

Make Health Understandable by all Texans



Supporting systems change in health literacy will promote the success of health initiatives and health information transparency for the 30 million people living in Texas.

Low health literacy results in worse health outcomes and increased costs.

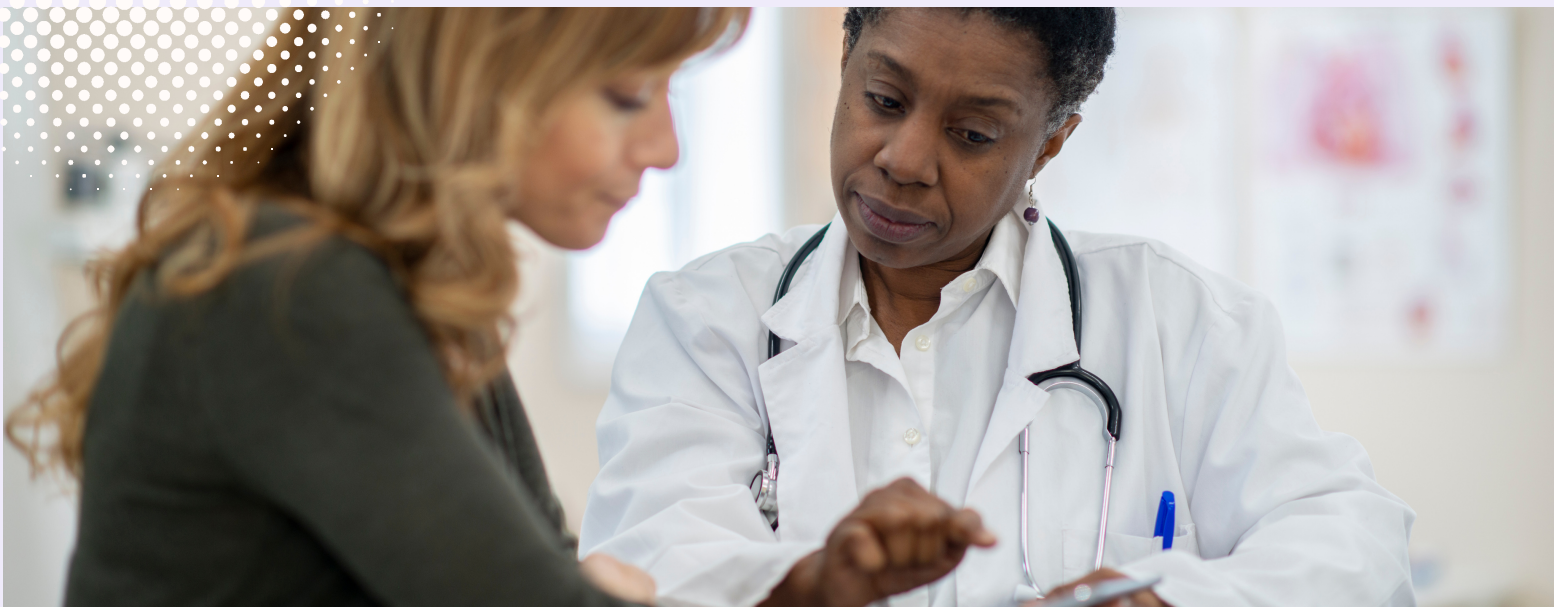
- Health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.
- Two decades of research has shown that nearly 9 out of 10 United States adults struggle at one time or another to use everyday health information.
- Low health literacy is associated with less ability to understand and follow medical advice and worse health outcomes, including more hospitalization and emergency care and less use of preventive services like cancer screenings.
- Low health literacy is estimated to cost the US economy billions annually in healthcare expenditures.

Investing in health literacy initiatives can support efforts to improve healthcare and public health in Texas.

- Health literacy interventions can improve health-related knowledge and treatment adherence.
- Community health workers and navigators serve as health literacy bridges for hard-to-reach and rural populations.
- Legislative efforts to improve health data and insurance transparency do not work if people cannot find, understand, and use the information and services.

Health care organizations and systems have a responsibility to address health literacy.

- Health care organizations often fail to offer information and services in a way that people can understand.
- Healthy People 2030, the nations' public health agenda, highlights **organizational health literacy** as the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.




The Texas Public Health Association, Health Literacy Texas, and SaferCare Texas have created a task force to empower systems and individuals to promote the public's health through health literacy in Texas.

Recommendations:

- The Texas Statewide Health Coordinating Council should prioritize health literacy** by leveraging the work of health literacy experts and organizations across the state.
- Conduct a statewide needs assessment** to inform health literacy interventions that are in alignment with Healthy People 2030.
- Align healthcare, health literacy nonprofits, and public health organizations to **collaborate on health literacy research and interventions.**
- Conduct a statewide Return on Investment (ROI) study** to better understand the impact of health literacy interventions.



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Sources:

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