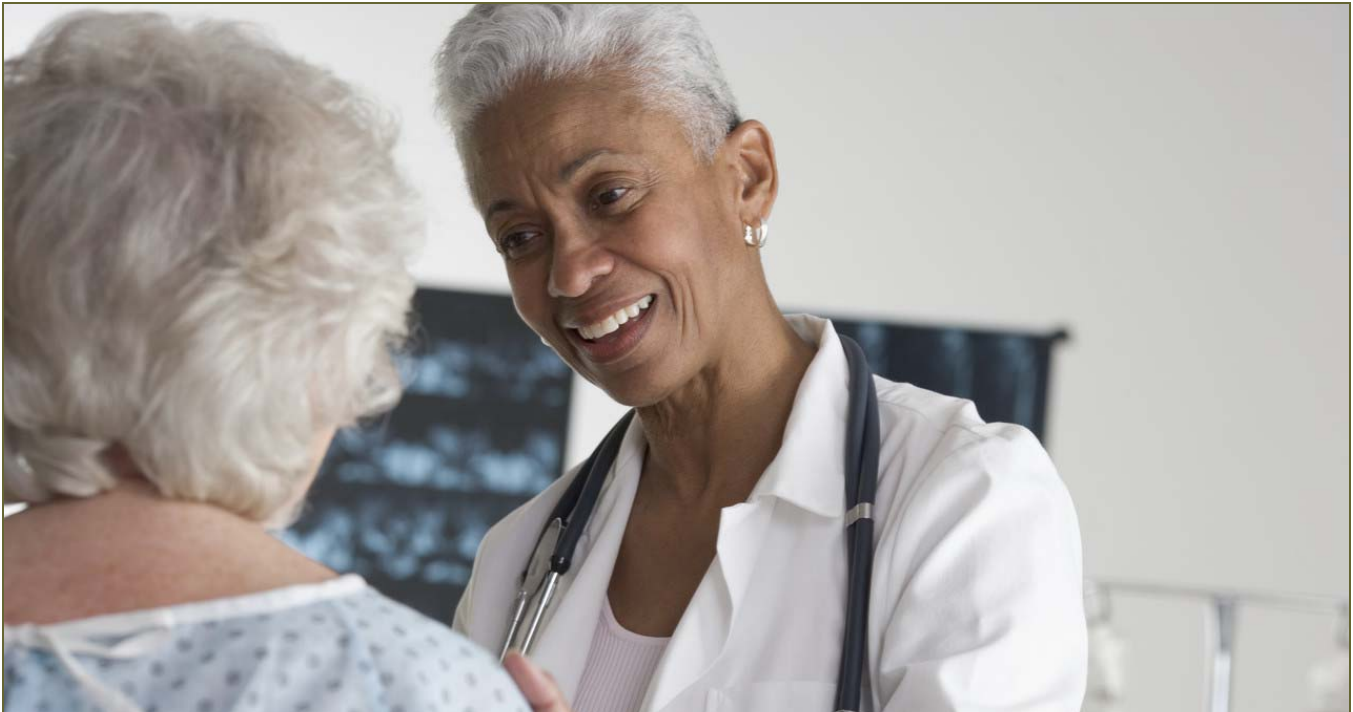




Program Guide



"I found the workshops most interesting and helpful. [I] have incorporated some of the ideas ... during ... visits to my medical facility. The computer sessions had lots of good sources which I have also used. All in all a very worth-while experience. Thank You."

HeLP MN Seniors
Workshop Participant

Welcome

The Health Literacy Program for Minnesota Seniors (HeLP MN Seniors) is a two-part workshop series that teaches older adults how to communicate with their health care providers and find good health information. This program guide will provide you with everything you need to know for implementing the program in your own community.

All of the workshop program materials are freely available online. Look for them on the Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership website at:
<http://www.healthliteracymn.org/resources/help-mn-seniors>.

We look forward to helping you improve the health literacy skills of seniors!

Seniors & Health Literacy

Seniors are an especially vulnerable population when it comes to health literacy.

