

Literacy as a Bridge: Engaging Health Equity through Low Health Literacy Design

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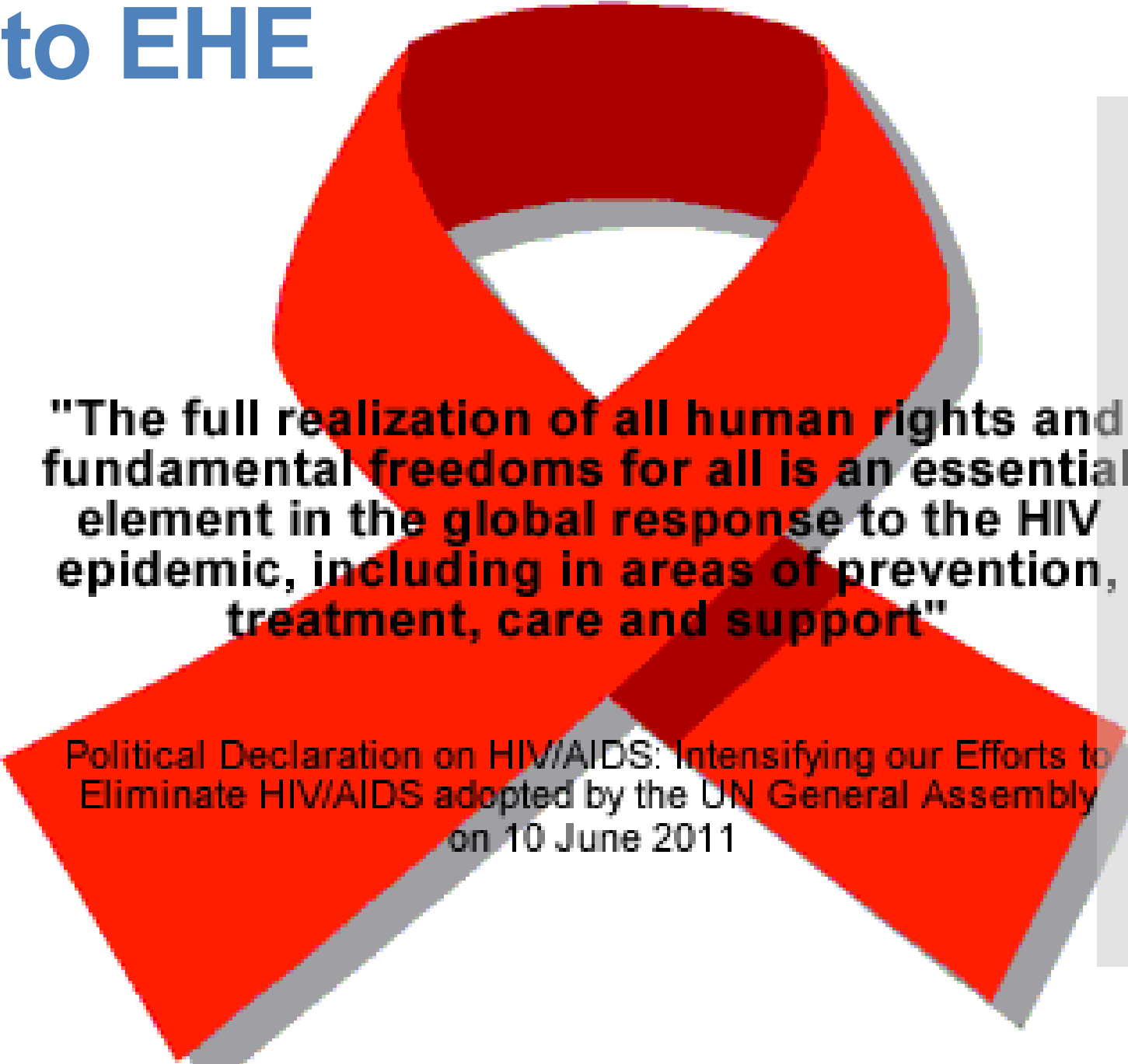


