

**The Ohio State University  
AHEC Clear Health Communication Program**

**Health Literacy Web Resources**

<b>Websites with Easy-To-Read Materials for Patients / Clients</b>
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**Academic**

**Aetna Intellihealth-**<http://www.intelihealth.com/IH/ihtIH/WSIHW000/408/408.html>.

Intelihealth produces reliable and respected health information sources from Harvard Medical School.

**Hamilton Health Sciences-Education-Patient Education Services -**

<http://www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/PEDL/>

This website actually includes both easy to read materials and information on health literacy. The topic of health literacy and why it is important to health care providers, tips on how to write in plain language, standards for quality materials, and planning guides for educational materials are included. A large pool of plain language reading materials is accessible for the public.

**Mayo Clinic-** <http://www.mayoclinic.com/index.cfm>

Information on diseases and conditions from A to Z and disease and “condition centers” can be accessed to give patients more information and tools to help patients manage conditions. There is also a healthy living feature and a section where patients can pose questions to be answered by one of the Mayo Clinic physicians.

**Netwellness –** <http://www.netwellness.org/>

This site is a collaborative effort among the University of Cincinnati, The Ohio State University, and Case Western Reserve University. The sections include: Ask an Expert with over 300 health professionals to answer the questions, over 100 topics with in-depth information on hundreds of diseased and wellness issues, monthly newsletters, a reference library and much more.

**The Ohio State University Medical Center –**

[http://medicalcenter.osu.edu/patientcare/patient\\_education/](http://medicalcenter.osu.edu/patientcare/patient_education/)

This site has over 2,000 health-related topics, all written by health professionals at the medical center and all below 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. Most of the handouts have illustrations. There are also materials in Somali and Spanish. A section on websites for other language materials and information about other cultures is also available.

**University of Utah Hospitals & Clinics –** <http://www.med.utah.edu/pated>

Over 300 patient education titles are available in both English and Spanish. An Author’s Guide assists staff in writing easy-to-read materials.

**Virtual Hospital-** <http://www.vh.org/index.html> This University of Iowa website has easy to read medical information for adult and pediatric patients. Some booklets are available in languages other than English, such as Spanish, German, and Portuguese. Other features on the website include health topics in the spotlight for the current month and an in the news section.

## **Commercial**

**Channing Bete Company** - <http://www.channing-bete.com/>

Channing Bete Company specializes in producing easy to read health brochures and handouts. The publications are available in a wide variety of reading levels, and are geared towards children/teens, parents/families and health care patients and providers.

**ETR (Education, Training, Research) Associates** – <http://pub.etr.org>

This non-profit organization provides health promotion materials in over 35 topic areas for a wide-range of audiences. Materials include books, pamphlets, flip charts, displays, videos and curricula.

**Journeyworks Publishing** – <http://www.journeyworks.com>

Easy-to-read and culturally sensitive materials are the hallmark of this company. They provide booklets and posters for targeted populations (seniors, colleges, women’s health, worksite, gay & lesbian, teens.)

**Krames – Stay Well Company** – <http://www.krames.com>

Colorfully illustrated materials on all topic areas. Materials include brochures, booklets, tear sheets, posters, videos, software, books, and binder kits. Krames-On-Demand provides materials that can be printed from your computer.

**Patient Education Institute** – <http://www.patient-education.com>

The Patient Education Institute publishes X-Plain, interactive multimedia software for patient education. X-Plain simplifies information, engages the patient with illustrations, sound, animations, asks questions to verify understanding, and documents education.

**Pritchett & Hull Associates, Inc.** – <http://www.p-h.com>

Most of the colorfully illustrated materials are below 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level, and many are at the 5-6<sup>th</sup> grade level. The “Here’s How” series is in plain language specifically for patients with low-literacy. Materials include tear pads, pamphlets, booklets, posters, print-on-demand on-line inventory, CD-ROMs, packages, flip cards.

## **Government**

**Healthfinder** - <http://www.healthfinder.gov/aboutus/> Healthfinder® is an award-winning Federal Web site, developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services together with other Federal agencies. Healthfinder® links to carefully selected information and Web sites from over 1,800 health-related organizations. A health library feature allows you to browse by each letter of the alphabet for all topics on prevention and wellness, diseases and conditions, alternative medicine, and selected health topics

**Medline Plus** – [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/easytoread/easytoread\\_a.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/easytoread/easytoread_a.html).

This site is a service from the U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. It contains a large inventory of easy-to-read materials on all health related topics. Interactive tutorials from the Patient Education Institute are available for a number of the topics, which are ideal for those with limited literacy. The tutorials require Flash Player.

