



Attributes of a Health Literate Health Care Organization



LEADERSHIP PROMOTES
Has leadership that makes health literacy integral to its mission, structure, and operations.

PLANS, EVALUATES AND IMPROVES
Integrates health literacy into planning, evaluation measures, patient safety, and quality improvement.



PREPARES WORKFORCE
Prepares the workforce to be health literate and monitors progress.

INCLUDES CONSUMERS
Includes populations served in the design, implementation, and evaluation of health information and services.

MEETS EVERYONE'S NEEDS
Meets the needs of populations with a range of health literacy skills while avoiding stigmatization.



ENSURES EASY ACCESS
Provides easy access to health information and services and navigation assistance.

DESIGNS EASY-TO-USE MATERIALS
Designs and distributes print, audiovisual, and social media content that is easy to understand and act on.

COMMUNICATES EFFECTIVELY
Uses health literacy strategies in interpersonal communications and confirms understanding at all points of contact.

TARGETS HIGH RISK
Addresses health literacy in high-risk situations, including care and modality transitions and communications about medicines.

EXPLAINS COVERAGE AND COSTS
Communicates clearly what health plans cover and what individuals will have to pay for services.

Attributes of a Health Literate Health Care Organization

- 1. Has leadership that makes health literacy integral to its mission, structure, and operations.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Dialysis organization leadership makes health literacy an organizational value that extends beyond initiating a few projects that address health literacy. Leadership puts in place health literacy champions to help facilitate health literacy on every level of the organization, including on the dialysis clinic level.
- 2. Integrates health literacy into planning, evaluation measures, patient safety, and quality improvement.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Ensure that all patient assessments, surveys, and evaluations are designed to be easily understood and easy to complete. Couple health literacy efforts with other organizational priorities, such as advancing health equity.

Conduct organizational- and facility-level (i.e., in-center hemodialysis setting, chronic kidney disease clinic, home dialysis clinic, etc.) assessment of the environment/setting.
- 3. Prepares the workforce to be health literate and monitors progress.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Dialysis organization acknowledges that all staff, not just those who provide frontline patient care, needs health literacy training. Dialysis organization promotes widespread, evidence-based training that supports a culture of effective communication. Dialysis clinics identify and collaborate with patient representatives and subject matter experts who can act as mentors, speakers, and trainers.
- 4. Includes populations served in the design, implementation, and evaluation of health information and services.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Include patients that represent or have experience with each modality who can serve on governing bodies. Establish patient advisory committees.
- 5. Meets the needs of populations with a range of health literacy skills while avoiding stigmatization.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Dialysis clinic limits the amount of print materials on the lobby/clinic bulletin boards. The dialysis clinic intentionally creates an environment that is welcoming of those with limited health literacy and general literacy, and does not impose high literacy demands on patients. Employs appropriate technology and innovations to overcome barriers faced by patients with limited health literacy.
- 6. Uses health literacy strategies in interpersonal communications and confirms understanding at all points of contact.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Be aware of, ask about, and accommodate different communication preferences and learning styles. For example, employing different methods for communicating lab results, screening patients for mental health concerns, or engaging patients in quality assessment and performance improvement process (QAPI) meetings. Help patients identify their learning style: [Learning Style Assessment](#). Utilize interpreter services when dialysis staff does not have documented proficiency in the patient's preferred language. Treat communication failures as patient safety issues.
- 7. Provides easy access to health information and services and navigation assistance.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Do not solely rely on patients to relay information among care providers; have a standardize process in place for communicating with other providers. Supply navigators and peer mentors at the facility-level. Assist with referrals, track referrals, and follow-up to completion.
- 8. Designs and distributes print, audiovisual, and social media content that is easy to understand and act on.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Use tools that assist in developing easy-to-understand print and online health materials, such as:
 - [Toolkit for Making Written Material Clear and Effective](#) (CMS, 2021);
 - [Health Literacy Online: A Guide to Writing and Designing Easy-to-use Health Websites](#) (HHS, 2010);
 - [Simply Put: A Guide for Creating Easy-to-Understand Materials](#) (CDC, 2009)
 - [Accessible Health Information Technology \(Health IT\) for Populations with Limited Literacy: A Guide for Developers and Purchasers of Health IT](#) (Eichner and Dullabh, 2007); and
 - [Clear & Simple: Developing Effective Print Materials for Low-literate Readers](#) (NIH, 2021).
- 9. Addresses health literacy in high-risk situations, including care and modality transitions and communications about medicines.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Engaging and educating patients and their families and confirming understanding throughout their continuum of care—pre-dialysis, dialysis, transplant, post-transplant, keeping them engaged and informed with easy-to-understand materials about all modalities, including conservative management for kidney failure, and instructions for person-centered care unique to the individual and aligned with the patient's health and lifestyle goals.
- 10. Communicates clearly what health plans cover and what individuals will have to pay for services.**
 - » **Attribute in Action in the Dialysis Setting** - Effectively communicate costs of care to patient/family in advance. Staff is familiar with and take into consideration insurance coverage that affects the cost of medicine, transplant, home dialysis materials, etc. (Brach et al., 2012)

For more details on each attribute please visit: https://nam.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/BPH_Ten_HLit_Attributes.pdf