- There are currently over 36 million adults age 65 and older living in the United States (1).
- This age group represents 13% of the U.S. population but accounts for nearly 35% of all hospital stays, 34% of all prescription medication use, and 30% of all over-the-counter medication use (2, 3).
- Limited health literacy in older adults has been associated with a 2-fold risk of death, even after adjusting for demographics, socioeconomic, and other factors (4).
- According to the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy from the U.S. Department of Education, adults in the oldest age group - 65 and older - had lower average health literacy than adults in younger age groups, with only 3% at the proficient level (5).

This means that the population group with the highest prevalence of chronic disease and the greatest need for healthcare has the least ability to obtain and comprehend information needed to maintain their health (6).

Health Literacy Program for Minnesota Seniors (HeLP MN Seniors)

HeLP MN Seniors is a joint project between the University of Minnesota Health Sciences Libraries and the Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership. Through the work of a multi-disciplinary team of health sciences librarians, health literacy specialists, public health professionals, and senior care specialists, the HeLP MN Seniors project has created an evidence-based program aimed at building capacity and enhancing efforts to improve the health literacy status of older adults. This was done through the development of a two-part workshop series focusing on clear communications with healthcare providers and seeking health information on the Internet. The workshops were pilot-tested with residents of a senior living community. These pilot workshops incorporated structured evaluation measures including needs assessment focus groups, intervention (workshop) assessment pre-tests and post-tests, and an outcomes assessment survey. The findings of the evaluation activities were used to customize the training materials and inform the development of an evidence-based workshop program. The health literacy workshop program is available for use by anyone interested in improving health outcomes for older adults through health literacy initiatives.

Assessment & Evaluation Materials

HeLP MN Seniors workshop materials can be used as provided with no changes to content. Instructors wishing to customize the materials for a specific audience are encouraged to use the needs assessment focus group guiding questions and the outcomes assessment survey. Here are a few guidelines to help you in the process.

Before you begin any evaluation activities, remember that if you plan on reporting your research findings at conferences or in published literature, you will need prior approval from your institutional review board, or IRB.

Needs Assessment Focus Group Guiding Questions: To tailor the workshops to your audience, you must first know what their needs are. Focus groups (guided conversations) are a good way to gather information about the needs and interests of your intended audience. Two needs assessment focus groups were

conducted to develop HeLP MN Seniors workshop materials, but each audience is different. If you decide you want to learn more about the specific needs of your audience, use the Needs Assessment Focus Group Guiding Questions as a starting point. As you prepare and conduct the focus groups, keep the following suggestions in mind:

- You should have no more than 10 participants in each focus group.
- Focus groups should not last much more than 1 hour.
- The total number of focus group participants should be proportional to the number of people you anticipate at your workshops. If you expect around 50 participants, 1 focus group of 8-10 people would be perfect.
- Recording the conversation will help you review the content at a later date and will help facilitators make the most of their time with the focus group participants.
- It is helpful to have two people facilitate a focus group. One person can manage the conversation while the other takes notes, helps with the audio recording, and provides general assistance as needed.
- Make sure you direct the conversation to answer your questions. It is very easy to get off-topic. The Guiding Questions provided as part of the assessment and evaluation materials will help you with this.

Outcomes Assessment Survey: After you present the HeLP MN Seniors workshops, you might be interested in the impact of the program on your audience. Did it help participants communicate more effectively with their health care providers? Did they learn how to evaluate health information? To answer these and other questions, use the Outcomes Assessment Survey. The findings can be used to refine workshop content. Those choosing to use the survey should keep the following tips in mind:

- You will need a way to distribute the questionnaire to workshop participants – so use a sign-up sheet to collect names and contact information at the workshops.
- Do not wait too long after the workshops to distribute the survey. Memories fade fast!
- Set a response deadline to get the information you need in a timely manner.

- Make it as easy as possible for participants to return completed questionnaires. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes might be appreciated.

