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Making connections with health care information: A senior center and an academic library collaboration

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Making Connections with Health Care Information: a Senior Center and an Academic Library Collaboration

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LAWRENCE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

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What is 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” (Selden, Zorn, Ratzan, Parker, 2000)

The Confusion of Medicalese

- Take this medication with food
- Take this medication two times a day
- On a special diet
- When taking this medicine, don't drive heavy machinery

Source of the Low Health Literacy Problem-

Change to a New Model of Health Care Delivery

- **Old model** -Skilled professionals took care of patients
 - Based on long hospital stays
 - Closely monitored bedside and post-operative care

New model- Patients learn to care for themselves

- Changes in technology=new medical knowledge, drugs & treatments
- More outpatient procedures and treatments
- Short hospital stays
- Patients are quickly on their own with long lists of instructions, medications and appointments
- Little support from skilled professionals (Schwartzberg & Lagay, 2001)

Why is Health Literacy Important?

Healthy People

Healthy People 2000, 2010, 2020

- Initiative from U.S. government's DHHS
- Provide science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving the health of all Americans
- Establish benchmarks and monitored progress over time in order to:
 - Measure the impact of prevention activities
 - Empower individuals toward making informed health decisions
 - Encourage collaborations across communities and sectors



Why is Health Literacy Important?

Money

- Readmission Program created under the Affordable Care Act tracks how often patients are treated for heart attack, heart failure, and pneumonia & had to return to the hospital within 30 days of discharge
- Medicare payments docked 1%=2013, 2%=2014
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease & total hip replacements added in 2015 with a 3% penalty

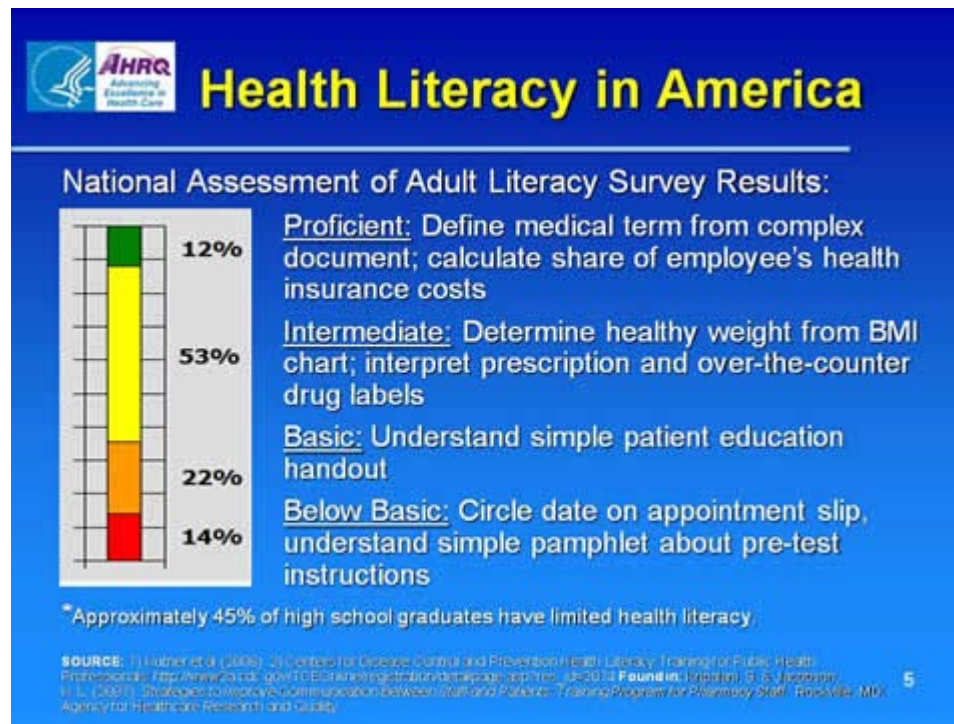
Examples of the Problem

➤ American Medical Association patient interviews

➤ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgTuD7I7LG8>

➤ Stories

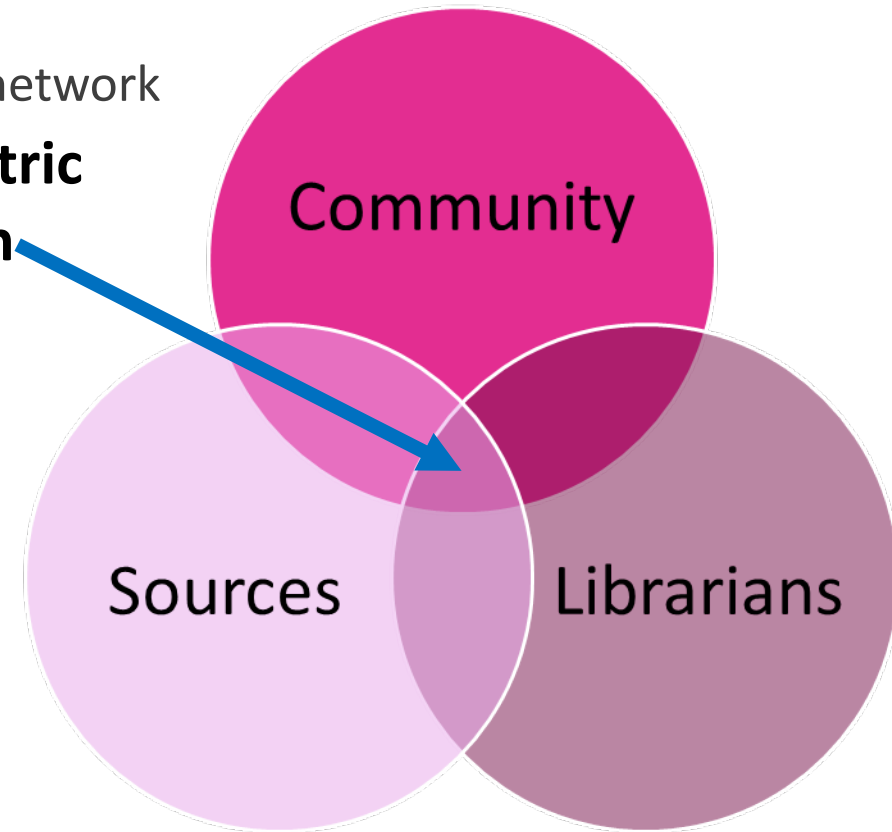
Benchmark for Health Literacy in America



