



Bridging the Gap: Taking Action on Health Literacy in Minnesota

THE MINNESOTA HEALTH LITERACY PARTNERSHIP, AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY,
BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF MINNESOTA, PORTICO AND THE AMERICAN
HEART ASSOCIATION

Overview

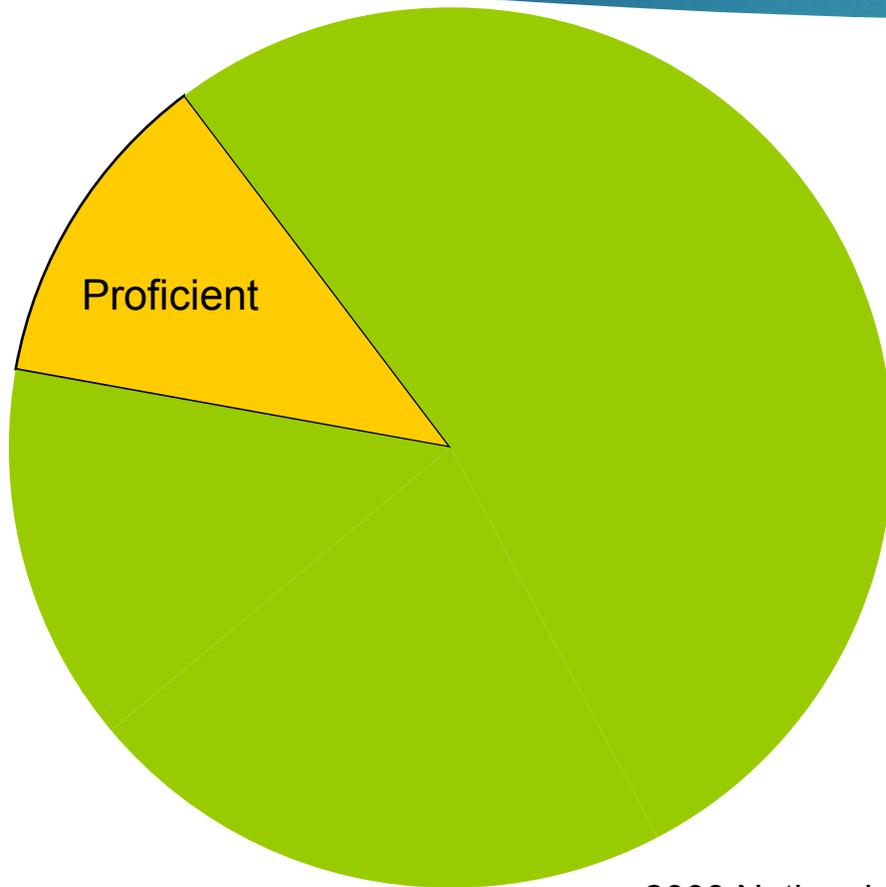
- ▶ Define health literacy
- ▶ Discuss barriers to health literacy
- ▶ Review MN Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy
- ▶ Explore recommendations and potential use by MNsure

Definition

What is health literacy?

