



Organizational Health Literacy Toolkit

What is this Toolkit?

This is a toolkit of linked resources for organizations looking to make changes to improve the accessibility, understandability, and use of their health information and services by their end users (patients or clients). Each resource or tool has a description and an example of why you would want to use it.

Who is the Toolkit For?

The toolkit can be used by both clinical and non-clinical organizations. Many people have more trust with their community organizations and social service agencies than with traditional health care and prefer to use them for their basic health education needs. Health Conianza's Pledge Program has demonstrated that these resources are applicable to any organization that aims to educate its clients on health. All organizations have a responsibility to critically self-evaluate for needed health literacy improvements. Making this effort helps increase health equity in our community.

Questions?

If you have questions about any of the resources listed here, please email Confianza@uthscsa.edu.

Category	Resource/Tool	Brief Description	What it Provides	Example
Readability of Materials (What grade level is your text and is it written in plain language?)	Health Literacy Advisor *This is the only listed tool that has a cost. Health Conianza has a subscription and may be able to assist you.	Software tool for Microsoft Word to assess and improve readability of documents.	Text readability, plain language suggestions, a style guide	You want to make sure your handout is in plain language.

	SMOG Readability Formula	A formula that scores text based on the complexity of its sentences and words. It estimates the years of education a person needs to understand a piece of writing.	Grade level of material	You want to score an entire text or a random passage to determine the grade level required to read it. Here is an example of how to do a calculation .
Understandability / Actionability of Materials (Can the end user successfully use your materials to take an action?)	Clear Communication Index	A tool from the CDC that helps you develop and assess public communication materials based on a set of 20 scored items.	Score of the clarity of your communication product	You want to encourage people to get a flu shot and want to make sure that your message to the public is effective.
	Federal Plain Language Guidelines	Official guidelines from The Plain Writing Act of 2010 that requires that federal agencies use clear communication that the public can understand and use.	Guidelines on how to write clearly	You want to make sure your agency is adhering to plain language best practices so that users can find, understand, and use your information
	Health Literacy Online	These are guidelines from the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion to develop easy-to-understand websites and mobile devices.	Recommendations on how to create online health content	You want to work with your website administrator to ensure your organization's website can most effectively be understood and used by your clients.
	PEMAT (Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool)	A guide from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) that uses a systematic method to evaluate and compare the	An understandability score and an actionability score of materials	You need to choose from several patient education materials your agency will distribute on childhood vaccination. You want help deciding which are

		understandability and actionability of patient education materials. The website offers an Excel scoring form.		the easiest to understand and act upon.
	Simply Put	A guide from the CDC for strategies that transform complicated scientific and technical information into communication that your audience can understand and use. Covers design, visuals, readability, and more.	Practical steps to organize information and use language and visuals	You need help developing a fact sheet about COVID-19 transmission that is organized, clear and relatable to the reader.
Organizational Health Literacy Self-Assessment (What tools can your organization use to self-assess for current health literacy practices?)	Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit	A toolkit from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) of resources to help an organization make health literacy improvement in 5 areas through concrete actions.	23 tools with concrete actions and 40 resources to make organizational health literacy improvements	Your primary care practice is seeking to get started with identifying areas for health-literacy related improvement and begins with these actions .
	HLE2: The Health Literacy Environment of Hospitals and Health Centers	This is a health literacy self-assessment tool for identifying an organization's facilitators and barriers to information, care, and services in 5 areas. While it was created for health care agencies, it can be used by any organization that	Self-assessment scores in 5 areas of an organization (policy, practice, communication, navigation, and culture)	Your organization wants to score itself in the areas of policies, practices, navigation, culture and language, and communication.

		provides some amount of health education and/or services.		
	The Health Literacy Environment Activity Packet: First Impressions and Walking Interview	This tool focuses specifically on the navigation of facilities. It evaluates first impressions such as requesting directions by calling the main number and physical navigation through a walking interview.	An observation checklist to evaluate the ease of navigation at a facility	You would like to engage volunteers to objectively review your facility's navigability using this checklist.
Practice Change (What are some resources that will help your organization make actionable changes for improving health literacy?)	Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit	A toolkit from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) of resources to help an organization make health literacy improvement in 5 areas through concrete actions.	23 tools with concrete actions and 40 resources to make organizational health literacy improvements	Your practice would like to implement a set of concrete actions for achieving change, such as addressing language differences and making referrals easy.
	Building Health Literate Organizations	This guidebook describes how to make organizational change based on the Ten Attributes of a Health Literate Organization .	A resource guide describing how to make health literacy organization changes with a case study	Your organizational team that is planning organizational health literacy change wants a guidebook that takes them through a step-by-step process.
	National CLAS Standards	The US Dept. of Health & Human Services has developed 15 action steps as a blueprint to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate	15 action steps towards achieving cultural and linguistics standards in health	Your organization wants to implement federally recognized culture and language standards to ensure it is providing

		services. The goal of these actions are to reduce health disparities and advance health equity.		equitable, responsive, and respectful care.
	Making Health Literacy Real	The CDC created this easy-to-use template to help organizations plan changes to improve health literacy.	A fill-in-the blank template of an organizational health literacy plan	Your organization wants an actionable template to create its Organizational Health Literacy Plan with goals and objectives.
	Questions Are the Answer	The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) developed a public campaign to improve patient engagement in healthcare by encouraging questions with understanding.	A multimedia campaign for patient engagement with an app, videos, handouts and more.	Your organization is looking for a ready-to-implement health literacy campaign to promote better engagement by patients and clients with your services.
	Ten Attributes of Health Literate Health Care Organizations	A 2012 National Academies Roundtable identified 10 attributes of a health literate health care organization. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) had coupled these attributes with specific resources.	List of the Ten Attributes of a Health Literate Organization with resources to help achieve each attribute	Your organization wants to set goals for becoming a more health literate organization that are based on national recommendations.
Policy (What are policy guides and recommendations that can support your health literacy case?)	Health Literacy in the United States: Enhancing Assessments and Reducing Disparities	This 2022 report by the Milken Institute describes the state of health literacy in the US, identifies policy priority	A PDF report of health literacy in the US with specific policy recommendations	You want a recent report to share with your stakeholders that provides policy recommendations.

		areas, and provides recommendations.		
	Healthy People 2030	The US Dept. of Health & Human Services sets these public health decade milestones for the nation. For the first time in 2030, organizational health literacy was defined, emphasizing the role organizations and systems have in addressing health literacy.	A list and explanation of the nation's health literacy objectives to be achieved by 2030	Your organization wants to align its specific health literacy objectives with national objectives.
	National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy	The US Dept. of Health & Human Services issued this report in 2010 as a national call to improve health literacy, particularly through actions by organizations and professions.	A PDF report of health literacy in the US with seven goals for improving health literacy and strategies to achieve them	You want to refer to the sentinel report that first described the responsibility of organizations and systems in improving health literacy.

Be able to print out this chart as a PDF.