

Action Plans to Improve Health Literacy

What is health literacy?

Health literacy is 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*

National
Action Plan to
Improve
Health Literacy



Foundations for National Plan

- Healthy People 2010 Objective
 - 2003 action plan
- NIH/AHRQ/CDC Program Announcement to fund health literacy research
- 2003 NAAL data
- 2006 Surgeon General's Workshop on Improving Health Literacy
- 2007-08 Regional Town Halls

National Action Plan

- Goals and high level strategies
- Multiple sectors and professions included
- Status March 2010: draft
 - Requires HHS clearance
 - Development led by HHS staff but not a plan for government alone

Vision

- Accurate, actionable health information
- Person-centered health information and services
- Life-long learning and skills to promote good health
- Call for response from all sectors

Goal 1

Develop and disseminate health and safety information that is accurate, accessible and actionable.

Goal 2

Promote changes in the healthcare delivery system that improve health information, communication, informed decision-making and access to health services.

Goal 3

Incorporate accurate, standards-based and developmentally appropriate health and science information and curricula in early childhood through university level education.

Goal 4

Support and expand local efforts to provide adult education, English language instruction, and culturally and linguistically appropriate health information services in the community.

Goal 5

Build partnerships, develop guidance, and change policies.

Goal 6

Increase basic research and the development, implementation and evaluation of interventions to improve health literacy.

Goal 7

Increase the dissemination and use of evidence-based health literacy practices and interventions.

Six Principles

- Cross-disciplinary
- Strategic and evidence-based
- Evaluate
- Continuous public education
- Include laws, policies and other institutional factors
- Involve communities most affected by limited health literacy

What can you do?

- Identify the most relevant goals and strategies for your organization
- Draft possible action steps
- Brief your supervisors and propose action steps
- Plan and implement approved actions
- Evaluate their effectiveness in improving health literacy
- Share your findings with colleagues

Plan Overview

- ADA Council on Access, Prevention and Interprofessional Relations (CAPIR) in cooperation with its ad hoc advisory committee
- 2010-2015
- Set of principles, goals and strategies
- NOT a “to do list” *per se*
- Flexible and dynamic, not static

Health Literacy
In Dentistry
Action Plan:
2010-2015



HL in Dentistry Focus Areas

1. TRAINING AND EDUCATION
2. ADVOCACY
3. RESEARCH
4. DENTAL PRACTICE
5. BUILD AND MAINTAIN COALITIONS

www.ADA.org

Thank you!

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