

Health Literacy Skills and Quality Health Care

Primary Health Care All Grantee Meeting

June 23, 2005

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Health Resources and Services Administration

Center for Quality

Health Literacy and Quality Care

Putting It All Together



THE LANGUAGE OF HEALTH

**HEALTH
LITERACY**

**CULTURAL
COMPETENCY**

PATIENTS

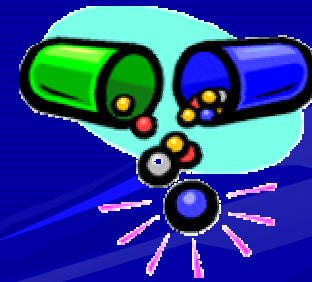
PROVIDERS

**QUALITY
health care**

What is Health Literacy ?

Healthy People 2010

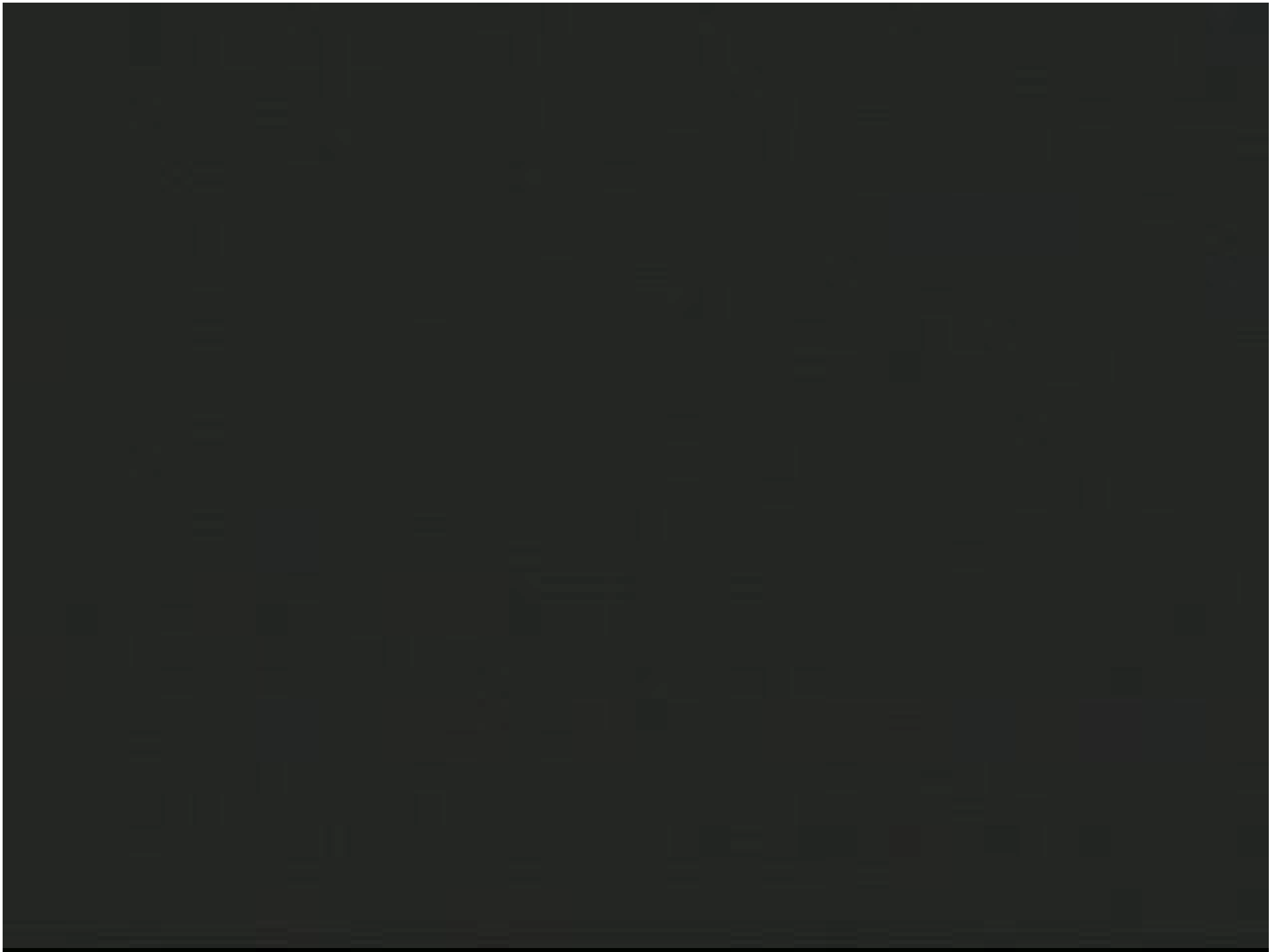
“The degree to which individuals have the capacity to **obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.**”



When do I take these pills?