**National Cancer Institute-** <http://cancer.gov/cancerinfo/> This web site has an alphabetic search for all of the different types of cancer. Other headings include: treatment options, prevention strategies, coping with cancer, and support/resources.

**National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute -**

[http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/pubs/pub\\_gen.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/pubs/pub_gen.htm) This has information about heart, lung, blood diseases, asthma, cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, weight reduction, and exercise. Many booklets come in several languages and are in color.

**National Institutes of Health-** <http://health.nih.gov/>. Titles of categories include: body location/systems, common conditions/diseases, health and wellness, procedures, and demographic groups. Other major headings are: clinical studies, drug information, library references, special programs, and other health information agencies.

**NIDDK- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.**

<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/eztoread.htm#dig> NIDDK provides reading material at about a sixth grade reading level and has many pictures to go along with the text. With each section, a dictionary is provided with the terms used to describe and manage the diseases. Also disease description and disease management strategies are given.

**NIH Senior Health-** <http://nihseniorhealth.gov> This website features specific information to meet the health information needs of older adults. There is the option to increase text size, contrast, and sound to hear the information read aloud.

**The National Women’s Health Information Center** – <http://www.4women.gov>

Provides links to hundreds of low literacy and Spanish language resources dealing with all aspects of women’s health.

**U. S. Food and Drug Administration Easy to Read Publications**

<http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/7lowlit.html>

Easy to read medical information publications are included in both Spanish and English. This site is very credible, and has a variety of lively, picture-laden, colorful handouts on various health related topics.

**Minority Populations / Multilingual Health Information**

**Asian American Health** – <http://asianamericanhealth.nlm.nih.gov>

The website covers 6 major Asian American communities: Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Asian Indian/Pakistani, and Southeast Asia. Physical and mental health issues, preventive health steps, and combined resources on Western, Eastern, and alternative medicine are presented. Links to patient information materials in Asian languages are provided.

**American Indian Health** – <http://americanindianhealth.nlm.nih.gov/health.html>

Provides links to health materials and research specific to the Native American and Alaskan Native population. Highlights includes tribal health initiatives, environmental health concerns, and links to reputable web sites about other indigenous people.

**Black Women's Health** – <http://blackwomenshealth.com>

Information on the physical, mental, spiritual well being of African-American women is provided.

**Health Info Translations** – <http://www.healthinfotranslations.com>

This website was created as a partnership of The Ohio State University Medical Center, Mount Carmel Health and Ohio Health. Easy-to-read, dual language, and culturally appropriate materials on a variety of general health information topics are available.

**National Network of Libraries of Medicine**– <http://nmlm.gov/outreach/consumer/multi.html>

Numerous linkages to resources with items in multiple languages, with a list of those for specific languages are provided.

**The 24 Languages Project** – <http://library.med.utah.edu/24languages/>

Over 200 health education brochures are offered in 24 languages with sound recordings developed by Utah Department of Health, University of Utah, Immunization Action Coalition, and AAPCHO.

**Washington State Department of Health** [http://www.doh.wa.gov/translated\\_materials.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/translated_materials.htm)

Educational materials are listed by subject. A selected item gives a detailed description and a list of languages that the item is available in.

## **Organizations**

**Familydoctor.org** – <http://www.familydoctor.org> This site has easy-to-read health information on a wide variety of topics, with special sections for children, women, men, and seniors. There is an extensive index, a dictionary of medical words and names of diseases, an index of herbal and alternative remedies, and information in Spanish.

**FirstFind.Info** - <http://www.firstfind.info/>

This website contains a massive database of a variety of easy- to- read fact sheets on health problems. Almost all basic illnesses and diseases are covered in this library, with a great variety of formats for the handouts. One interesting medium for relaying the health information is x-plain tutorial.

**Health Check: A Health and Literacy Program** -

<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/adultlit/hlthchk/contents.htm>

This health and literacy program provides easy to read materials on a wide variety of topics such as healthy eating, smoking, alcohol, active living, relationships, and STDs and AIDS. The format for the handouts is interesting and interactive with instructions for the instructors, and anecdotes from fictitious characters regarding the topic.

**Health and Literacy Compendium** <http://www.worlded.org/us/health/docs/comp/index.html>

The health and literacy compendium provides a diversity of web and print based health materials for use with low-literacy adults. Included are resources about books, reports and journals on what low health literacy is, how to assess and develop plain language materials, and curricula for use in literacy classrooms and community settings.

