



Coalition Connect

The latest news from the
Utah Health Literacy Coalition

HEALTH LITERACY PERSONAL STORY

The Terror of Change



"I'm on the autism spectrum. It's affected me in many ways throughout my life, especially when it comes to medical matters. I've worn glasses for as long as I can remember and have always looked forward to the possibility of Lasik surgery. I did all the research and prepared myself for the big day. But at the

last-minute plans changed, which threw all my research and preparation out the window. The room was chilly, really chilly, they put me on top of a really high table, and there was a cacophony of noises. It was frightening for my vision to melt before my eyes, and I just started counting to myself, 1,2,3,1,2,3."

Listen to Austin's story on the
Health Literacy Stories podcast



In this newsletter you will find:

Upcoming events, Helpful Tools, UTHLC website survey, Annual Convening info, Health literacy tip, Recent research & Member spotlight. Keep Reading!

Upcoming Events

DAY ON THE HILL

The goal of this event is to provide lawmakers with information and data that show the efficacy of investing in primary and preventive care.

- **Date:** January 17th
- **Time:** 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
- **Location:** Utah State Capitol

Let's get health literacy and language access concerns in front of policymakers! Contact Amber Hall, lead of the policy workgroup.

Amber.Hall@hsc.utah.edu



UTAH HEALTH POLICY PROJECT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This year's conference will focus on the upcoming legislative session and discuss policy opportunities.

- **Date:** January 9th
- **Time:** 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- **Location:** Utah Cultural Celebration Center



HEALTHCARE STORIES: PROMISE

At the 6th annual storytelling event community members share personal stories about health and healthcare.

- **Date:** February 1st
- **Time:** 7:00 PM
- **Location:** Kingsbury Hall

Helpful Tools



Check out these helpful tools for improving health literacy

OPHELIA process



Optimizing Health Literacy and Access (OPHELIA) process facilitates improvements to health and equity by optimizing the health literacy of people and organizations and maximizing access to health information and services by all.

The CDC Clear Communication Index

is a research-based tool to help you develop and assess public communication materials.



Choosing the Right Care

From U of U Health, these videos demonstrate the differences between the Emergency Department (ED), Urgent Care (UC), and Primary Care in 17 languages, including English.



Source: YouTube U of U Health

And the survey says...



74

people responded to
the survey

Members of the Utah Health Literacy Coalition (UTHLC) gathered in the summer of 2023 to discuss the preliminary goal, scope, target audience, and proposed content for the coalition website.

- **Goal:** Move health literacy forward in Utah by increasing understanding and empowering decisions.
- **Scope:** How to understand information about a topic, NOT to provide information about topics.
- **Audience:** Professionals and community members seeking UT health literacy resources

The group brainstormed questions the audience may seek, that could lead them to the UTHLC website. These questions guided the development of a survey distributed to frontline professionals likely to receive health-related questions.

These survey findings will help in the development of the UTHLC website.

The most common health-related questions respondents receive from people they serve:

- *How do I apply for benefits?*
- *How do I apply for Medicaid?*
- *Where can I find free food?*
- *How much does this cost?*
- *Is this available in languages other than English?*

The most common organizational processes for deciding what documents need translation:

- *frequently requested or commonly used documents*
- *leadership or committee*

In an open-ended question, respondents shared how people get and use information. There were four common themes in responses:

- *Things to consider (for the website and health literacy in general)*
- *Services at the library*
- *Translation and interpretation - needs and understanding*
- *Navigating and understanding systems - information, insurance, healthcare, etc.*

THE FULL REPORT IS AVAILABLE ON THE COALITION [GOOGLE DRIVE](#)

2nd Annual UTHLC Convening

New year, New format

We propose that for 2024, the coalition meet monthly to discuss, work within, and learn about the three coalition focus areas to work toward goals, improve engagement, and increase health literacy skills and knowledge. Groups at the Convening brainstormed the following ideas:

Policy development

- Language Access
- ADA
- Readability/usability content levels
- Telehealth expansion to libraries
- Wi-Fi Access
- Public Form Access



Policy research

- Reevaluate UT UNC data
- What has been published in Utah about Health Literacy?



Networking Opportunities

- Health Equity Day or week
- Get to know Senator working on language access and mental health
- Work on certifications together
- Service projects as a coalition
- Educate other groups about HL:
 - Local PR and marketing, UMA, Utah Nursing groups, Local HR Reps, UPHA, etc.



