The presentation outlined three steps to successful organizational change:

1. Demonstrate the importance of health literacy to leaders. Statistics – for example 75% of patients with poor health also tested in the below-basic health literacy category* – can be powerful.

2. Make the business and regulatory case for health literacy. Laws and regulations support integrating health literacy best practices because it can protect organizations from lawsuits. In fact, four of the top ten reasons for malpractice are related to poor communication.**

3. Provide leaders with actionable, measurable steps to improve health literacy. For instance, recommend creating a community or patient advisory council to conduct a health literacy assessment of your organization’s existing practices.

**The top 10 reasons physicians are sued for malpractice,” ProAssurance Corp.
Tools for health literacy

The theme of this year’s Minnesota Health Literacy Best Practices Conference was “Tools for the Health Care Practice.”

Throughout the day, speakers shared different approaches and resources that attendees can use in their health literacy efforts. Here’s a look at some of the resources shared.

Action Plan
During her welcome, Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership Chair Alisha Odhiambo, MA, LMFT, shared information about the Minnesota Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy. This plan includes statistics on health literacy rates and six key priorities to improve health literacy in the state.

Teach-back
Genelle R. S. Lamont, PhD, MPH, of the Minnesota Department of Health covered health literacy basics and the importance of improving health literacy skills in Minnesota. During her presentation, she explained the patient education method called Teach-back. This is when providers ask patients to repeat in their own words what they need to know or do in a non-shaming way. Teach-back resources are available here.

Ask Me 3®
In the afternoon, Dr. Lamont also led a discussion on patient-friendly medication schedules. During the activity, she explained how the Ask Me 3® program run by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement can be a useful tool. More information on Ask Me 3® is available here.

Ask Me 3® is a registered trademark licensed to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement.

In the Know:
Health literacy news and best practices

Upcoming events

Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership meetings
Minnesota Literacy Council | Saint Paul
(10:30 a.m.-noon, first Wednesday of the month)
- September 4
- October 2
- November 6
- December 4

The Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership website will be updated in case a meeting is canceled or rescheduled.

International Conference on Communication in Healthcare
Academy of Communication in Healthcare and the International Association for Communications in Healthcare | San Diego, CA
- October 27-30

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