Interprofessional Geriatrics Training Program

Communication Among Patients and Practitioners: Enhancing Adherence and Safety

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Acknowledgements

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Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Restate health literacy disparities across populations
2. Discuss the impact of low health literacy on patient safety and health outcomes
3. Summarize how the Health Literate Care Model can be applied to practice
4. Identify tools from the Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit that can be used to promote better health outcomes and improve safety
5. Identify key tips for creating and delivering health education using a variety of written and online sources

Health Literacy Disparities

Health Literacy

- "The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions"

(U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2010, p. 11-9)

Overview of U.S. Adult Literacy Levels

Literacy Levels	Definitions	Examples of Key Abilities
Below Basic	Indicates no more than the most simple and concrete literacy skills	Locating easily identifiable information and following written instructions in simple documents
Basic	Indicates skills necessary to perform simple and everyday literacy activities	Reading and understanding information in simple documents

(Kutner et al., 2006)

Overview of U.S. Adult Literacy Levels

Literacy Levels	Definitions	Examples of Key Abilities
Intermediate	Indicates skills necessary to perform moderately challenging literacy activities	Locating information in dense, complex documents, and making simple inferences about the information
Proficient	Indicates skills necessary to perform more complex and challenging literacy activities	Integrating, synthesizing, and analyzing multiple pieces of information located in complex documents

(Kutner et al., 2006)

U.S. Health Literacy Levels

- More than one-third of U.S. patients are health illiterate (basic and below basic [not in narration]) (2003)
  - 12% of adults had **proficient** health literacy
  - 53% of adults had **intermediate** health literacy
  - 22% had **basic** health literacy
  - 14% had **below basic** health literacy
- Women have a higher health literacy score than men
- Adults living below the poverty level have lower average health literacy
- Practitioners cannot assume patients understand their health conditions
  (The Joint Commission, 2007)

(Kutner et al., 2006)

U.S. Older Adult Health Literacy Levels

- U.S. adults aged 65 and older had lower average health literacy scores than younger adults

- Within older adults:

  - Proficient (3%)

  - Intermediate (38%)

  - Basic (30%)

  - Below basic (29%)

- Indicating over 50% of older adults are only able to read and understand simple instructions

(Kutner et al., 2006)

Health Literacy by Race and Ethnicity

- U.S. White and Asian/Pacific Islander adults had higher mean for health literacy than Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, and multiracial adults

- Adults with **below basic** health literacy were <u>least likely</u> to access health information from any written or electronic sources compared with adults with **basic**, **intermediate**, and **proficient** health literacy

(Kutner et al., 2006)

Which of the following individuals is most likely to have low health literacy?

a) 65-year-old African-American woman

b) 22-year-old Asian male

c) 72-year-old American Indian man living below the poverty level

d) 50-year-old upper middle class Caucasian woman

Which of the following individuals is most likely to have
low health literacy?

a) 65-year-old African-American woman

b) 22-year-old Asian male

c) 72-year-old American Indian man living below the poverty
(Correct Answer)

d) 50-year-old upper middle class Caucasian woman

The Impact of Low Health Literacy

Health Literacy Outcomes

Type of Literacy	Associated With	Outcomes
Health Literacy	→	• Improved patient safety
<u>Higher</u> Level of Health Literacy	→	• Improved adherence
<u>Lower</u> Level of Health Literacy	→	• Poor communication • Poor health outcomes • Increased health care expenses • Less frequent preventive cancer screenings • Higher rates of disease and mortality

(Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2012a)

Health Literacy Outcomes

Health Literacy	Associated With	Outcomes
Nonadherence (unintentional non-adherence due to low literacy and not understanding treatment plan)	→	• $2,000 per patient in physician visits annually • $100 billion - $289 billion in direct costs annually • 30% - 50% of treatment failures • 125,000 deaths annually

(Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2012a)

Improving Health Outcomes

- In order for health outcomes to improve we need to:
  - Present information in a way individuals can understand
  - Engage individuals in prevention, decision-making, and self-management

