Developing Health Literate Materials

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Continuing Education

• To complete the course, the learner must:
  – Watch the 60-minute webinar (live or recorded)
  – Complete evaluation & reflective questions

• After this course, the learner will:
  – Identify three (3) written communication patient barriers
  – Describe at least three (3) best practices to create or evaluate written patient education
  – Explain how to check written patient materials for readability levels
Continuing Education

• Nursing approved for 1.25 contact hours
  – Quality Insights is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation

• Social work
  – The Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners has approved Quality Insights Renal Network 5 to extend continuing education credit to participants who meet attendance requirements in the Network 5 region (Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, DC) and certifies that this program meets the criteria for 1 credit hour of Category I continuing education credit for social workers in the Network 5 region.
    • Participants must attend 100% of the entire event and be licensed in the Network 5 region.
    • Social work continuing education credits for regions outside of the Network 5 area have not been approved.
Continuing Education

• Also accepted for Certified Patient Care Technicians’ (CPTCs) and Certified Hemodialysis Technicians’ certificates
• Other disciplines can check their State Board to see if they accept ANCC credits
• Quality Insights has no further disclosures.
Definitions

• Health literacy requires a variety of types of literacy skills.

  – **Written Literacy**
    • Understanding, evaluating, using, and engaging with written text to participate in the society, to achieve one’s goals and to develop one’s knowledge and potential (CDC, 2019).

  – **Numeracy**
    • The ability to access, use, interpret, and communicate mathematical information and ideas, to engage in and manage mathematical demands of a range of situations in adult life (CDC, 2019).

  – **Digital Literacy**
    • The ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills American Library Association (ALA).
Readability of Written Patient Materials

• Comprehensive patient education is necessary for shared decision-making.
  – Patients use verbal conversations with providers AND published materials to enhance their understanding.
  – Research study
    • Mean readability grade levels ranged from 11\textsuperscript{th} to 13\textsuperscript{th} grade levels
    • 2.1\% materials were at sixth grade reading level
    • 8.2\% materials were at eighth grade level

Rooney, et al., 2021
Common Written Documentation Issues

• Too much information
• Paragraphs and multiple pages
• Not focused
• Reading level is high
• Medical jargon or scientific words
• Patients are overwhelmed or lose interest
• Confusing information
First Glance – What Issues Do You See?

High Blood Pressure & Kidney Disease

What is high blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against blood vessel walls as the heart pumps out blood, and high blood pressure, also called hypertension, is an increase in the amount of force that blood places on blood vessels as it moves through the body. Factors that can increase this force include higher blood volume due to extra fluid in the blood and blood vessels that are narrow, stiff, or clogged.

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against blood vessel walls as the heart pumps out blood.

Blood pressure test results are written with two numbers separated by a slash. For example, a health care provider will write a blood pressure result as 120/80. A health care provider will say this blood pressure result as “120 over 80.” The top number is called the systolic pressure and represents the pressure as the heart beats and pushes blood through the blood vessels. The bottom number is called the diastolic pressure and represents the pressure as blood vessels relax between heartbeats.

Most people without chronic health conditions have a normal blood pressure if it stays below 120/80. Prehypertension is a systolic pressure of 120 to 139 or a diastolic pressure of 80 to 89.

Urine Tests

Dipstick test for albumin. A dipstick test performed on a urine sample can detect the presence of albumin in the urine. Albumin is a protein in the blood that can pass into the urine when the kidneys are damaged. A patient collects the urine sample in a special container in a health care provider’s office or a commercial facility. The office or facility tests the sample onsite or sends it to a lab for analysis. For the test, a nurse or technician places a strip of chemically treated paper, called a dipstick, into the urine. Patches on the dipstick change color when blood or protein is present in urine.

Urine albumin-to-creatinine ratio. A health care provider uses the albumin and creatinine measurement to determine the ratio between the albumin and creatinine in the urine. Creatinine is a waste product in the blood that is filtered in the kidneys and excreted in the urine. A urine albumin-to-creatinine ratio above 30 mg/g may be a sign of kidney disease.

Blood Test

A blood test involves having blood drawn at a health care provider’s office or a commercial facility and sending the sample to a lab for analysis. A health care provider may order a blood test to estimate how much blood the kidneys filter each minute, called the estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR). The results of the test indicate the following:

- eGFR of 60 or above is in the normal range
- eGFR below 60 may indicate kidney damage
- eGFR of 15 or below may indicate kidney failure

Get Screened for Kidney Disease

Kidney disease, when found early, can be treated to prevent more serious disease and other complications. The National Kidney Foundation recommends people with high blood pressure receive the following regular screenings:

- blood pressure tests
- urine albumin
- eGFR

Health care providers will help determine how often people with high blood pressure should be screened.
Where to start?

• Use the checklist handout
• Limit the number of messages (3-4 per document)
  – Needs to know and do
  – One message at a time
  – Short long lists (3-7 items) with bullets
• Write text that you want on the handout in Word
Another Example

Understanding your lab values

Albumin and normalized protein nitrogen appearance (nPNA) are measures of your nutritional health. They tell whether you are getting enough protein and calories from your diet.

Average daily weight gain is the amount of fluid weight you gain each day between dialysis treatments. If you do not follow your fluid and salt limits between treatments, you may gain too much fluid weight.

