

Making Health Literacy Real:

The Beginnings of My Organization's Plan for Action



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
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):

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Allies:

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Workgroup Members:

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Identifying My Advocates

Advocates External to my Organization

Champion(s):

Allies:

Workgroup Members:

Getting Buy-In

Audience:

What may work:

Audience:

What may work:

Audience:

What may work:

Audience:

What may work:

Commitment to Planning

Who's in:

Who's Leading the Planning Effort:

Expected Process:

Resources Needed:

Honest Assessment

Who's in:

Who's Missing:

Expected Process:

Honest Assessment

Factor	Opportunities for Health Literacy Improvement
Health Information (i.e. forms & factsheets)	
Communications with clients, partners, community	
Relationship with Media	
Physical Environment	
Program development, implementation, and evaluation	
Internal Communication and Policies	

Honest Assessment (cont.)

Other Factor(s)	Opportunities for Health Literacy Improvement

Consider Barriers & Solutions

Opportunity	Potential Barriers	Potential Solutions

Developing Your Action Plan

Issue Overview:

Vision:

Statement of Commitment:

Existing Policies:

Developing Your Action Plan

Goal:

Objective:

Action Step (s):	By Who?	By When?

Developing Your Action Plan

Goal:		
Objective:		
Action Step (s):	By Who?	By When?

Developing Your Action Plan

Goal:

Objective:

Action Step (s):	By Who?	By When?

Next Steps

What is our process to vet the Plan?

How will we gain endorsement from senior leadership?

What are our opportunities to build awareness?

What is our process for monitoring efforts?

What will we do to implement 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>