(Kutner et al., 2006)

Assessment Question 2

Low health literacy results in the following outcomes <u>except:</u>

a) Medication errors

b) Early detection preventive screenings for cancer

c) Premature death due to mismanagement of chronic diseases

d) Lack of follow-up with primary care provider

Assessment Question 2: Answer

Low health literacy results in the following outcomes <u>except</u>:

a) Medication errors

b) Early detection preventive screenings for cancer

   (Correct Answer)

c) Premature death due to mismanagement of chronic diseases

d) Lack of follow-up with primary care provider

Health Literate Care Model

Management Principles: Health Literate Care Model

Health Literate Care Model

- Collaborate with community partners to expand our access to resources

- The development of health literate systems makes it easier for patients to navigate, understand, and use health information or services

- Some ways to create and enhance a health literate system include:

  - Delivery systems design

    - Assigning a nurse of the same race and ethnicity of a minority patient

  - Health information system

    - Using an electronic medical record system to print out after-discharge summaries

(Koh et al., 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016)

Management Principles: Health Literate Care Model

Health Literate Care Model (Continued)

- Some ways to create and enhance a health literate system include (continued):
  - Self-management support
    - Asking the patient to repeat the purpose and directions for a newly prescribed medication
  - Shared decision-making
    - Reviewing clinical guidelines with a patient to develop an action plan

(Koh et al., 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016)

Management Principles: Health Literate Care Model

Strategies to Build a Health Literate Organization

- Apply improvement methods such as:

    - Incorporate the Health Literate Care Model into your organizational practice

    - Improve verbal interaction by role playing the delivery of medical treatment instructions

    - Improve written communication by typing out instructions instead of hand-writing instructions

(Koh et al., 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016)

Management Principles: Health Literate Care Model

Strategies to Build a Health Literate Organization (Continued)

- Apply improvement methods such as (continued):
  - Address patients' social needs by having a social worker meet with patients during their medical appointment
  - Actively involve patients in the improvement process by obtaining their feedback on health care services received

(Koh et al., 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016)

Management Principles: Health Literate Care Model
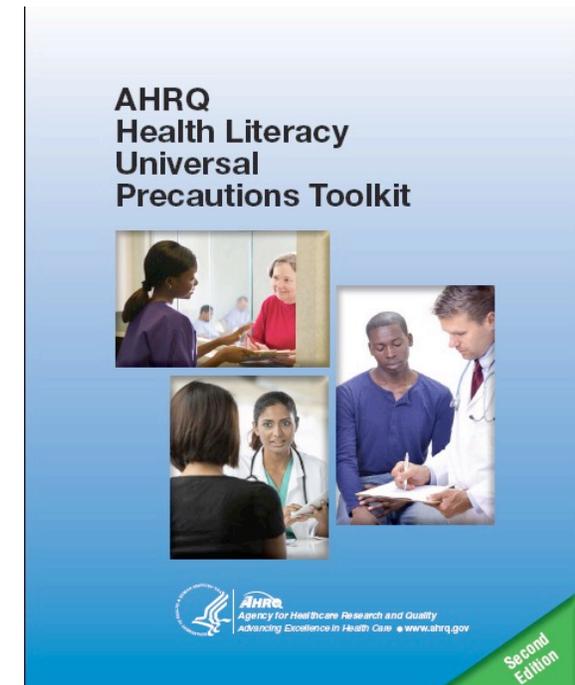
Practitioners

- Incorporate the Health Literate Care Model into your daily practice
- Approach patients with the assumption that they are at risk for not understanding how to manage their health conditions
- Confirm and ensure patients' understanding

(Koh et al., 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016)

Management Principles: Health Literate Care Model

- As patients become more health literate and as we build health care teams and organizations that practice within the Health Literate Care Model we are creating an environment where more productive interactions occur between patients and providers which will ultimately improve health outcomes
- A health literate organization can:
  - Give patients access to supportive services
  - Use tools to improve written and verbal communication
  - Equip patients to improve their self-management skills
  - Empower patients to take control of their health