**Healthy Roads Media** – <http://www.healthyroadsmedia.org/>

This site contains written and multimedia health education materials in a number of languages. It provides basic health information, especially for those who prefer to listen or view a movie, read easy-to-read materials, and who have English as a second language.

**Health Touch** [http://www.healthtouch.com/bin/Econtent\\_HT/hdinfo.asp?cid=HTHLTH](http://www.healthtouch.com/bin/Econtent_HT/hdinfo.asp?cid=HTHLTH)

Health Touch has a wide variety of information on health related topics. While much of the material is not presented at a very low literacy level, it is presented in a format that would aid the high school educated low health literate client.

**Institute for Healthcare Advancement** – <http://iha4health.org>

This organization provides a series of books on “What To Do For Health” that are easy-to-read, and a teacher’s training manual on how to use the books in teaching adult literacy and/or English as a second language classes. In addition, there are a variety of other materials in easy-to-read format.

**Medicinenet-** <http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/hp.asp> A network of U.S. Board Certified Physicians and Allied Health Professionals provide the public with current, comprehensive medical information written in an easy to read format. Main topics include information on diseases and conditions, procedures and tests, medications, medical terms, and current health news and facts.

## **Websites about Plain Language and Health Literacy**

### **Academic**

**California Health Communication Project** – <http://healthresearch4action.org/communications/>

The Center for Health Communication at UC Berkeley provides services to develop consumer materials that are easy-to-understand. Resource tip sheets are available.

**Harvard School of Public Health-** <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/>

This site has information for researchers and practitioners in public health, and adult education. An introduction to health literacy with power point overview, previews of videos, research reports, innovative health education materials, how to create and evaluate plain language handouts, curricula, literature review, annotated bibliography, and links to easy-to-read health information sites is included.

**OSU Health Literacy Initiative** – <http://medicine.osu.edu/ahec/4977.cfm>

The AHEC program at The Ohio State University supports a health literacy program that includes modules for health professionals and consultative services.

**National Academy of Sciences** <http://www.iom.edu/project.asp?id=3827>

The health literacy section of this website contains a brief report on the April 2004 publication, “Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion,” and information on how to order the book. There is a video about the report and related resources and links.

**University of Virginia School of Medicine Health Literacy Curriculum** –

<http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/internet/som-hlc/>

This site will help you develop a health literacy curriculum. An outline of the curriculum at UVA, reference materials, basic lecture power point, tools, links, and a bibliography are included.

**Commercial**

**Garbl’s Plain Language Resources** – <http://home.comcast.net/~garbl/writing/plaineng.htm>

This site provides an annotated directory of websites, books, agencies and organizations that can help you use plain language (plain English) techniques to improve your writing.

**Health Literacy Consulting** - <http://www.healthliteracy.com/default.asp>

Health Literacy Consulting, created by Helen Osborne, has many articles and tips on health literacy, written by her. She provides a consulting, training, advocating, coaching, and writing / editing service that includes tele-classes on this topic. She is the founder of the National Health Literacy Month, celebrated in October each year.

**IMPACT Information Plain Language Services** – <http://www.impact-information.com/>

William DuBay provides many articles and research reports on plain language. Included are links to plain language websites and archives of the Plain Language at Work Newsletter.

**On Plain Language** – <http://www.gopdg.com/plainlanguage/> or Plain Language Center

<http://www.plainlanguage.com>

Cheryl Stephens, mentor/muser, provides a wealth of information and articles on plain language writing, testing, evaluation, readability, and layout and design

**Pfizer Clear Health Communication Initiative** <http://www.pfizerhealthliteracy.com>

Learn more about health literacy and ways in which your organization can address the issue. Download Pfizer’s *Principles for Clear Health Communication Handbook* and health literacy fact sheets.

**Plain Language Service** - <http://www.pls.cpha.ca/english/faq.htm>

Information for health care providers on what plain language is and how to write health information in a 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade level is provided. A plain language service, from the Canadian Public Health Service, takes difficult patient handouts and revises them into plain language for a fee.

**Plain Train** - <http://www.web.net/~plain/PlainTrain/IntroducingPlainLanguage.html>

Plain Train assists the health care professional in creating plain language handouts. Topics that are covered include: your reader and purpose, organizing ideas, appropriate words, simple sentences, effective paragraphs, design and testing.

**The Clear Language Group** - <http://www.clearlanguagegroup.com/>

The site contains detailed explanations of plain language as a movement and as a method. Also on the website are descriptions of the services, which include consulting and coaching, writing and editing, presenting and training, assessing materials and audiences, communicating across cultures, and producing multimedia.

