESS OF BREATH, FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS SUCH AS COUGHING, SORE THROAT, AND FATIGUE OR HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH A PERSON WITH THESE SYMPTOMS.

**PLEASE ADVISE US**  
PLEASE KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE OF 6FT OR 2 METERS FROM OUR STAFF

PARA AYUDAR A MANTENER A NUESTRO PERSONAL SEGURO DURANTE LA PANDEMIA DE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

**POR FAVOR NO ENTRAR**

SI TIENE ALGUNO DE LOS SIGUIENTES SÍNTOMAS FIEBRE, FAJTA DE ALIENTO, SÍNTOMAS PARECIDOS A LA GRIPE, COMO TOS, DOLOR DE GARGANTA Y FATIGA O HA ESTADO EN CONTACTO CON UNA PERSONA CON ESTOS SÍNTOMAS.

**POR FAVOR AVÍSANOS**  
MANTENGA UNA DISTANCIA SEGURA DE 6 PIES O 2 METROS DE NUESTRO PERSONAL

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**WARNING**

**IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING**

- FEVER
- COUGH
- FATIGUE
- SHORTNESS OF BREATH

**DO NOT VISIT TODAY**  
**THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO KEEP COVID-19 OUT OF OUR FACILITY**

CORNYOUTH | CORNYOUTHNYC.COM | 800.777.1200 #853479144

# COVID-19 Signage; Social Distance



# Medical Intake Examples

## ADULT PATIENT INTAKE FORM

Welcome to [REDACTED]. We are pleased to serve your health care needs and those of your family. In order to assist our providers and staff, please complete this information to the best of your ability.

**Patient Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sex:** M F **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ **SS#** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City/Town State Zip code

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Ext.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Phone Number

**Insurance Carrier:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Policy Holder Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Policy Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Your relation to Policy Holder** \_\_\_\_\_ **Policy Holder SS#** \_\_\_\_\_

*Are we considering inclusivity in our paperwork?  
Do our clients feel represented or put-off?*

*Are we offering additional help for confusing concepts that may need further explanation?*

## **ADVANCE DIRECTIVES**

Do you have a living will? Yes No

Do you have a health care proxy? Yes No Name/Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Have you designated someone "Power of Attorney?" Yes No Name/Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Have you issued an order indicating "Do Not Resuscitate" (DNR) Yes No

**Please give your provider any documentation you have available regarding the above directives.**

# Common Confusing Paperwork



OCA Official Form No.: 960

## AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF HEALTH INFORMATION PURSUANT TO HIPAA

[This form has been approved by the New York State Department of Health]

Patient Name	Date of Birth	Social Security Number
Patient Address		

I, or my authorized representative, request that health information regarding my care and treatment be released as set forth on this form:

In accordance with New York State Law and the Privacy Rule of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), I understand that:

1. This authorization may include disclosure of information relating to **ALCOHOL and DRUG ABUSE, MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT**, except psychotherapy notes, and **CONFIDENTIAL HIV\* RELATED INFORMATION** only if I place my initials on the appropriate line in Item 9(a). In the event the health information described below includes any of these types of information, and I initial the line on the box in Item 9(a), I specifically authorize release of such information to the person(s) indicated in Item 8.
2. If I am authorizing the release of HIV-related, alcohol or drug treatment, or mental health treatment information, the recipient is prohibited from redisclosing such information without my authorization unless permitted to do so under federal or state law. I understand that I have the right to request a list of people who may receive or use my HIV-related information without authorization. If I experience discrimination because of the release or disclosure of HIV-related information, I may contact the New York State Division of Human Rights at (212) 480-2493 or the New York City Commission of Human Rights at (212) 306-7450. These agencies are responsible for protecting my rights.
3. I have the right to revoke this authorization at any time by writing to the health care provider listed below. I understand that I may revoke this authorization except to the extent that action has already been taken based on this authorization.
4. I understand that signing this authorization is voluntary. My treatment, payment, enrollment in a health plan, or eligibility for benefits will not be conditioned upon my authorization of this disclosure.
5. Information disclosed under this authorization might be redisclosed by the recipient (except as noted above in Item 2), and this redisclosure may no longer be protected by federal or state law.
6. **THIS AUTHORIZATION DOES NOT AUTHORIZE YOU TO DISCUSS MY HEALTH INFORMATION OR MEDICAL CARE WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN THE ATTORNEY OR GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY SPECIFIED IN ITEM 9 (b).**