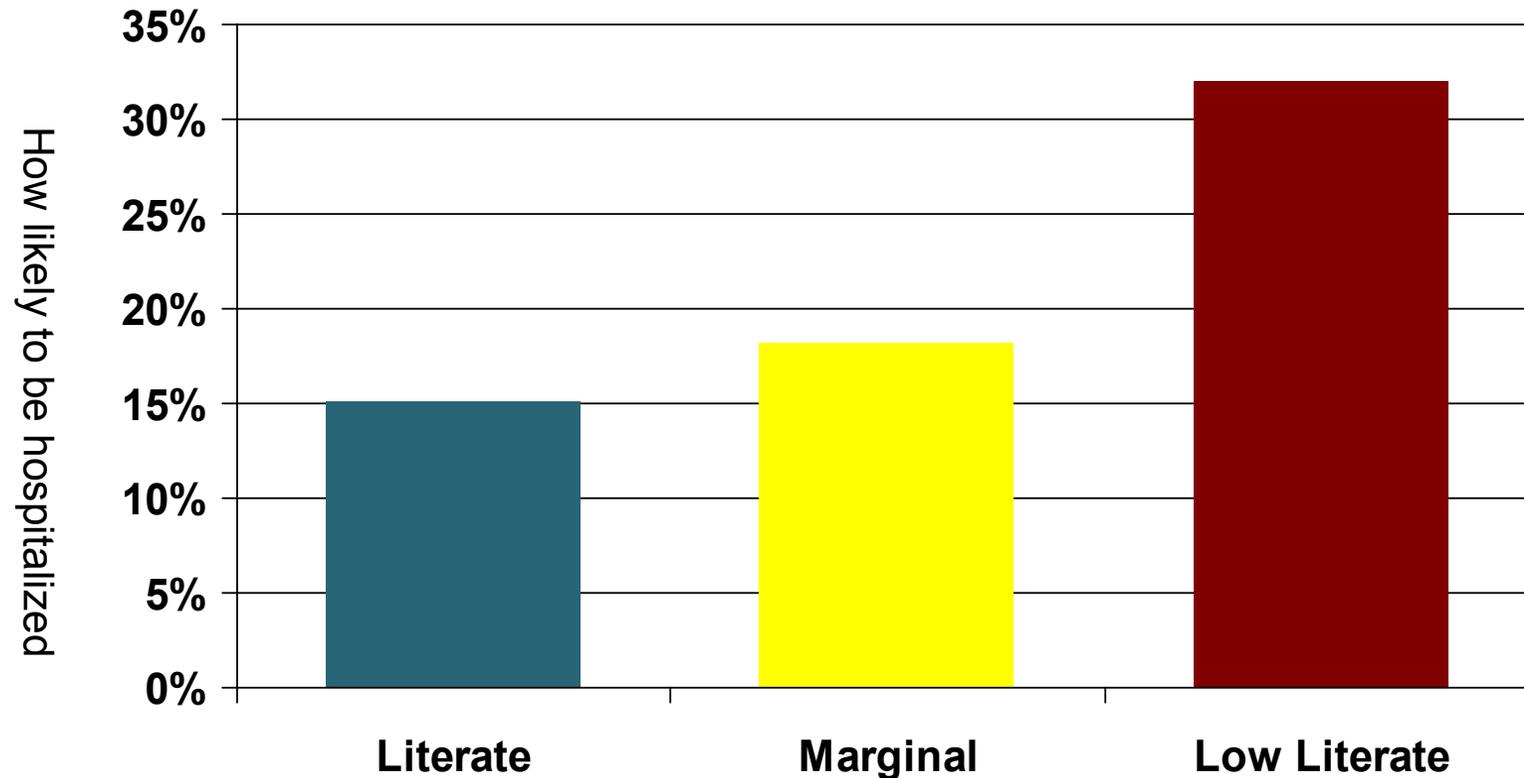
- ▶ Health Literacy is....
- ▶ our ability to **read, understand** and **act on** health information.
- ▶ a provider's capacity to **communicate** clearly, **educate** about health and **empower** their patients.
- ▶ a system's capacity to be easily **accessed**, quickly **navigated** and **understandable** by all.