(Koh et al., 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016)

Promote Better Health Outcomes and Improve Safety

- The *Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit* is a complementary resource to the Health Literate Care Model
- Designed to simplify communication between providers and patients
- Providers refer to the *Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit* to promote better health outcomes and improve safety

AHRQ
Health Literacy
Universal
Precautions Toolkit

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
Advancing Excellence in Health Care ● www.ahrq.gov

Second Edition

(Brega et al., 2015)

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Promote Better Health Outcomes and Improve Safety

The Toolkit Aims To:

- Simplify communication between providers and patients

- Provide a more welcoming environment

- Support patients' efforts to improve their health

2nd Edition Toolkit

- http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/healthlittoolkit2.html

(Brega et al., 2015)

Assessment Question 3

Identify strategies for building a health literate organization.

Select all that apply:

a) Encourage providers to use medical jargon (e.g., beta blocker) and acronyms (e.g., PO) when educating patients about their new medication
b) Provide patients with a printed copy of a discharge summary of their visit at the end of the appointment
c) Refer patients to a social worker when social issues arise (e.g., unable to pay for medication, interested in seeking employment)
d) Provide patients with a wealth of written material on how to manage their diabetes without verbally reviewing the material or giving the patient an opportunity to ask questions
e) Send patients a satisfaction survey after their visit

Identify strategies for building a health literate organization.

Select all that apply:

a) Encourage providers to use medical jargon (e.g., beta blocker) and acronyms (e.g., PO) when educating patients about their new medication

b) Provide patients with a printed copy of a discharge summary of their visit at the end of the appointment (Correct Answer)

c) Refer patients to a social worker when social issues arise (e.g., unable to pay for medication, interested in seeking employment) (Correct Answer)

d) Provide patients with a wealth of written material on how to manage their diabetes without verbally reviewing the material or giving the patient an opportunity to ask questions

e) Send patients a satisfaction survey after their visit

Assessment Question 4

Using these communication tools from the

Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit can:

(Select all that apply)

a) Increase frustration with provider and the health care system

b) Improve shared decision-making

c) Lead to positive health outcomes

d) Increase understanding of health content

e) Decrease patients' adherence to treatment plan

f) Improve provider-patient relationship

Assessment Question 4: Answer

Using these communication tools from the

Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit can:

(Select all that apply)

a) Increase frustration with provider and the health care system

b) Improve shared decision-making (Correct Answer)

c) Lead to positive health outcomes (Correct Answer)

d) Increase understanding of health content (Correct Answer)

e) Decrease patients' adherence to treatment plan

f) Improve provider-patient relationship (Correct Answer)

Tips to Improve Your Communication Skills with Patients

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Improving Communication Skills with Patients

Tips to Improve Your Communication Skills

- Create a welcoming and supportive environment
  - Practice being an active listener
  - Encourage patients to ask questions
  - Review health-related materials with patients

Not Included in Film

- Identify any impairments that may impact communication
  - Determine cognitive baseline
  - Identify any sensory impairments

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(Pfizer, 2011b)

Improving Communication Skills with Patients

Tips to Improve Your Communication Skills (Continued)

- Patients may display a range of health literacy

    - Pause when providing instructions

    - Include reference points (i.e., parameters) when delivering test results

    - Use less medical jargon and avoid use of acronyms

    - Address any confused looks

    - Ask clarifying questions and avoid faulty assumptions

Improving Communication Skills with Patients

Exemplars of Practitioner Questions

- You have seen a lot of numbers, which can be confusing. Do you have any questions? May I help you sort through them?

- Let us take a few minutes to review the options you have.

- Sometimes things in medicine are not as clear as most people think. Let us work together so we can come up with the decision that's right for you.

- Let us take a moment to talk about next steps.

- Considering what we have discussed, do you have a preference about the direction we take?