How This Relates to EHE

The Greatest
Connectors to Risk

The Inequality of
Vulnerability

Addressing Causation
and Engaging
Prevention – Meeting
Our Goals



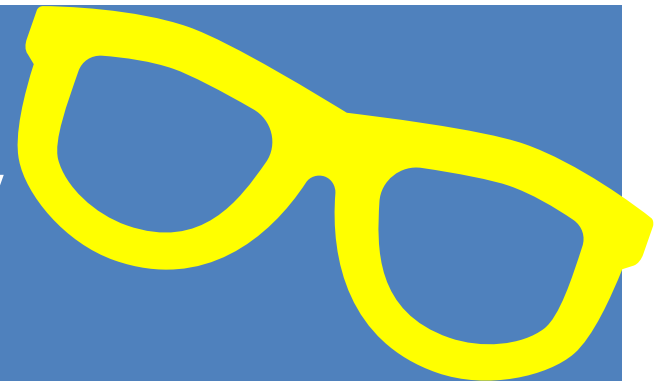
"The full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is an essential element in the global response to the HIV epidemic, including in areas of prevention, treatment, care and support"

Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS: Intensifying our Efforts to Eliminate HIV/AIDS adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 June 2011

- The average reading comprehension level of the population in the US is between a 5th – 8th grade level. Where poverty is higher and/or the population has a higher percentage of youth (people under the age of 21), that average comprehension level can be as low as 3rd grade.
- Individuals can have high literacy overall and still experience low health literacy.
- Poverty greatly impacts health literacy, with uninsured and publicly insured individuals being the highest risk for having low health literacy.
- Medical information (prescriptions, diagnosis, resources, etc.) is written on average at a 12th grade level.
- Literacy is impacted by multiple factors; education, language of origin, sight, hearing, comprehension ability/disability, emotion, and processing capacity.
- Cultural beliefs impact communication between providers and patients, having strong effect on a patient's ability and interest in adhering to a provider's instructions.



Health Literacy



What Low Health Literacy Looks Like



“Your results show that you have an noitcefni that has decnavda from your reddalb to your syendik. This is why you were feeling pain and having trouble gnitaniru. We are going to start you on scitoibitna and want to do some blood tests to rule out other sesongaid that could have caused this. I am also going to give you some secruoser on the snoitpircserp so you know how to use the noitacidem.”

“Your results show that you have an infection that has advanced from your bladder to your kidneys. This is why you were feeling pain and having trouble urinating. We are going to start you on antibiotics and want to do some blood tests to rule out other diagnoses that could have caused this. I am also going to give you some resources on the prescriptions, so you know how to use the medication.”

Numeracy & Technology




- Affect how a patient understands their health (“An undetectable viral load is below 20/mL, yours is 2300/mL” or “your blood pressure is 160/100, a healthy blood pressure is 120/80”)
- Affect how a patient understands their individual responsibility and health management (“You cannot consume more than 36 grams of carbs in each meal”)
- Affect how a patient can be consistent (“You can setup your next appointment through the patient portal and a reminder will be emailed to you”)
- Affect a patient’s accessibility (“We only do prescription refill requests through the patient portal” or “In order to see the doctor you have to check in using the QR code in the waiting area”)

Health Disparities for Low Health Literacy



12% of Americans have proficient health literacy



Limited health literacy affects all racial/ethnic groups but is disproportionate across them. 28% of white adults have basic – below basic literacy, in comparison to 65% of Latinx adults.

Approximately 1 in 3 people with a graduate degree can fully understand medical information provided to them.

