



**ILLINOIS PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
RESOLUTION NO. 5
2022**

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL	
Approved	9/14/2022
Not Approved	
MEMBERSHIP	
Approved	9/21/2022
Not Approved	

Support for Promoting Health Literacy in Illinois

WHEREAS, around 88% of adults living in the US have a level of health literacy that is inadequate for navigating the healthcare system and advocating for their individual health and well-being¹; and,

WHEREAS, compared to adults with proficient health literacy, adults with low health literacy report poor outcomes and health status², experience healthcare costs that are 4 times greater, have 6% more hospital visits, and an average of 2-day longer hospital stays³; and,

WHEREAS, limited health literacy poses a high financial and social burden, resulting in over 1 million unnecessary hospital visits, and an additional \$25 billion in healthcare spending annually⁴; and,

WHEREAS, low digital health literacy was a direct contributor to the spread of online misinformation related to COVID-19⁵, and caused people to decline vaccination, reject public health measures, and seek the use of unproven treatments⁶; and,

WHEREAS, low-income patients seeking multilingual health information reported negative experiences and limited health literacy due to inaccessible materials and preferred language accommodations⁷; and,

WHEREAS, the level of health literacy influences the management of communication within the healthcare system, and that higher levels of health literacy among providers is positively associated with attitudes toward health literacy promotion and the use of communication techniques⁸; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA), as a public health leader in Illinois, will:

1. Support the development and dissemination of materials for both patient and provider education that is accurate, accessible, and actionable.
2. Advocate in favor of awareness of health literacy and its implications on the health of Illinois residents.
3. Encourage Public Health Departments to develop communication materials that promote health literacy.

References

1. Lopez, C., Kim, B., & Sacks, K. (2022). *Health Literacy in the United States: Enhancing Assessments and Reducing Disparities*. Milken Institute.
https://milkeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Health_Literacy_United_States_Final_Report.pdf
 2. Devraj, R., & Gupchup, G. V. (2012). Knowledge of and barriers to health literacy in Illinois. *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association: JAPhA*, 52(6), e183–e193.
<https://doi.org/10.1331/JAPhA.2012.12011>
 3. Center for Health Care Strategies. (2013). *What is health literacy?* [Fact sheet]. Retrieved from https://www.chcs.org/media/What_is_Health_Literacy.pdf
 4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (May 21, 2021). Talking points about health literacy. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/shareinteract/TellOthers.html>
 5. Bin Naeem, S., & Kamel Boulos, M. N. (2021). COVID-19 Misinformation Online and Health Literacy: A Brief Overview. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(15), 8091. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18158091>
 6. Office of the Surgeon General (OSG). (2021). *Confronting Health Misinformation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on Building a Healthy Information Environment*. US Department of Health and Human Services.
<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-misinformation-advisory.pdf>
 7. Chu, J. N., Sarkar, U., Rivadeneira, N. A., Hiatt, R. A., & Khoong, E. C. (2022). Impact of language preference and health literacy on health information-seeking experiences among a low-income, multilingual cohort. *Patient education and counseling*, 105(5), 1268–1275. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2021.08.028>
- Mor-Anavy, S., Lev-Ari, S., & Levin-Zamir, D. (2021). Health Literacy, Primary Care Health Care Providers, and Communication. *Health literacy research and practice*, 5(3), e194–e200.
<https://doi.org/10.3928/24748307-20210529-01>