RESOURCES
for HEALTH LITERACY

Compiled and reviewed by:

OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE
HEALTH LITERACY

NALHD
Nebraska Association *of*
Local Health Directors

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RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Want to incorporate plain language techniques for writing and designing public health materials? These resources will connect you to tools and best practices. These resources were originally compiled as part of OPIHL's Writer's Workshops.

Recommended Pre-Reading

"Health Literacy Principles: Guidance for Making Information Understandable, Useful, and Navigable" by Kara L. Jacobson and Ruth M. Parker.
https://nam.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/HealthLiteracyGuidance.pdf

Building Health Literate Organizations: A Guidebook to Achieving Organizational Change

UnityPoint Health
http://www.unitypoint.org/health-literacy-guidebook.aspx

A health literate health care organization is described as easier for people to use, and critical to delivering patient-centered care (Ten Attributes of Health Literate Health Care Organizations). It supports patient-provider communication to improve health care quality, reduce errors, facilitate shared decision-making, and improve health outcomes. This guidebook will help health care organizations of any size engage in organizational change to become health literate. It complements many excellent health literacy resources, helping you use them effectively and reliably. It includes background, resources, examples, and lessons learned to help build a health literate health care organization

AMA Health Literacy YouTube Video

UnityPoint Health
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGtTZ_vxjyA

This video is part of a health literacy educational toolkit developed by the American Medical Association Foundation.

Health Literacy Training Manual for CHWs and Front Office Staff

St. Vincent's Charity Medical Center, Cleveland Ohio
http://nalhd.org/files/resources-HL/Health_Literacy_Manual.pdf

Titled "Making Health Literacy Work for You," this manual was written specifically for Front Office and Community Health Workers.

Center for Disease Control (CDC) Health Literacy Training

CDC
http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy

Newly updated and revised Health Literacy Resources feature training courses, resources for organizations working to address health literacy, and links to resources for developing materials that follow health literacy principles. NALHD Favorites accessible from this site include:

- *Writing for the Public*
  https://www.train.org/cdctrain/course/1066816/

Health Literacy Advisor Software

Health Literacy Innovations
http://www.healthliteracyinnovations.com/

Health Literacy Advisor is the nation's first interactive health literacy software tool. This tool assesses and improves the readability of your documents using plain language principles. The HLA works entirely within Microsoft Word, offers a full array of readability formulas, and has an easy-to-use interactive "readability-checker." Watch a 15-minute demonstration of this tool at
http://www.healthliteracyinnovations.com/products/demo/

Health Literacy Tool Shed

U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM), in collaboration with Boston University School of Medicine
http://healthliteracy.bu.edu/

The Health Literacy Tool Shed is an online database of health literacy measures. The site contains information about measures, including their psychometric properties, based on a review of the peer-reviewed literature.

Teach-back Toolkit

Always Use Teach-back
http://www.teachbacktraining.org/

The Teach Back toolkit helps all health care providers learn to use teach-back—every time it is indicated—to support patients and families throughout the care continuum, especially during transitions between health care settings. The toolkit combines health literacy principles of plain language and using teach-back to confirm understanding, with behavior change principles of coaching to new habits and adapting systems to promote consistent use of key practices.

The Health Literacy Style Manual

The Maximus Center for Health Literacy
http://nalhd.org/files/resources-HL/Health_Literacy_style_manual.pdf

105-page book that includes hints and suggestions for developing and improving applications, notices, and other print materials related to government programs. In it are some tried and true strategies for writing and formatting specifically for clients, many of whom have limited literacy skills. Includes chapters on project planning, writing, formatting and style, applications and other forms, field testing, and translations.

Quick Checklist for Plain Language

The Maximus Center for Health Literacy
http://nalhd.org/files/resources-HL/Quick_Checklist_Maxiumus.pdf

This two-sided reference will help you check your print and web materials for plain language and formatting that helps readers find and understand key messages. Check your materials for Reader Focus, Organization, Writing, Design and Formatting. The more items with checks, the more likely it will be that readers can understand and use the material. Also includes Tips for Checking the Language.

Knowing the Audience: Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) Culture Profiles

Cultural Orientation Resource Center
http://www.culturalorientation.net/learning/backgrounders

The Cultural Orientation Resource Center has produced numerous publications providing key information about various refugee populations. These Refugee Backgrounders and Culture Profiles include a population's history, culture, religion, language, education, and resettlement needs, and brief demographic information.