*How many of our direct care clinicians, intake personnel, or front desk staff can explain this simply to our clients?*

*Are we training our staff on understanding these forms, so they themselves understand what our clients are signing?*

# Assessing the Health Literacy of an Organization



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# Attributes of a Health Literate Organization

1. Has leadership that makes health literacy integral to its mission, structure, and operations.
  - *Do you make health literacy a high priority?*
  - *Is it part of day-to-day operations and culture?*
  - *Committed, continuous, and knowledgeable leadership is key to effectively implement and sustain health literacy improvement activities.*



# Attributes of a Health Literate Organization

2. Integrates health literacy into strategic and operational planning, QI goals, and measures.

- *Do you assess success with vulnerable populations as part of your overall organizational performance measures?*
- *Is health literacy explicitly integrated into all relevant activities?*

# Attributes of a Health Literate Organization

## 3. Prepares the workforce to address healthy literacy issues and monitors progress.

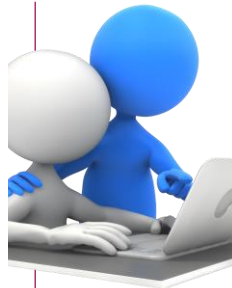
- *Does your organization meet the staff's health literacy training needs?*
- *Do you measure the training's impact on advancing health literacy?*

*This includes  
ALL staff; from  
front end to  
Board of  
Directors*

# Attributes of a Health Literate Organization:

## 4. Provides easy access to health information

- *Do you utilize technology to make it easy for people to find health information?*



internet

social media

electronic communications/email

patient portals.

# Attributes of a Health Literate Organization:

5. Addresses health literacy in high-risk situations such as emergency preparedness and clinical emergencies.

- *Are there known processes in place to ensure people receive clear and useful information when they are at their most vulnerable, or under physical/emotional distress?*
- *Do you anticipate the client's health literacy when making crisis plans?*



*Was your organization prepared for the shift to emergency operations during the COVID-19 pandemic?*

# Attributes of a Health Literate Organization

## 6. Communicates clearly the available health services and costs.

- *Does staff clearly explain a client's choices among services and associated costs up front?*
- *Are intake forms in plain language, without too much jargon or confusing medical terminology?*



*Forms should be at 7<sup>th</sup> grade reading level or below so the majority of the population can easily understand*

# Next Steps; Now What?



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# Having an Action Plan; The Vision

1. Provide everyone access to accurate and actionable health and service information.
2. Deliver person-centered health information and services.
3. Support education and skills that promote good health.

# End Goals:

Develop and disseminate health and safety info that is accurate, accessible, and actionable

Promote changes in healthcare delivery systems that improve information, communication, informed decision-making, and access to services

Support and expand local efforts to provide education and culturally appropriate health information services in the community

Increase basic research, development, and evaluation of practices to improve health literacy



# How do we do this?

## ➤ Review:

- Examine your organization's priorities and programs.
  - *Ask "How can attention to health literacy improve our services and outcomes?"*
  - *Establish a dedicated health literacy team or champion*

## ➤ Choose:

- Identify the most relevant goals and strategies for your specific programs
  - *Who is your target audience? Are you taking into account the culture of the community?*

## ➤ Try:

- Plan and implement strategies

## ➤ Evaluate:

- Assess the effectiveness of chosen strategies
  - Focus groups, client previews with feedback