The Intersection of Health Literacy, Patient Safety and Quality of Care
What is Health Literacy?
Personal Health Literacy

‘I can find, grasp and use health information to make informed decisions and actions for myself and others.’

Rephrase from HP 2030
YOUR HEALTH AT RISK
Reading Literacy
Health Numeracy
Digital Literacy
Organizational Health Literacy

“degree to which organizations equitable enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and action for themselves and others”

-Healthy People 2030
Organizational Health Literacy

My provider helps me find, grasp and use health information to make informed decisions and actions for myself and others.”

Rephrase from HP 2030
Why Health Literacy Matters
More than 43 million adults in the United States cannot read, write, or do basic math above a third-grade level.

Patients with Low Health Literacy...
Special Populations

- Persons with a disability
- Persons with English as a second language
- Low vision, hearing impaired
- Those with behavioral health challenges
- Who else?
## Risk factors for lower health literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic minority status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health insurance coverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational attainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language spoken before starting school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-reported health status</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• What does this have to do with Health Literacy?
A Moment to Reflect

What decisions might a patient with low health literacy make that could have an adverse impact on their health and wellness?
Impact of Low Health Literacy on Healthcare Organizations

- Health disparities
- Patient safety events
- Low patient satisfaction
- Poor patient-provider communication
Impact of Low Health Literacy on Healthcare Organizations

• Poor clinical outcomes
• Frequent readmissions
• Higher incidence of post-op complications
• Litigation risks
Health Literacy & Implicit Bias

• What happens at the intersection?
Reviewing Implicit Bias

- Unconscious, unintentional
- We all have it – the goal is to recognize and reduce it
- Usually comes up as response to a situation
- Impacts how we see, communicate with others
- Affects judgment, decisions, behaviors
- Contributes to differences in care and outcomes
Impact of Implicit Bias in Healthcare

- Poor treatment
- Inaccurate diagnoses
- Delays in diagnosis
- Stress
- Poor interpersonal interactions
- Poor adherence
Health Literacy cannot succeed outside an environment of Equity & Diversity

- Shame- and stigma-free
- Culturally competent, attuned to health beliefs
From Ten Attributes of Health Literate Health Care Organizations, National Academy of Sciences, 2012
Organizational strategies

• Leadership commitment
• Integration of health literacy in all activities
• Health literacy education and training for all staff
• Embrace patient-centered design principles
• Practice universal precautions
Organizational strategies

- Adopt evidence-based communication strategies
- Make it easy to access care
- Use plain language standards for all patient resources
- Target high risk situations
- Be clear about health care costs
#healthliteracyallthetime
#it’salwaysonus
Your Questions
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