Health Literacy Includes

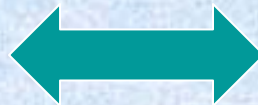
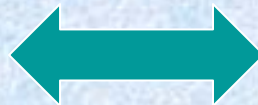
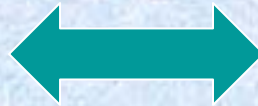
- **The interaction of individuals' skills with health contexts, the health care system, and broad social and cultural factors at home, at work, and in the community.**
 - Includes components beyond reading and writing: numeracy, listening, speaking, and relies on cultural and conceptual knowledge



Health Literate Patients

PATIENT

- **Questions health information**
- **Understands what is needed to improve health**
- **Accesses services**
- **Makes appropriate decisions**



PROVIDER

- **Ability to listen**
- **Clearly describes treatment options**
- **Advises on how to enter system of care**
- **Gives necessary information**

U.S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona

“The ability to access, understand, and use health-related information and services is critical to the success of my three priorities: improving emergency preparedness, and eliminating health disparities, and preventing disease.

That’s why **health literacy** is the currency of success for everything I am doing as Surgeon General. And I need your help.”

“Health Literacy in America: The Role of Health Professionals.”
American Medical Association Meeting, June 2003.

National Assessments of Literacy

- **1992 Survey Results:** approximately 90 million adults (46%) in the United States demonstrated skills in the two lowest levels of literacy.
- **2003 Survey Results:** will provide health literacy data with 26 health related items in the assessment instrument.

Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report:
**“Health Literacy:
A Prescription to End Confusion”**

“If patients cannot comprehend needed health information, attempts to improve the quality of care and reduce health care costs and disparities may fail.”

IOM Press Release: April 8, 2004

The Institute of Medicine (IOM)

Some Key Findings:

- Health literacy is fundamental to quality of care
- Health literacy assessment should be part of health care information systems and quality data collection
- Health professionals and staff have limited education, training, continuing education, and practice opportunities to develop skills for improving health literacy

Addressing Health Literacy Improves Patients' Ability to...

- Access information
- Access care
- Navigate institutions
- Complete forms
- Provide informed consent
- Communicate with professionals
 - Provide information for diagnosis and assessment
 - Make sure that directions and treatments are understood

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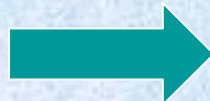
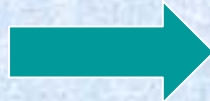
Cultural Competency and Health Literacy

- **Cultural competence becomes important to health literacy at the point where language and culture interfere with or support effective communication.**
 - Health literacy efforts are not limited to cross-cultural situations
 - Cultural competence efforts are broader than health literacy
 - Initiatives in both these areas would benefit from coordination with each other!

Culturally Competent Providers

Provider

- Cultural awareness
- Linguistic competence
- Cultural appropriateness
- Cultural sensitivity



PATIENT

- Patient feels respect
- Processes verbal and non-verbal health information
- Treatment regime conveys attitudes of patient
- Message reflects values of patient

Assure Quality of Care

What is Quality Health Care?

www.hrsa.gov/quality/



Quality Health Care

- In 1990 The Institute of Medicine (IOM) defined Quality Care as:

“The degree to which health services for individuals and populations increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes and are consistent with current professional knowledge.”

IOM. Medicare: A Strategy for Quality Assurance, Vol.1. 1990.

Quality Health Care

“Good quality means providing patients with appropriate services in a technically competent manner, with good communication, shared decision-making and cultural sensitivity.”

IOM. *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century.* 2001.

Components of Quality Health Care

- **SAFE**
- **Effective**
- **PATIENT-CENTERED**
- **Timely**
- **Efficient**
- **EQUITABLE**

– IOM. *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*. 2001.

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For More Information

- Web site:

www.hrsa.gov/quality/healthlit.htm

- Contact: Linda Johnston Lloyd at

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