Net-Centric Librarian

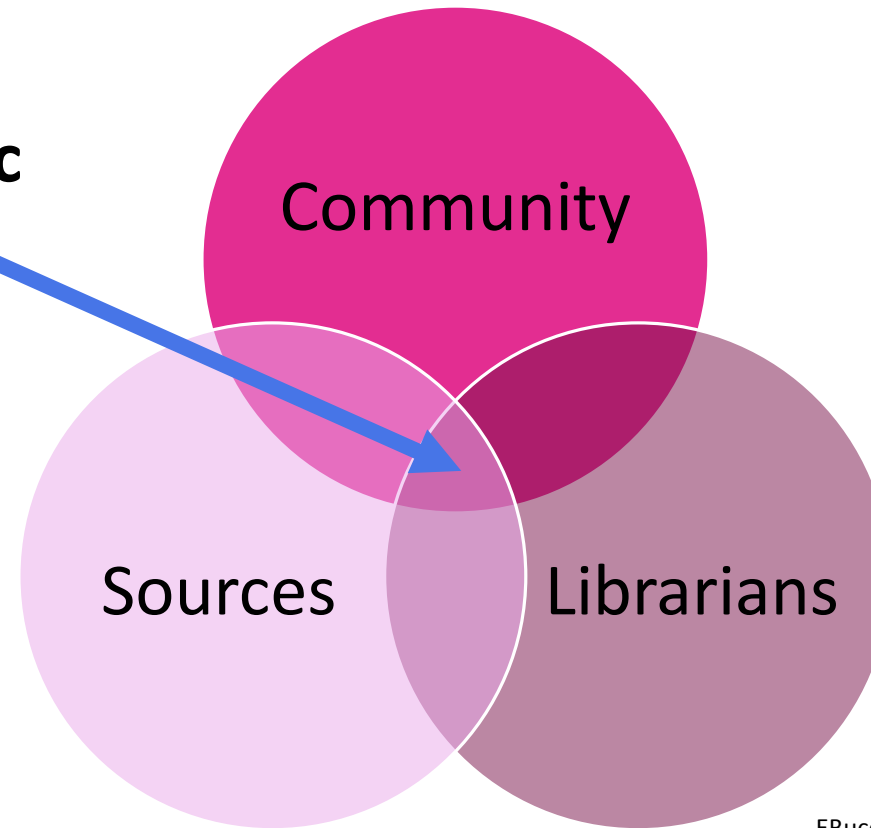
- No longer a gatekeeper; in fact, no gates, instead a network
- It's always about the relationship
- Rules of the new game of library services
- Reference on the road
- "Pilot" forever
- Being persistent

Net-Centric Librarian



What's a Health Sciences Librarian to Do?

The Net-Centric Librarian



EBucciarelli

Personal Interest & Motivation



EBucciarelli

- My Mother taught the family about health and medicine using clear, plain language, and the legacy continues
- Neighborhood nurse
- Family translator of health & medical information

Collaboration Discussions

- Energized from GMR NN/LM workshop
- Discussion with father-in-law to gauge interest
- Father-in-law did the same during other events
- Attended some Eton Center activities polled the attendees to gauge their interest in the topic
 - Diseases & conditions
 - Medications
 - Determining web site authority
- Discussion with Dearborn Heights Eton Senior Citizen Program Coordinator
- Discussion with the Assistant Deputy for Parks & Recreation for the City of Dearborn Heights

Planning

- Begin with the very active Eton Senior Center
- Toured the presentation room ahead of time; language confusion
- Worked through technical issues
- Created a promotional flyer
- Flyer posted & distributed at both senior centers; placement on event calendar
- Demonstration & discussion; no hands-on paper handout
- Simple PP with embedded links for email distribution



The Presentation & Content

*“Finding Trustworthy Health Care Information
on the Internet”, Feb. 17, 2014*

- Defined “health literacy” & discussed importance
- Legal warning
- Discussed ways to evaluate internet health information
- Demonstrated and explored trustworthy senior health care web sites
 - NIH Senior Health - <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/>
 - MedlinePlus - <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>
- Open discussion – other health topics, other topics of interest
- Surveyed for other topics of interest

Flipping the Model

Empowering Patients to Ask Health Care Professionals to:

- Slow down & spend time explaining
- Use plain, simple language (It's the law!)
- Use examples
- Limit the amount of information provided
- Show or draw pictures; use videos, pictures & send via apps
- Write down their questions & concerns
- Invite a family member or friend to accompany you
- Don't be ashamed of asking questions
- Ask me 4
- "Teach-Back" technique

Changes for the Next Health Literacy Discussion

- Additional Topics of Interest

- Safe use of medicines

- Drug Information

- Senior Fitness - *Go4Life* - <https://go4life.nia.nih.gov/>

- Senior Nutrition - *Go4Life* - <https://go4life.nia.nih.gov/>



Fda.gov

- Involve local public libraries

- *Health Happens in Libraries* from OCLC <https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/ehealth.html>

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