Health literacy – a universal problem



**Only 12% of adults
are proficient in
understanding
health information**

Patients with low literacy nearly twice as likely to be hospitalized



Health literacy stats



- Patients with low literacy are more likely to report poor health

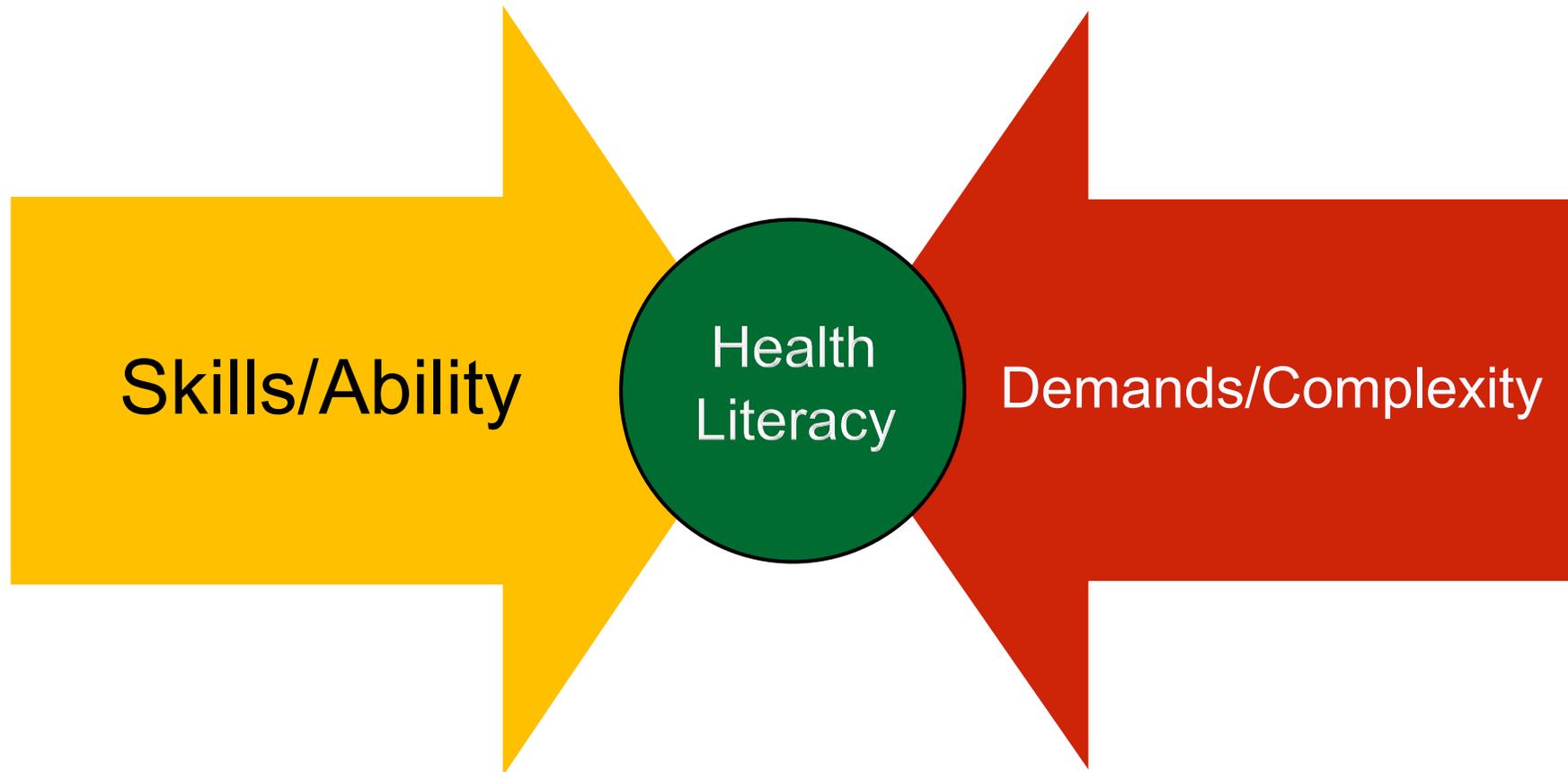


- People prefer plain language regardless of their level of education



- Low health literacy increases U.S. health care costs by \$50 – 70 billion annually

Improve skills & reduce complexity



MN Health Literacy Partnership

- ▶ Formed in 2006
- ▶ Functions as an independently funded program of the Minnesota Literacy Council
- ▶ **Our mission is** *to improve the health of all Minnesotans through clear communication.*
- ▶ **We accomplish this through:**
 - ▶ Educating health care providers about health literacy and the use of best practices
 - ▶ Empowering consumers to ask for clear health communication
 - ▶ Sharing health literacy resources
- ▶ **Website:** healthliteracymn.org

Working
together to
improve health
literacy in MN

A New Project: Minnesota Action Plan

- ▶ The health care system is currently experiencing an unprecedented level of change and additional strategies are needed to further the goals of the Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership.
- ▶ To improve health literacy in Minnesota, a steering committee convened a cross-sector stakeholder group to kick off a new initiative of the Health Literacy Partnership centered around consumer-focused health literacy.
 - ▶ Including Understanding Healthy Living & Accessing Care/Insurance
- ▶ Stakeholder organizations participated in the creation of a state action plan and over 40 co-sponsors have committed to furthering the action plan within their own organizations
 - ▶ Based on the National Call to Action, but more focused and MN Specific

Project structure

- ▶ The Minnesota Action Plan on Health Literacy is organized as a project of the existing MN Health Literacy Partnership.

 **Project Steering Committee**

 **BlueCross BlueShield Minnesota**

 **Cancer Action Network™**
American Cancer Society®

 **American Heart Association** | **American Stroke Association®**
life is why™

 **PORTICO**
Healthnet

 **MINNESOTA Health Literacy PARTNERSHIP**

 **Stakeholder Group**

- 60+ stakeholders invited to participate
- Common interest in addressing barriers
- Health plans, providers, consumer/patient advocates, drug companies, academics,

 **The Health Literacy Partnership**

- Action plan = strategic plan
- A natural home for the action plan to continue
- Stakeholders can join the partnership to continue to shape the work

Co-sponsors

- ▶ Allina Health
- ▶ American Cancer Society
- ▶ American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)
- ▶ American Diabetes Association
- ▶ American Heart Association
- ▶ Arc Greater Twin Cities
- ▶ Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota
- ▶ Care Management Solutions, LLC
- ▶ CentraCare Health
- ▶ Essentia Health
- ▶ Generations Health Care Initiatives
- ▶ HealthEast Care System
- ▶ HealthPartners
- ▶ Kate Murray, MPH candidate, University of Minnesota School of Public Health
- ▶ Medica
- ▶ Medical Alley
- ▶ Minnesota AIDS Project
- ▶ Minnesota Association of Community Health Centers
- ▶ Minnesota Association of Health Underwriters (MAHU)
- ▶ Minnesota Business Partnership
- ▶ Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Minnesota Community Measurement
- ▶ Minnesota Council of Health Plans
- ▶ Minnesota Department of Health
- ▶ Minnesota Gastroenterology
- ▶ Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership
- ▶ Minnesota Literacy Council
- ▶ Minnesota Rural Health Association
- ▶ MNsure
- ▶ NAMI Minnesota (Minnesota National Alliance for Mental Illness)
- ▶ National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Upper Midwest Chapter
- ▶ Normandale Community College – Health Sciences
- ▶ Novartis
- ▶ Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
- ▶ Portico Healthnet
- ▶ Rainbow Health Initiative
- ▶ Raiza Beltran, MPH, PhD student, University of Minnesota School of Social Work
- ▶ Stratis Health
- ▶ UCare
- ▶ University of Minnesota – Health Sciences Libraries
- ▶ University of Minnesota Extension – Center for Family Development
- ▶ Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment (WISE)

