

Making Health Literacy Real:

The Beginnings of My Organization's Plan for Action



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Office of the Associate Director for Communication

About this Template

This easy-to-use template helps you and your organization get started in developing your own plan to change organizational and professional practices to improve health literacy. Developing a plan for action does not have to be an overwhelming process and this template can help you think through the steps needed from getting buy-in and conducting an assessment to developing goals and monitoring progress.

Two decades of research indicate that much health information is presented in ways that are not understandable by most Americans. It is imperative that public health and health care organizations take steps to ensure health information, products, and services are accessible and understandable. Improving health literacy requires changes in organizational and professional practices.

In May of 2010, the Department of Health and Human Services released the National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy. This plan seeks to engage organizations, professionals, policymakers, communities, individuals, and families in a linked, multi-sector effort to improve health literacy. The plan is based on the principles that (1) everyone has the right to health information that helps them make informed decisions and (2) health services should be delivered in ways that are understandable and beneficial to health, longevity, and quality of life. The plan includes seven broad goals with multiple high level strategies for various stakeholders and provides a focal point for the field. By focusing on health literacy issues and working together, we can improve the accessibility, quality, and safety of health care; reduce costs; and improve the health and quality of life of millions of people in the United States.

Please let us know about your experience using this template to develop your organization's plan by emailing healthliteracy@cdc.gov.

Identifying My Advocates

Advocates Internal to my Organization

Champion(s):

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Allies:

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Workgroup Members:

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Identifying My Advocates

Advocates External to my Organization

Champion(s):

Allies:

Workgroup Members:

Getting Buy-In

Audience:

English as second language

What may work:

Information desk can greet with different languages

Kiosk with different language guide, Phone interpreter, Google Translation

Audience:

Low vision personal

What may work:

Building map with larger font, "You are here" marker

A guide

Audience:

Low Readability patients

What may work:

Rewrite materials to 8th grade levels

Use plain language

Audience:**What may work:**

Commitment to Planning

Who's in:

[REDACTED]

Who's Leading the Planning Effort:

[REDACTED]

Expected Process:

- * Kiosk setup
- * Create large font map
- * Re-write materials to 8th grade level

Resources Needed:

- * Kiosk availability with many other languages
- * Find phone interpreter
- * Find Map-signs maker
- * Health literacy editor

Honest Assessment

Who's in:

[REDACTED]

Who's Missing:

[REDACTED]

Expected Process:

[REDACTED] will take over some of [REDACTED] work load while [REDACTED] prepares for the new plan.

Honest Assessment

Factor	Opportunities for Health Literacy Improvement
Health Information (i.e. forms & factsheets)	* Rewriting to the 8th grade level will increase the number of patients that visit us
Communications with clients, partners, community	* Setting and preparing phone interpreters & Kiosks with many other languages will create a sense of welcoming to the diverse people of Madison, WI
Relationship with Media	* Saying greetings in other languages will draw attention from people that came from those countries.
Physical Environment	* Easy-to-navigate facility for the patients * Large font signs
Program development, implementation, and evaluation	* Find out who our future audience is first. * Who needs our services? * Well organized monitoring system
Internal Communication and Policies	* Ask practitioners to use less jargon to patients. * Patients will understand better

Honest Assessment (cont.)

Other Factor(s)	Opportunities for Health Literacy Improvement

Consider Barriers & Solutions

Opportunity	Potential Barriers	Potential Solutions
Increase numbers of patients with other languages	Hard to find available interpreters	Use Kiosks with multiple language capabilities
Increase the number of patients with low readability level	Increased miscommunication	Train practitioners to speak in plain language
Draw attention from people that speak other languages	Need more interpreters	Set interpreters on an appointment basis
Easy navigation of the facility	Do not need information desk personnel	Use volunteers
High demand program	Need larger rooms for the increase in number of patients	To avoid over booking, use a well organized appointment scheduling system
Patients understand material better	Overwhelmed by the number of patients	Open other facilities

Developing Your Action Plan

Issue Overview:

Health literature is at a high readability level.
There is no interpreter on site.
Not easy to navigate the facility.
Signs are not easy to see.
There is no map placed.
Needs more patients.

Vision:

When the patients come to the American Center, they see a "check-in" sign by the entrance, a "Translation" sign at the Information desk, and also a map by each entrance.
An 8th grade readability level pamphlet is available.
Multilingual Kiosks are available.

Statement of Commitment:

Create easy reading materials and a better navigation system for patients.

Existing Policies:

N/A

Developing Your Action Plan

Goal:

Create a welcoming environment

Objective:

Easy access and navigation

Action Step (s):	By Who?	By When?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Design signs *Double the size of letters *Contrasting colors * Temporary at first 	<p>██████████</p> <p>contacts sign makers</p>	Monday next week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ask patients * Test it out with patients with low vision and English as a second language 	<p>██████████</p> <p>will find 5-10 patients and contact them</p>	Find them this week, ask them to give feedback at end of the month.
After ethnographic observation and evaluation create a final sign	<p>██████████</p> <p>will contact sign makers to finalize the items</p>	Next Month

Developing Your Action Plan

Goal:

Better accessibility in our facility

Objective:

Multilingual translation services

Action Step (s):	By Who?	By When?
* Find Kiosk with multilingual translation services. Ask for a 30days trial	[REDACTED]	This week
*Find patients willing to test the new system *Gather feedback	[REDACTED]	Next month
Monitor for 25 days, do the evaluation,and make a decison on the use of Kiosks and translators	[REDACTED]	After the 25th day of the trial

Developing Your Action Plan

Goal:

Easier to understand information

Objective:

Readable information is available

Action Step (s):	By Who?	By When?
Estimate and decide how many editors are needed to be hire and how much to pay them (hourly rate and frequency).	[REDACTED]	This week
Find health literacy editors	[REDACTED]	This week
Start implimentation	Editors with [REDACTED]	Next month

Next Steps

What is our process to vet the Plan?

Do quantitative research

Measure if the number of patients increased after implementation of the new plan.

How will we gain endorsement from senior leadership?

Open up to social networks

What are our opportunities to build awareness?

It benefits to our patient's health

What is our process for monitoring efforts?

Monthly tracking of number of patients after the new plan.

Biannual survey asking users of the Kiosks if they would like to continue using them.

What will we do to implement plan?

Find out how much we can spend and prepare budgets for the new plan.

Planning Resources

Framework

National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy

<http://www.health.gov/communication/HLActionPlan/>

Examples of Assessment Tools

Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit

<http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/literacy/>

Hospitals and Health Centers: Assessing the Health Literacy Environment

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/practice/environmental-barriers/index.html>

Pharmacy Audit Tool

<http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/pharmlit/pharmlit1.htm>

National Assessment of Adult Literacy – State and County Estimates

<http://nces.ed.gov/naal/estimates/StateEstimates.aspx>

Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) Questionnaire for Addressing Health Literacy

<http://www.ahrq.gov/browse/hlitix.htm>