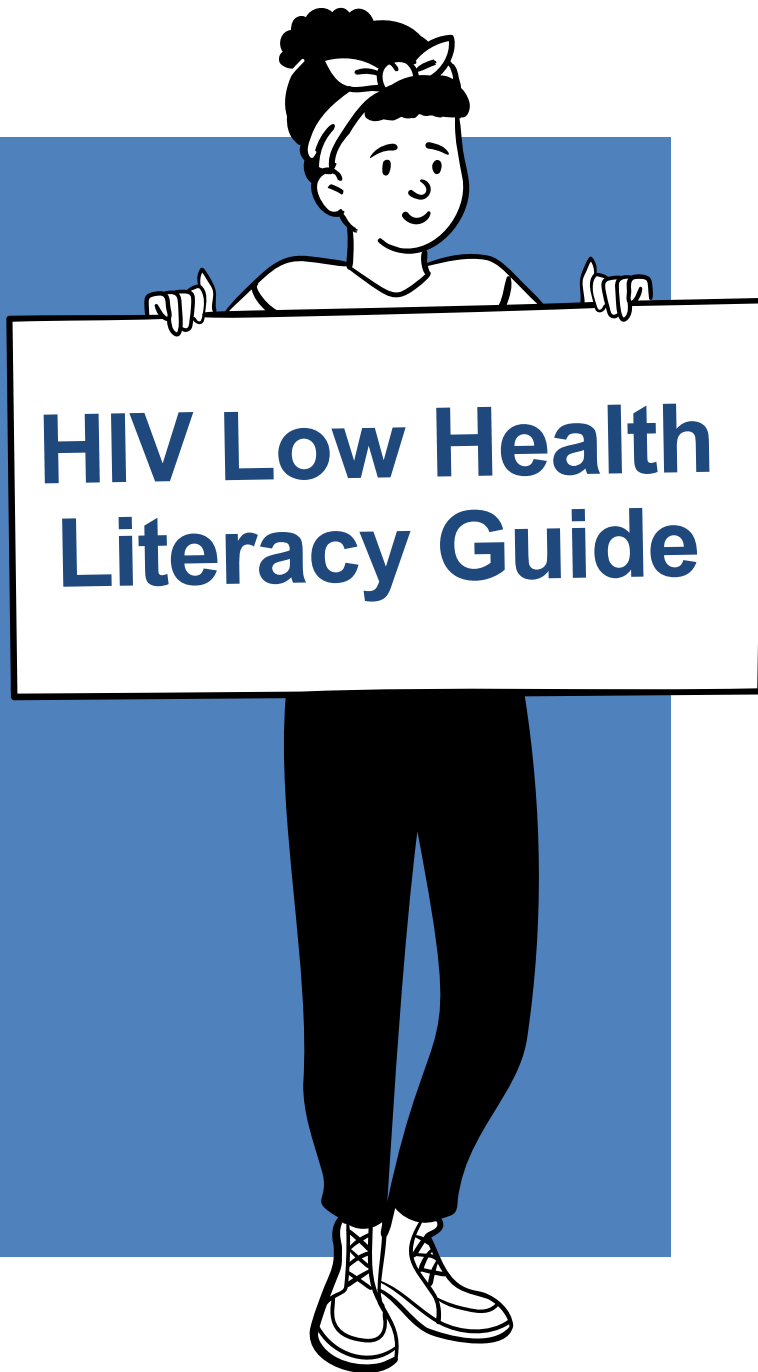
Numeracy and technological adaptability are separate from but compound health literacy.

Adults over 65 are the group most impacted by low health literacy.

Low health literacy results in patients paying more on average in health care costs and increased visits to the ER, hospital admission, and decreased access to appropriate care.

Quick Best Practices

- **Pictures and Images**
- **Choosing Color with Intention**
- **Fonts and Sizing**
- **Alt-Text Always**
- **Limit Numbers and Data**
- **Simplify**
- **Memory Tricks Help Things Stick**



- Low health literacy greatly impacts consumers' ability to make decisions regarding their care, their consistency with care and medication adherence, and any necessary behavior adjustments.
- The Low HIV Health Literacy Guide is a collected set of standard best practices for clinical spaces to provide resources, diagnoses, case management, prescriptions, and care at a more universal literacy range for all consumers to best understand
- The guide includes:
 - A quick HIV specific literacy, numeracy, and color perception test that can be given by any clinician
 - Standards for print and digital resource materials
 - Standards for verbal communication
- AACO has a 1/1.5-hour training that teaches case managers and clinicians how to utilize the guide and what low literacy looks like

Resources

- [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#)
- [Health Literacy Month \(October\)](#)
- [Pennsylvania Health Literacy Coalition](#)
- [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Toolkit for Making Material Clear and Effective](#)
- [CDC's Plain Language Thesaurus for Health Communications](#)

Watch

[AMA Foundation: Health Literacy and Patient Safety: Help Patients Understand](#) – *23 minutes*

[TEDxMidAtlantic: Are you Confused About Health Information? You're Not Alone](#) by Lisa Fitzpatrick – *12.5 minutes*

[Blue Cross Blue Shield: Health Literacy Overview](#) – *2 minutes*

[NNLM: Graphic Public Health Comics for Health Literacy, Health Promotion, and Advocacy](#) – *1 hour*

[NNLM: Addressing Health Literacy with Older Adults and Person with Disabilities](#) – *1 hour*

**Thoughts,
Questions,
Concerns?**



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