Organizations invited to participate

Allina Health
American Cancer Society
Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota
LifeScience Alley
Minnesota Gastroenterology, P.A.
University of Minnesota
AARP
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Disability Association
American Heart Association
America's Health Insurance Plans
Arthritis Foundation
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota
Bristol Myers Squibb
Care Management Inc
CentraCare
CLUES
Education Minnesota
Fairview Health
Genentech
Generations
Glaxosmithkline
Health Partners
HealthEast

ISAIAH
Lifescience Alley
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
MN Association of Health Underwriters
Mayo
Medica
Minnesota Hospital Association
Mid-MN Legal Aid
Minnesota Black Nurses Association
Minnesota Community Measurement
Minnesota Department of Health
Minnesota Nurses Association
Minnesota Rural Health Coalition
Minnesota School Boards Assn
Minnesota Superintendents Assn
Minnesota AIDS Project
Minnesota Association of Health Underwriters
Minnesota Business Partnership
Minnesota Chamber
Minnesota Community Health Workers Alliance
Minnesota Literacy Council
Minnesota Medical Association
Minnesota Rural Health Association
MNACHA

MS Society
NAMI
Novartis
Park Nicollet
Pediatric Home Service
People's Center Health Services
Pfizer
Pharma
Portico
Preferred One
Rainbow Health Initiative
SEIU
SHADAC (U of MN Public Health)
Stairstep Foundation
Stratis Health
The Arc Greater Twin Cities
TPT
U of M Extension
UCARE
University of Minnesota
Women of Wise



MN Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy

Barriers as identified by stakeholders

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Plain language isn't ;
consumers need tools
and more actionable
information

Better utilizing
resources already
available is also an
important part of the
solution

Payers and providers
need to work together
to bring more
transparency to the
system, especially
around cost.

Consumers need
more system
navigation and care
coordination support.

Health equity – work
with the community to
develop solutions.
Provide information in
first language and
culture.

Action Plan: 6 Priorities

- ▶ Adopt and use health literacy best practices across all verbal and written communication
- ▶ Make information about health relevant and accessible
- ▶ Increase and improve patient-centered resources
- ▶ Implement and enhance education opportunities at all levels
- ▶ Streamline processes within the health care system
- ▶ Invest in language and cultural resources

Priority: Adopt and use health literacy best practices across all verbal/written communication

Strategies

- ▶ Use plain language and readable formats to deliver clear and concise health information
- ▶ Adopt consistent terminology and standardize materials across the health system
- ▶ Simplify explanations of insurance policy coverage
- ▶ Engage consumers in the creation of health materials
- ▶ Create a health literacy “seal of approval”

Priority: Make information about health relevant and accessible

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Strategies

- ▶ Use a variety of formats to distribute materials
- ▶ Disseminate health resources and materials in places where people already congregate, not just where they receive care

Priority: Increase and improve patient-centered resources

Strategies

- ▶ Increase awareness of and access to resources and people who help patients navigate and coordinate care
- ▶ Create centralized places for patients to seek resources and ask questions (in person, by phone, and online)

Priority: Implement and enhance education opportunities at all levels

Strategies

- ▶ Provide health literacy education in K-12 schools
- ▶ Develop health literacy content for adult learners
- ▶ Train health professionals in health literacy

Priority: Streamline processes within the health care system

Strategies

- ▶ Simplify and standardize health care processes
- ▶ Promote integrated care teams
- ▶ Expand the ability of health care facilities to share information about patients while protecting the privacy of patients' personal information

Priority: Invest in language and cultural resources

Strategies

- ▶ Improve health care access for diverse, low-income, and rural communities
- ▶ Provide information in more languages and improve access to interpreters
- ▶ Work with community leaders and cultural groups to reach populations with limited health literacy
- ▶ Improve cultural competency training and education

Next steps for MNsure...

- ▶ How might MNsure use this report?
- ▶ Where are the opportunities for MNsure based on this report?
- ▶ How could the advisory committees help build support for changes?
- ▶ Other thoughts....

Thank you!

- ▶ Feel free to contact us with any questions

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