

UPDATING HEALTH LITERACY FOR HEALTHY PEOPLE 2030

Defining Its Importance for a New Decade in Public Health

For the first time in 20 years, and with the launch of Healthy People 2030 (HP2030), the Healthy People initiative has expanded its definition of health literacy.

EVOLUTION OF THE DEFINITION OF HEALTH LITERACY



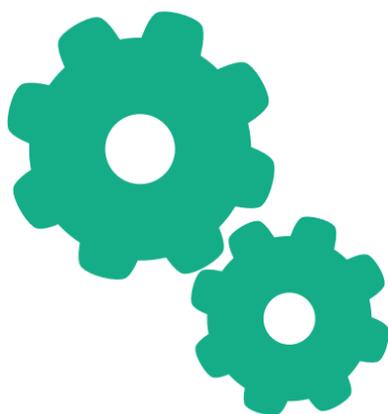
The HP2010 definition of health literacy solely focused on the individual's capacity to comprehend basic health information. HP 2030 expands the definition to include a focus on both personal and organizational health literacy, recognizing health literacy in a systems context with interventions at all levels.

PERSONAL HEALTH LITERACY

Personal 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. Changes from the previous definition include (1) an emphasis on the use of health information and services, (2) a shift from appropriate decisions to *informed* decisions and actions, and (3) inclusion of a public health perspective whereby personal health literacy can be used to promote the health of others.



ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH LITERACY



The adoption of a definition for organizational health literacy signals that personal health literacy is contextual and that organizations play a critical role by making health information and services easy to understand and access. The definition also points out that organizations must be equitable in how they address health literacy.

BENEFITS OF BOTH PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH LITERACY

The HP2030's updated health literacy definition builds on Healthy People's previous health literacy contributions to public health. Both personal and organizational health literacy can have a powerful effect on an individual's health. It can make the difference in understanding a diagnosis, treatment, or recommended lifestyle changes to lead active, healthy lives.



Source: Stephanie Santana; Cindy Brach; Linda Harris; Emmeline Ochiai; Carter Blakey; Frances Bevington; Dushanka Kleinman; Nico Pronk. Updating Health Literacy for Healthy People 2030. *J Public Health Manage Pract.* Published ahead of print, Mar. 12, 2021. doi: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000001324

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