CDC Audience Tool

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/index.html

The more you know about your primary segment, the better you can reach them with messages, activities and policies. This tool includes analysis of different target audiences for public health so that you can more effectively communicate with them to influence their behavior.

CDC Clear Communication Index
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Learn about this research-based tool to help you develop and assess public communication materials. https://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/index.htm

Go straight to the scoring tool. https://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/widget.html

Health Communication Tips
Health Research for Action at UC Berkeley
http://www.healthresearchforaction.org/sites/default/files/HRA%20Health%20Communication%20Tips_0.pdf

These user-friendly tip sheets help you craft more effective health communications. Tips sheets include Facts, Tips, and Readability for Clear Health Communication, as well as Common Managed Care Terms with Suggested Alternatives and a Plain Language Word List.

"How To" Tips for Plain Language
PlainLanguage.gov
http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/index.cfm

Want some great shortcuts to the information you need? Find a wealth of materials from writing tips to dictionaries, as well as guidelines for starting your own grassroots plain language movement.

Plain Language Thesaurus
University of Utah
http://depts.washington.edu/respcare/public/info/Plain_Language_Thesaurus_for_Health_Communications.pdf

This Plain Language Thesaurus has been put together by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Marketing.

Substitute Word Lists
University of Utah
http://www.gemini-grp.com/ISPY/WordSub.pdf

List of substitute words for difficult-to-understand, abstract terminology.

Five Guidelines for Developing Customer-Friendly Websites
The Maximus Center for Health Literacy
http://nalhd.org/files/resources-HL/MAXIMUS_CHL_CustomerFriendlyWebsites.pdf

Includes information about how to make your site easy to find, how to create a clean and uncluttered design, writing for your clients, creating clear paths for user tasks and avoiding costly mistakes.

Health Literacy Online: A Guide to Writing and Designing Easy-to-Use Health Web Sites
The U.S. Department of Health Human Services' Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP)
http://www.health.gov/healthliteracyonline/
Research-based "how-to" guide for creating health Web sites and Web content for the millions of Americans with limited literacy skills and limited experience using the Web. The strategies in this guide complement accepted principles of good Web design and thus have the potential to improve the online experience for all users, regardless of literacy skills. This guide is written for Web designers, Web content specialists, and other public health communication professionals. It offers an overview of how to (1) deliver online health information that is actionable and engaging, (2), create a health Web site that's easy to use, particularly for people with limited literacy skills and limited experience using the Web, (3), evaluate and improve your health Web site with user-centered design. Chapters include Learn about Your Users and Their Goals, Write Actionable Content, Display Content Clearly on the Page, Organize Content and Simplify Navigation, Engage Users with Interactive Content, Evaluation and Revise Your Site

Usability.gov
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs.
http://www.usability.gov

A one-stop source for user experience best practices and strategies. Learn how to create more usable, useful, and accessible websites. Learn the basics of user experience, content strategy, project management, visual design, methods, and guidelines.

Creating Usable, Useful Health Websites for Readers at All Levels
Health Literacy Out Loud
http://www.healthliteracyoutloud.com/2010/03/23/hlol-34-creating-usable-useful-health-websites-for-readers-at-all-levels/

In this Health Literacy Out Loud podcast, (HLOL #34), host Helen Osborne interviews health literacy consultant Stacy Robison about (1) how people with limited literacy skills, health literacy skills, or limited time use online health information, (2) what is different when communicating about wellness and prevention (health promotion) v. communicating about diagnosis and treatment (health care), and (3), ways to design health content so that Web users can, and will, take action.

Design for readability: inspiring action with clear formatting.
Presentation by Eva Anderson at Wisconsin's 2013 Health Literacy Summit
http://www.fammed.wisc.edu/files/webfm-uploads/documents/research/wren/wihls13/anderson-design-readability.pdf

Numeracy Icon Array
University of Michigan
http://www.iconarray.com/

Make your own downloadable, linked, or embedded visual graphic of risk/frequency. This tool addresses Numeracy – how we communicate about numbers.

Teach Back Videos
University of Alabama
https://healthliteracy.uams.edu/for-healthcare-professionals/resources/teachback/

Watch these useful videos that demonstrate Teach Back in action.