Calcium and phosphorus are two minerals that are important for bone health. If they get out of balance, the parathyroid glands start making more PTH. High PTH can lead to loss of calcium from the bones, and increased risk of heart and blood vessel disease.

Glomerular filtration rate (GFR) is an estimate of how well your kidneys are working. Your GFR can be estimated from a math equation using the results of your blood creatinine test, your age, gender, and race.

Hemoglobin is the part of red blood cells that carries oxygen to your tissues. If your number is too low, you have anemia, and you will need to take one or more medicines to raise the red blood cell level in your body.
Next Steps

• Edit out unnecessary information
• Provide the most important information first
• Keep it short
• Be consistent with words
Keep Editing

• Identify words that are polysyllable words (3 or more) and try to replace if possible
  – Med-i-ca-tions
  – Hemo-di-al-y-sis & Di-al-y-sis
  – Rec-om-men-da-tion & Rec-om-men-ded
  – Phy-si-cian & Prac-ti-tion-er
Words Matter

• Show respect and value (don’t preach)
• Tell the patient what they will gain from understanding and using the materials
• Use conversational vs. formal written language
• State actions the patient needs to do
  – Use active voice
  – Focus on the positive vs. negative
  – Offer small, practical steps, or examples
Be Cautious…

- Avoid unnecessary abbreviations or acronyms
- Limit medical jargon or scientific language
- Curb the use of symbols
- Avoid use of statistics (use words like “half”)

More than 1 in 7
15% of US adults are estimated to have chronic kidney disease, that is about 37 million people.
More Editing

• Edit the text in Word without images or design
• Check readability level
• Edit again and check readability level
Readability Assessments

• Formulas calculate score of reading or grade levels
  – Key areas are syllables, length of sentences
  – Many score by U.S. school grades

• Numerous **free key tools** for assessing reading level
  – Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (U.S. school grade levels)
  – Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease
  – Simple Measures of Gobbledygook (SMOG) Index
Flesch-Kincaid

• Microsoft Word option
  – Must initially set the feature
    • Click on “File” tab
    • Locate Word “Options” button
    • Click on “Proofing”
    • Check the option for “Show readability statistics” & click OK
  – To check scoring, run “Spell Check” and at the end a report will be provided
Flesch-Kincaid

- **Reading Ease**
  - 90-100: Very Easy
  - 80-89: Easy
  - 70-79: Fairly Easy
  - 60-69: Standard
  - 50-59: Fairly Difficult
  - 30-49: Difficult
  - 0-29: Very Confusing

- **Grade Level**
  - Aim for 5th-6th grade
SMOG

- SMOG Conversion Table
- Free online tools
  - Drop plain text or file into the tool and auto calculate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Polysyllabic Word Count</th>
<th>Approximate Grade Level (+1.5 Grades)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
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<td>21 - 30</td>
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<td>31 - 42</td>
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<td>183 - 210</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211 - 240</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next Steps

• Edit to the appropriate grade level
• Choose font, paper color
• Add appropriate images or design
• Test with applicable patients
Visual Considerations

• Appropriate punctuation
• Subtitles or headers if using a lot of text
• Boxes or sections
• Dark letters on light colored paper
• White space
• Meaningful pictures/images
  – Culturally appropriate
What looks good with this handout?

**Patients with Catheters**

**TIP 1**
Catheters have a higher risk of infection. Ask your doctor about getting a fistula or graft instead.

**TIP 2**
Learn how to take care of the catheter at home. Do not get it wet.

**TIP 3**
Wash your hands often, especially before and after dialysis treatment.

**TIP 4**
Know the steps your healthcare providers should take when using the catheter for treatment.

**TIP 5**
Know the signs and symptoms of infection and what to do if you think you might have an infection.

**TIP 6**
Know what to do if you have any problem with the catheter.
Let’s Talk Fonts

• Font size (12-14 points)
• Font style
  – Serif fonts are best
  – Times New Roman, Cambria, Garamond, Georgia, plus more
• **Bold type** to emphasize key words or phrases
  – Limit *italics* or **underlining**
  – Avoid ALL CAPS
How are these fonts?
Review with Health Literacy Lens

• Test with applicable patients
• Edit as needed
Do you need translation versions?
Translation Tips

• Use culturally appropriate pictures
• Select your translator carefully
  – Use a certified medical translation organization
  – Don’t use free online translation applications to translate your documents
• Check the translated material
  – Use back-translation
    • Pass the translated material through an online application to see how it translates back to English
  – Test materials with appropriate patients
Search for Health Literate Tools
What could be improved?
Summary

• Less is best
• Lead with most important message
• **Edit – Edit – Edit**
• Check readability level
• Fonts matter
• Test it
• Translate
Resources

• Advancing Health Literacy in the Kidney Disease Community course (Quality Insights)

• Handouts:
  – Checklist for Promoting Health Literacy and Guidelines for Written Materials
  – Resource Handout
References

• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). Health literacy basics.
• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Health literacy resources.
• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Health literacy website.
Evaluation

• Developing Health Literate Materials: A How-to Guide
  – Evaluation: 
    [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WPC9CRB](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WPC9CRB)
  – Copy link after submitting survey to get your certificate with continuing education credits.
Questions?

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Thank you.