Workshop Materials

Two, 1.5 hour workshops were developed as part of the HeLP MN Seniors program. One workshop focuses on communicating effectively with healthcare providers. The other workshop focuses on finding reliable and accurate online health information. Each of the workshops incorporates sound health literacy principles and has been pilot-tested for use with older adults. Materials for each workshop include:

- 1) The workshop presentation with speaker notes
- 2) A pre-test to assess baseline knowledge and experience of participants
- 3) A post-test to test to assess knowledge gained
- 4) A handout for participants
- 5) A promotional flyer template

The workshop on finding accurate online health information also includes a Demonstration Guide to assist instructors as they teach participants how to effectively use the 3 websites highlighted in the presentation.

In addition to the workshop materials, we recommend the following equipment:

- A computer with a web browser and Microsoft PowerPoint.
- A high-speed Internet connection.
- A computer lab with a high-speed Internet connection. This equipment is only recommended for the workshop on finding online health information and is not a requirement. Participants can also watch instructor-led demonstrations if a computer lab is not available.

Here are some helpful tips as you prepare to teach the workshops:

- If you are working with partner organizations to deliver the workshops, make sure you collaborate with them as you promote the workshops. They will know the best way to reach their audience.

- Read through the speaker notes that are included in the notes field of each workshop presentation.
- For the workshop on finding reliable online health information, spend some time with each of the 3 featured websites before you present the information. The Demonstration Guide will help you get started.
- Keep in mind that the pre-test and post-test are optional. If you choose to use these tools to help refine workshop content or evaluate workshop success, make sure you schedule time for this activity.

If you adjust any of the workshop content, please follow the guidelines below:

- To assist participants with poor vision, make sure you use 14 point font, or larger.
- Use simple language. You should have the goal of creating materials at an 8th grade reading level, or lower (6th grade is best). There are many online tools to help you test the reading level of your materials.
- Pilot-testing showed that it took participants a long time to answer multiple-choice questions. If you choose to revise the pre- and post-tests, keep multiple-choice questions to a minimum so you do not lose valuable teaching time.

Contact Information

We would love to hear about your experiences with the HeLP MN Seniors workshop program. Please share your success stories or send feedback to help us continue to improve the materials. Click “Contact Us” on the Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership website (<http://www.healthliteracymn.org>), or use the contact information on the site’s HeLP MN Seniors web page.

Attribution & Copyright Statement

You might be wondering why we included an attribution and copyright statement on all of the program materials. We at the Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership and the University of Minnesota Health Sciences Libraries are proud of the work

we have done to create our evidence-based health literacy program for seniors. We also want to share our success by encouraging others to use our materials.

You are welcome to explore, use, refine, or change any of the materials for your own use. We only ask that you share your materials in the same way and that you let others know where you found the original information so they can do the same. Here is an example citation for this program guide:

Aspinall, Erinn. Health Literacy Program for Minnesota Seniors: Program Guide [Internet]. University of Minnesota Health Sciences Libraries/Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership. November 2010 [cited 9 Nov 2010]. Available online at: http://www.healthliteracymn.org/downloads/TrainingGuide_ProgramGuide.pdf.

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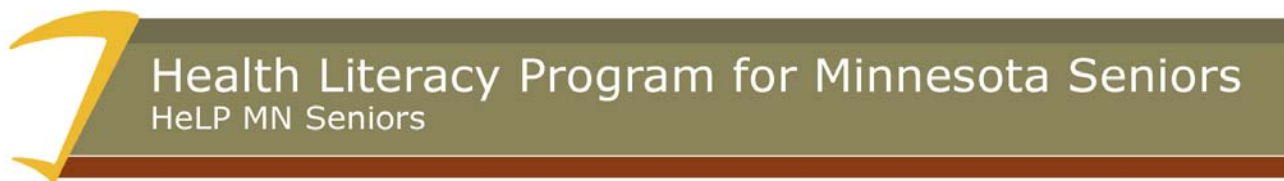
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Additional health literacy resources are available from the Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership
Website at: <http://www.healthliteracymn.org>

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