Health Literacy Definition
- The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.
- Health Literacy is the ability to read, understand, and act on health information effectively.
- Functional health literacy is the ability to apply reading and numeracy skills in a health care setting.

Factors that contribute to health literacy
- General literacy
- Experience with health system
- Complexity of information
- Cultural and language factors
- How information is communicated
- Aging

Extent of the Literacy Problem
- Literacy is a stronger predictor of an individual's health status than age.

Pennsylvania Readmissions
- Lack of effective communication among providers, between providers and patients, and between providers across healthcare settings were among the common themes related to Pennsylvania hospital readmissions reported between January and August 2010.
- Using customized, individualized discharge instructions that incorporate health literacy principles and strategies designed to improve care transitions are suggested for use in inpatient settings to enhance patient learning and improve harmonious communication into community settings.

SEPA-READS: Cardiovascular Health Literacy Coalition

Provider Training
- Session 1: Overview of Health Literacy
  - Creating a start environment
  - Assessment strategies
  - Communication techniques
- Session 2: Improving patient interaction with older adults
  - Creating and using patient friendly written materials
- Session 3: Effective use of the web
  - Inform Consent
  - WebReferencing

To Date:
- 10 initiatives participated in trainings
- 50 “Trained as Trainers”
- 4 from hospital institutions
- 1 from the Pennsylvania Dept of Health
- 1 from PA Medical Specialists

To Date: Participants’ Positions
- Administrators
- Case Managers
- Staff Nurse
- Ambulatory/Inpatient Manager
- RN Education Coordinator
- RN Advocate
- Nursing Staff Development
- Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Pharmacist
- Medical Director
- Nurse Navigator

To Date: Type of Practice Changes
- Improved patients’ knowledge, attitudes and behaviors about CVD disease
- Improved self-efficacy of providers and staff in patient communication
- Changes in use of teach-back, medication review and use of plain language
- Overall feedbacks with trainings
- Suggested modifications

Learning Community
- Shared Public Website
- Health Literacy build training modules
- Best practices
- Reference materials and other key resources
- Resource development led by partners such as translational materials, low literacy informed consents, revised forms, policies, etc.

To Date:
- Hospital and Community partners identified
- Baseline assessment conducted
- Community and Professional Advisory Groups formed and meetings conducted monthly via webinars
- Train-the-Trainer Modules 1 & 2, all developed and conducted
- Presentations to HCF Board, Insurers and Grand Rounds at hospital partnerships
- Interest from other hospital and American Heart Association in the state

Evaluation: Long Term Outcomes
- Increased patient and provider satisfaction with communication during episodes of care (HCAPPS survey) (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems: Picker)
- Improved cardiovascular health outcomes in adults aged 50+
- Reduced CVD related readmissions within 30 days of discharge
- Reduced CVD medical errors
- Reduced costs related to CVD

Evaluation: Short Term/Intermediate Outcomes
- System and Policy Changes
  - Number of health literacy facilities that expand employee orientation, staff training and performance incentives to include health literacy
  - Number of hospital and hospital boards still struggling to ensure coherence of health literacy strategies across the organization
  - Number of CVD patient education materials, website materials and forms revised and developed and offered to office based centers for older adults
  - Number of informed Consent modifications related to CVD
- Improvements to enhance patient navigation
  - Institutionalization of effective communication materials and strategies into the routine of patient quality and safety initiatives at the facility
  - Centrally-formal and educational materials (handbooks, pamphlets, etc.)

- Professional Staff/Trainings
  - Number of trainings held, number staff trained
  - Change in knowledge base
  - Improved self-efficacy of providers and staff in patient communication
  - Changes in use of teach-back, medication review and use of plain language

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