Health Literacy: Health Literacy in Libraries

What is Health Literacy?

Health Literacy: the degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions (https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/learn/index.html). People apply these health literacy skills either to make sense of health information and services or to provide health information and services to others.

Health Literacy Resources

- Quick Guide to Health Literacy [PDF]
  This guide from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services explains health literacy basics, the connection between health literacy and health outcomes, ways to improve the usability of health information, and resources for learning more about health literacy.

- Health Literacy
  This resource from the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion includes an overview of health literacy, tools, and additional resources.

- Health Literacy, Medline
  This is Medline’s site on health literacy, with a summary, places to start, the latest news, and many more resources.

Evaluating Online Health Information

- Evaluating Internet Health Information: A Tutorial from the National Library of Medicine
  This video tutorial teaches you how to evaluate the health information that you find on the Web. It is about 10 minutes long.

- Evaluating Health Websites
  From the National Network of Libraries of Medicine

- Health Disparities: You know there’s a need, now prove it!
  Slides from a webinar on sources of health information, to show how your community measures up. You can also view the webinar recording (https://youtu.be/oeN14HUsOKQ). By Kate Flewelling, National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Middle Atlantic Region

Specific Services and Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healthnet</th>
<th>Health Happens in Libraries</th>
<th>Grants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Does your patron have a question about a personal health or medical concern? Contact Healthnet at 860-879-4055 (Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm) or by e-mail at healthnet@uchc.edu.

Healthnet also provides guides for consumers and librarians.

Healthnet is the Connecticut Consumer Health Information Network located at the UCONN Health Center in Farmington, CT.

Health and Medical Reference Guidelines

In June 2015, the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) released revised Health and Medical Reference Guidelines, the purpose of which is to assist information services staff in responding to health or medical inquiries. The guidelines describe the role of library staff, recommended professional behavior, and ethics, and link to additional guidelines from other professional associations.

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