Patient Education:
Reviewing Health Education Materials with Patients

- **Write** the patient's name or name of the medication he/she is taking to personalize health information handouts (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2015)

- **Circle or highlight** the most important information
  (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2015)

- Use the **teach-back method** to assess a patient's understanding of the material (Brega et al., 2015)

- **Reference** the material at every visit to indicate the importance of the information (Brega et al., 2015)

Patient Education:
Confirm Understanding and Increase Shared Decision-Making

Teach-Back Method

- Purpose:

  - Improve patients' understanding and adherence to treatment

  - Decrease returned calls and no-shows or canceled appointments

  - Improve patient satisfaction and health outcomes

(Brega et al., 2015)

Expert Interview: Naomi Twigg, PhD, PHCNS-BC, RN

(Brega et al., 2015)

Expert Interview: Naomi Twigg, PhD, PHCNS-BC, RN
Teach-Back Method

Listen to Our Expert Discuss:

- Teach-back method to educate patients about:

  - Medication

  - Treatment plan

  - Follow-up appointments (i.e., scheduling lab work or a diagnostic test)

- Teach-back steps

  - Explain or demonstrate the steps in the process

  - Ask the patient to repeat the steps back to the clinician and do a return demonstration

Assessing Patients' Health Literacy Level

Newest Vital Sign Tool

- Patients are given the nutritional facts from an ice cream container to use in their responses

- Ask patients six questions:

    1. If you eat the entire container, how many calories will you eat?

    2. If you are allowed to eat 60 grams of carbohydrates as a snack, how much ice cream could you have?

(Pfizer, 2011a)

Assessing Patients' Health Literacy Level

Newest Vital Sign Tool (Continued)

3. Your doctor advises you to reduce the amount of saturated fat in your diet. You usually have 42 grams of saturated fat each day, which includes one serving of ice cream. If you stop eating ice cream, how many grams of saturated fat would you be consuming each day?

4. If you usually eat 2,500 calories in a day, what percentage of your daily intake of calories will you be eating if you eat one serving?

Assessing Patients' Health Literacy Level

Newest Vital Sign Tool (Continued)

5. Pretend that you are allergic to the following substances: penicillin, peanuts, latex gloves, and bee stings. Is it safe for you to eat this ice cream?

6. Why or why not?

Patient Education: Developing Educational Health Materials

- Tools to create health education materials that increase patient readability:

Assessment Tools to Assess Readability (My Byline Media, 2016)	Link
• Fry Formula (Fry, 1977)	http://www.readabilityformulas.com/free-fry-graph-test.php
• SMOG Readability Formula (McLaughlin, 1969)	http://www.readabilityformulas.com/smog-readability-formula.php
• Flesch Reading Ease (Flesch, 1948)	http://www.readabilityformulas.com/flesch-reading-ease-readability-formula.php

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Patient Education: Developing Educational Health Materials

- Tools to create health education materials that increase patient readability (continued):

Assessment Tools to Assess Readability (My Byline Media, 2016)	Link
• Flesch Grade Level Readability Formula (Kincaid et al., 1975)	http://www.readabilityformulas.com/flesch-grade-level-readability-formula.php
• Gunning's Fog Index (FOG) (Gunning, 1952)	http://www.readabilityformulas.com/gunning-fog-readability-formula.php
• Automated Readability Index (ARI) (Smith & Senter, 1967)	http://www.readabilityformulas.com/automated-readability-index.php

Patient Education: Developing Educational Health Materials

- Tools to create health education materials that increase patient readability:

Assessment Tools to Enhance Understanding	Link
- AHRQ's Patient Education Materials Assessment Tools (PEMAT) (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2013)	http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/prevention-chronic-care/improve/self-mgmt/pemat/index.html
- CDC's Clear Communication Index (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015)	https://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/
- Suitability Assessment of Materials (SAM) (Doak et al., 1996)	http://aspiruslibrary.org/literacy/sam.pdf

