
Health Literacy Month 2022: Back to Basics

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Recap of Webinar 2

- Origins of Teach-Back (2003-2010)
- How Teach-Back improves patient understanding of health information
- “Sister” technique: Check-Back



Webinar 3: Plain Language

- What is plain language?
- History of plain language actions and initiatives
- Avoiding medical jargon
- Plain language use and health equity

What is plain language?

- Clear communication that your audience can read or understand the first time they read or see it
- Allows people to find what they need, understand what they find, and act appropriately on that understanding to best meet their needs
- A tool that improves health literacy and health outcomes



History of plain language actions and initiatives

- **1970s:** Presidents Nixon and Carter order Federal government to communicate in easy-to-understand language
- **1984:** “Plain Language” Column in the *Michigan Bar Journal* begins
- **1994:** Plain Language Action and Information Network (PLAIN) launches
- **2006:** Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publishes an alert stating that plain language is a public safety matter
- **2010:** President Obama signs Plain Writing Act of 2010 into law
- **2014:** Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton signs executive order that requires state government to use plain language

Plain language use and health equity

- Using plain language can help advance health equity
- Health equity means that every person has the opportunity to attain their full health potential
 - No one is disadvantaged from achieving their full health potential because of social position or socially-determined circumstances
- Historically disadvantaged groups are more likely to experience barriers when seeking healthcare
 - Plain language can help individuals from disadvantaged groups overcome barriers to healthcare and achieve the highest level of health possible

Up next: Health equity



Equality



Equity