Training and Resources

Education/Training for UTHLC members

- What is a health literacy policy?
- A Plain Language skills class
- LGBTQI best practices
- Animated videos for education/website
- Cultural awareness training
- How to speak with legislators when advocating
- How to develop an elevator speech to discuss health literacy
- Consumer literacy
- Adult functional literacy programs
- Blood pressure program at library
- Trauma response
- A how-to start presentation from Wisconsin Health Literacy Conf.
- Steps needed to create a website with user experience design
- How to use LinkedIn
- Numeracy Training

Resources

- Developing content/materials, what are the key items you should have, and what are best HL practices
 - documents
 - videos
 - books
 - numeracy
 - sample policies
- Create a resource network of information for coalition website

2nd Annual UTHLC Convening, contd.

2023 Accomplishments



ADVOCACY AND POLICY

- Gathered information on health literacy/language access requirements
- Created connections with other UT health policy centers
- Prepared a Proclamation for the Governor to establish October as Health Literacy Month (for 2024)



NETWORKING

- Created coalition recruitment letter and Gmail account
- Updated LinkedIn page
- Discussed outreach efforts, including tabling, recruiting & presenting opportunities
- Created newsletter
- Worked with the T&R workgroup on website



TRAINING & RESOURCES

- Focused on website creation, including:
 - convened to discuss goal, purpose, audience, and content of the site
 - Developed, sent out, and analyzed survey for content creation

Health Literacy Tip

Audience-Centered Writing

From Plain Language for Public Health

[download here](#)

Use everyday words and avoid jargon



In your field of work, you might use words that your audience does not understand. Use common words that others can understand, and when you need to use technical terms, define or reword them in plain language.

“Your test shows that you do have the flu”
NOT “Your antigen test was positive for influenza A”

Use short sentences & an active voice

Short, concise sentences are easier to understand. Use an active voice. Start the sentence with the subject followed

by the verb and object. An active voice puts the most important information (who, what) at the beginning of the sentence.

“Everyone ages 2 and up should get their teeth cleaned by a dentist.” NOT “Taking time to visit the dentist for a cleaning is recommended for people over age two.”

Use “you.”

Writing in second person makes your content more conversational and accessible.

It helps the readers understand you are sharing information meant specifically for them.

“Remember to wash your hands” NOT “Everyone should wash their hands”



Research

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY!!

BEEHIVE: Booster Epidemiology Evaluation of Health, Illness and Vaccine Efficacy

We are looking for adult volunteers aged 18 years and older living in the greater Salt Lake City area to participate in a research study that will compare how well two different FDA-authorized boosters protect against COVID-19.

BEEHIVestudy@utah.edu (801) 203-0320



REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH LITERACY AMONG ADOLESCENT WOMEN IN UTAH

The adolescent brain is not fully developed until at least 25 years of age. This is especially apparent for the parts of the brain that control judgment and impulsiveness. As this relates to reproductive health, inadequate reproductive health literacy is a concern for female adolescents ages 12–18 in Utah. If adolescents do not have knowledge about how the reproductive health system works, then they may be unlikely to identify signs of fertility and are at greater risk of an unintended pregnancy, which leads to other adverse social and health outcomes for the mother and child. [Read more](#)

OPPORTUNITIES IN MIXED METHOD RESEARCH AMONG HISPANIC WOMEN IN UTAH

National and local news cycles often highlight health-related disparities of the Hispanic community. Underlying many of the reports is the important concept and impact of health literacy. Health literacy becomes important for caregivers and/or patients when faced with a situation that requires the ability to find, understand, and use health information and services. Health literacy among Hispanic women is particularly important to highlight because of the lack of available data and impact Low Health Literacy (LHL) can have on individuals and family units. Utah-based research is needed to understand where and what health literacy interventions could be used to increase health literacy rates among Utah Hispanic women. [Read more](#)



Member Spotlight

RACHEL BYERS, MPH, CHES

Project Coordinator

Institute for Disability
Research, Policy & Practice
Utah State University



Briefly explain some health literacy projects you have worked on this year.

My efforts in health literacy in 2023 have focused on increasing mental health literacy among disability service providers. By increasing mental health literacy skills, disability service providers are able to promote a shift from crisis mental health intervention to a more preventive approach through early identification of potential mental health concerns and general psychological distress.

What has been the outcome of those projects? Most of my efforts this year have been focused on designing training curriculums. My team at the Institute for Disability Research, Policy & Practice has received very positive and hopeful feedback thus far from individuals in the disability services community. In 2024, we plan to pilot and implement the trainings.

What is your favorite part of being part of the Utah Health Literacy Coalition?

My favorite part of being part of the Utah Health Literacy Coalition is having opportunities to connect with other advocacy groups and learning more about what those groups are doing to support health literacy in Utah.



[Follow us on LinkedIn](#)

Want to connect with others in the coalition or who are interested in health literacy and stay current on health literacy information and practices? Follow and post on our page!