Patient Education: Developing Online Educational Health Materials

- Electronic health content should be <u>brief</u> and <u>engaging</u>

<u>Brief</u>

- Present "just the basics"
- Tell patients what they "need to know"
- Start with action steps patients can begin doing right away
- Explain the benefits of each action step

<u>Engaging</u>

- Put the most important information first
- Focus on benefits of behavior changes
- Give patients manageable steps to change their behavior
- Use interactive tools, checklists, and conversation tools to motivate patients to take action

(U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2015)

Patient Education: Ask Me 3 Tool
To Improve Provider-Patient Communication

Ask Me 3

- Educate your patients to ask three questions to all providers at each visit

  (Partnership for Clear Health Communication, 2016)

- Tell your patients to ask clarifying questions, such as "Will you please explain it to me one more time?"

  (Brega et al., 2015)

1. What is my main problem?

2. What do I need to do?

3. Why is this important to me?

Expert Interview: Naomi Twigg, PhD, PHCNS-BC, RN

Expert Interview: Naomi Twigg, PhD, PHCNS-BC, RN
Ask Me 3

Listen to Our Expert Discuss:

- Educate patients to be advocates for themselves:
  - Invite patients to ask you these three questions
  - Use universally in health care settings
  - Three simple questions patients can ask where they can obtain more information and place patients in control of their health care
- Reasons patients may not ask providers questions:
  - Do not think they should
  - Fear of challenging provider by asking these questions
- Tips:
  - Encourage patients to ask questions
  - Explain that they are in charge of their own health

To Improve Provider-Patient Communication

- Patients should feel empowered to ask providers to clarify answers they do not understand (i.e., "Will you please explain it to me one more time?")
  (Brega et al., 2015)

- Providers should be patient and use simple terminology when communicating health education materials to patients

- Empower your patients to ask questions about their care until they have a better understanding of their treatment plan

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Educate Your Patients to Ask Questions to Increase Understanding and Shared Decision-Making

Questions Are the Answer

- Encourage your patients to ask their practitioner these common questions:

    - What is the test for?

    - How many times have you done this procedure?

    - When will I get the results?

    - Why do I need this treatment?

    - Are there any alternatives?

    - What are the possible complications?

(Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2012c)

Educate Your Patients to Ask Questions to Increase Understanding and Shared Decision-Making

Questions Are the Answer (Continued)

- Which hospital is best for my needs?

- How do you spell the name of that drug?

- Are there any side effects?

- Will this medicine interact with medicines that I'm already taking?

(Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2012c)

Support Patients' Engagement
Before, During, and After Your Encounters

- <u>Before</u> the appointment urge them to write down any questions in preparation for the upcoming appointment

- <u>During</u> the appointment give patients space to ask questions

- <u>After</u> the appointment you should review the treatment plan with patients to assess their understanding and the practicality of implementing the plan

- Encourage patients to follow-up if they have any lingering questions

Devise an Action Plan

- An action plan is developed in collaboration between patients and their providers

Action Plan:

- Identify the behavior they want to change

- Develop a solid plan for how to work towards changing this behavior

- The action plan divides action into manageable steps in order to achieve their personal goal

(Brega et al., 2015, p. 49)

Devise an Action Plan

Action Plan (Continued):

- Tell your patient to bring the action plan to every visit and together update it so it becomes a workable plan

- Follow-up the same way each time, establishing a routine

(Brega et al., 2015. p. 49)

Final Tips

Engage in Shared Decision-Making with Your Patient

- Shared decision-making has the potential to influence positive health outcomes

- Ask your patient to review educational health materials with you

- Educate your patient to ask clarifying questions to increase his/her understanding of self-management of a chronic disease or required treatment

Collaborate with Your Patient for Positive Outcomes

- To promote shared decision-making and collaboration with patients think **"SHARE:"**
    - **S**eek your patient's participation
    - **H**elp your patient explore and compare treatment options
    - **A**ssess your patient's values and preferences
    - **R**each a decision with your patient
    - **E**valuate your patient's decision

(Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2016)

Educate Your Patients to Manage their Medications

Keep It SIMPLE

- **S**implify the regimen

  - Avoid prescribing medications with special requirements

- **I**mpart knowledge

  - Provide all prescription instructions clearly in writing and verbally

- **M**odify patient beliefs and behavior

  - Ensure your patients understand risks of not taking their medications

  - Address your patients' fears and concerns

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013)

Educate Your Patients to Manage their Medications

Keep It SIMPLE (Continued)

- **P**rovide communication and trust
  - Active listening
  - Use plain language
- **L**eave the bias
  - Develop patient-centered communication style
- **E**valuate adherence
  - Periodically review patients' medication containers, noting renewal dates

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013)

Expert Interview: Naomi Twigg, PhD, PHCNS-BC, RN

Expert Interview: Naomi Twigg, PhD, PHCNS-BC, RN

Listen to Our Expert Discuss:

- Providers should demonstrate confidence in their skills and knowledge to reduce uneasiness and anxiety in their patients

Educate Your Patient to Take Charge of Their Medications

Brown Bag Medicine Review

- Tell your patient to bring all prescription medicines and dietary supplements in a "brown bag" to **all** of their practitioner appointments
- Educate your patient to take this opportunity to ask their practitioner about their medications
- Correct medical errors and improve patients' adherence
- Provider should ask patients (not included on audio):
  - What do you take each medicine for?
  - When do you take this medicine?
  - Can you show me how much you take each time?

(Jacobson et al., 2008)

Develop a Medication List with Your Patient

- Develop a personalized medication list with your patient, including name, usage, instructions, and time of day the medication should be consumed

Name	Used For	Instructions	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Night
Metoprolol 100 mg	High blood pressure	One pill twice a day	X		X	

(Jacobson et al., 2008)

Expert Interview: Naomi Twigg, PhD, PHCNS-BC, RN

Expert Interview: Naomi Twigg, PhD, PHCNS-BC, RN

Listen to Our Expert Discuss:

- Communicating with patients:
  - Providers should know how they are communicating with patients and how to change their communication style with different patients based on:
    - What the patient's needs are
    - The patient's current health status
  - It is important for patients to be comfortable talking with their provider

All are helpful ways of delivering health education to patients <u>except:</u>

  a) Encouraging patients to ask questions about their medications

  b) Telling patients what they need to know about their diagnosis

  c) Quickly dismissing yourself from the room when patients

     begin asking questions

  d) Developing manageable steps with patients to change their behavior

Assessment Question 5: Answer

All are helpful ways of delivering health education to patients <u>except</u>:

a) Encouraging patients to ask questions about their medications

b) Telling patients what they need to know about their diagnosis

c) Quickly dismissing yourself from the room when patients begin asking questions (Correct Answer)

d) Developing manageable steps with patients to change their behavior

Resources

Resource	Link
Ask Me 3 Registered trademark licensed to the National Patient Safety Foundation	https://npsf.site-ym.com/default.asp?page=askme3
CDC: Health Literacy (CDC, 2016)	http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/planact/steps/index.html

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Resources

Resource	Link
National Health Literacy Action Plan (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010)	https://health.gov/communication/literacy/
Pfizer – Newest Vital Sign – Tool (Pfizer, 2011a)	http://www.pfizer.com/health/literacy/public_policy_researchers/nvs_toolkit
Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine (REALM) Copyrighted	https://www.nap.edu/read/10883/chapter/12 Copyrighted
Tutorial – Design Health Websites	https://health.gov/healthliteracyonline/write/

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Resources

http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/prevention-chronic-care/improve/self-mgmt/pemat/index.html Accessed January 31, 2017

http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/healthlittoolkit2.html Accessed January 31, 2017

http://aspiruslibrary.org/literacy/sam.pdf Accessed January 31, 2017

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