



In the Know:

Health literacy news and best practices

May 2018

Health literacy training for dental professionals

Implementing and enhancing educational opportunities for everyone in the health care field is one of the key strategies outlined in the [Minnesota Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy](#).

To help dental professionals, the Minnesota Department of Health's Oral Health Program and Normandale Community College recently provided specialized health literacy training for more than 60 oral health professionals working in underserved communities.

"Dental professionals recognize the importance of health literacy," said Genelle Lamont, Ph.D., MPH, the oral health surveillance coordinator with the Minnesota Department of Health and health literacy and equity consultant for Metro State University and Normandale. "We wanted to create a team-based training program that could fit into their busy schedules and give them practical tips and techniques they can start using immediately."

Genelle visited Hennepin County Medical Center and Children's Dental Services in Minneapolis to deliver on-site training over the lunch hour this spring. The training was developed using the [health literacy resources on the Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership website](#), and it included a presentation, videos, a case study review, and group exercises.

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The training, titled *Health Literacy 101 - Helping your patients understand*, focused on ways dental professionals can use illustrations or teeth demonstration models when giving instructions to patients. It also encouraged providers to ask their patients to "teach back" or repeat instructions back to them, even recommending that they hand the brush or floss to the patient so they can practice in the dentist's office.

The training also included "living room" language provided by the partnership, which Genelle modified to include dental terms. This showed the training participants what dental terminology they could swap out for simple to understand words when talking with patients. Genelle said this activity was a big hit with attendees, "many asked for copies to bring to their offices."

To learn more about the teach-back method and other educational and presentation materials, please visit our [website](#).

Did you know?

- Dental anxiety and oral health literacy are related.*
- The majority of oral health ailments can be avoided by increasing oral health literacy among all populations.**
- Poor oral health literacy is associated with significantly poorer oral health status among children.***

*Shin, Braun, Inglehart and Habil, 2013

**Academy of General Dentistry

***Miller, Lee, DeWalt and Vann, 2010

Health Literacy Out Loud

The "Health Literacy Out Loud" podcast series shares why health literacy matters and practical ways to help improve it. In each episode, host Helen Osborne interviews a health literacy professional, ranging from health communication instructors to public health officials.

Helen is a knowledgeable voice on health literacy efforts. As the founder of [Health Literacy Month](#) and president of [Health Literacy Consulting](#), she presents at conferences across the country and has written several books on the topic, including [Health Literacy from A-Z](#).

Visit the [podcast series website](#) to learn more and listen to the interviews.



Re-imagining informed consent

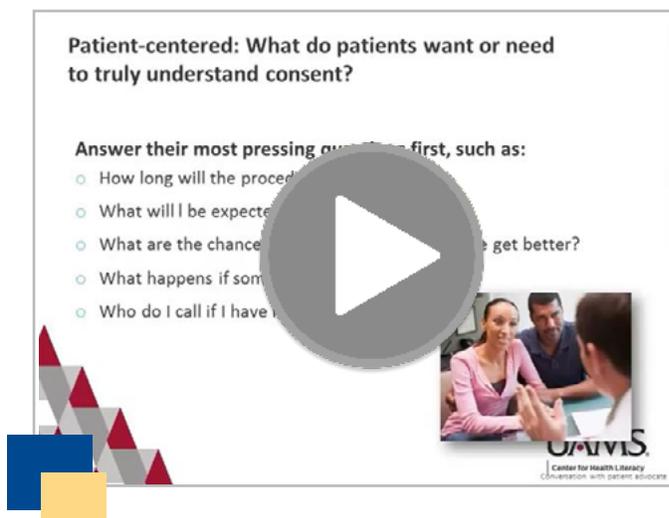
Informed consent and health literacy are closely tied, each helping ensure patients understand and are engaged in their health care. But how can you make sure your informed consent processes are effective and incorporate health literacy practices?

This question is why we collaborated with the Minnesota Alliance for Patient Safety, Hennepin County Medical Center, and Stratis Health to host a webinar on how health literacy can make your informed consent practices more patient-centered.

In this free webinar, Christopher R. Trudeau, JD, of the University of Arkansas, discussed methods to communicate legal and health information through the informed consent process in ways that both engage patients and better protect health organizations.

Informed consent is the process of how a health care provider discloses information to a patient so that they can make an educated choice about their treatment.

The webinar, which is available to [watch online](#), provides valuable tips to assess and integrate health literacy into informed consent processes, from clinical procedures to treatment plans. In fact, of the nearly 100 participants during the original live webinar, more than 90% felt the presentation provided useful content to incorporate into their organization's current processes.



Christopher R. Trudeau leads this free webinar about patient-centered informed consent.

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Upcoming events

Minnesota Health Literacy Partnership meetings

Minnesota Literacy Council | Saint Paul (10:30 a.m.-noon, first Wednesday of the month)

- June 6
- July - *no meeting*
- August 1
- **Mark your calendars: Health literacy month celebration and annual review of Action Plan successes! We encourage all co-sponsors to attend our monthly meeting on October 3.**

The [Minnesota Health Literacy partnership website](#) will be updated in case a meeting is cancelled or rescheduled.

Health Literacy Annual Research Conference

Hilton DoubleTree | Bethesda, MD
• October 22-23

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