## **Government**

**Agency for Health Research & Quality** <http://www.ahrq.gov/>

This government agency has a number of reports and documents in their Health Literacy and Cultural Competency section. Among them is the January 2004 evidence-based report on Literacy and Health Outcomes.

**Center for Disease Control** – <http://www.cdc.gov/> This website has materials for patients/clients, reports for professionals, and a guide (Simply Put) with tips for putting information in readable, plain language.

**Health Resources & Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** <http://www.hrsa.gov/healthliteracy/default.htm>

The Center for Quality has taken the lead to help implement the Healthy People 2010 Health Communications objectives. This site contains links to their activities in this area and additional health literacy links and resources.

**National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL)** – <http://nces.ed.gov/naal/>

The 2003 NAAL is a nationally representative assessment of literacy among adults residing in households and prisons in the U.S. It was conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. There is a health literacy component to the survey.

**National Cancer Institute** – <http://cancer.gov/cancerinformation/clearandsimple>

The guideline, Clear & Simple: Developing Effective Print Materials for Low-Literate Readers provides an excellent step-by-step method for material development. Included is information on how to conduct audience research to define the reader and how to pretest the draft of the material for revision.

**National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders**

<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov>

This website has a number of resources on improving health literacy and communication strategies.

**National Institute for Literacy** – <http://www.nifl.gov>

The NIFL is authorized by the US congress to provide national leadership regarding literacy, coordinate literacy services and policy, and serve as a national resource for adult education and literacy programs. Although materials are not specific to health literacy, there are a number of documents that help one understand the field of literacy and its impact.

**PLAIN-** <http://www.plainlanguage.gov>

The Plain Language Action and Information Network (PLAIN), promotes the use of plain language for all government communications. This site contains many resources and how to tools with examples that professionals will find useful.

**The Council of State Governments-**

<http://www.csg.org/CSG/Policy/health/importance+of+HL.htm> This web page provides fact sheets that pose such questions as: Why is health literacy important? Who is affected by low health literacy? What is the impact of low health literacy? What are states doing to address health literacy? What can policymakers do to address health literacy? Also, some credible health literacy links and resources are listed on this web page.

**Organizations**

**American Medical Association Foundation** - <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/8115.html>

The AMA Foundation is working to raise awareness among health care providers about the link between health outcomes and literacy. The site includes health literacy news, a list of each states' health literacy programs, the toolkit "Help Your Patients Understand," train-the-trainers seminars, grants program, and more.

**California Health Literacy Initiative** – <http://www.cahealthliteracy.org/>

This site provides information about this initiative in California. The health literacy resource center has documents on general health literacy information, plain language health resources, multicultural and multilingual information, health literacy research and publications, and health literacy clip art.

**CASLPA Fact Sheets** – <http://www.caslpa.ca/english/resources/literacy.asp>

This organization of Canadian Speech and Language professionals has a number of fact sheets and reports on health literacy.

**Center for Health Care Strategies Resource Center**

<http://www.chcs.org/>

The Center has developed a series of Fact Sheets on all aspects of health literacy.

**Educational Testing Services – Policy Information Report –**

<http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICHEATH.pdf>

This site provides a 52 page document (April 2004) from the Educational Testing Services on Literacy and Health in America.

**LINCS – Health and Literacy** - <http://www.worlded.org/us/health/lincs/facts.htm>

This website is one of the principal locations for literacy – related information for children, youth and adults. It is a service of the National Institute for Literacy and contains information on why health literacy and plain language materials are important, and how to make your community more health literate. A health care provider resources page has a list of other websites with health literacy information and plain language handouts.

**National Literacy and Health Program** - <http://www.nlhp.cpha.ca/>

The National Literacy and Health Program, developed by the Canadian Public Health Association, is geared toward identifying the need to provide health information in an easy to read format, and to maintaining and improving personal and community health. They provide resources that help health care professionals to create easy to read publications with their Plain Language Service, and national literacy and health program projects.

**Partnership for Clear Health Communication-** <http://www.npsf.org/askme3>

A new program, called Ask Me3, is a solution-based initiative to improve health communication between patients and providers. Free materials can be ordered to help institute the program in a health setting.

**The Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA)** – [www.iha4health.org](http://www.iha4health.org)

IHA offers health literacy training materials along with links to other online resources.

**The Plain Language Association International-** <http://www.plainlanguagenetwork.org> Formed in 1993, Plain Language Association International is a volunteer, nonprofit organization of plain-language advocates, professionals and organizations committed to plain language. This site contains many links to articles and resources from experts in the field.

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