

CONNECTING THE DOTS

HEALTH EQUITY AND HEALTH LITERACY

Improving health literacy is a national priority. Research has shown that health literacy is a more important predictor of health than race, socioeconomic status or educational attainment.¹

Find more information and resources on our health equity webpage



Understanding Health Literacy

Addressing health literacy through successful interventions and strategies can build a bridge to achieving health equity. Telligen's commitment to improving health literacy is an investment in improving health equity.

Personal Health Literacy

Personal health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.²

Organizational Health Literacy

Organizational health literacy is the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to find, understand and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.²

Health Literacy Challenges

Limited health literacy is a silent epidemic. Even people with strong literacy skills can face health literacy challenges. Patients with low health literacy are more likely to have poorer health outcomes and higher healthcare costs as depicted below³:

Individuals with low health literacy...



Are more likely to visit an emergency room



Have more hospital stays



Are less likely to follow treatment plans

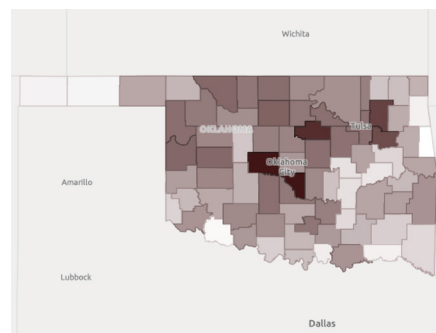


Have higher mortality rates

Examining the Data in Oklahoma⁴

Identifying and acknowledging health disparities is the first step towards change. The health literacy estimates shown below are based on the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL). This national survey categorized literacy skills into the following 4 categories and scores: Below Basic, Basic, Intermediate, and Proficient.

Health Literacy Scores in Oklahoma



BELOW BASIC: 0-183
Can perform no more than the most simple and concrete literacy activities

BASIC: 184-225
Can perform simple everyday literacy activities

INTERMEDIATE: 226-309
Can perform moderately challenging literacy activities

PROFICIENT: 310-500
Can perform complex and challenging literacy activities

Strategy for Change

Quality improvement is not linear, but rather iterative and continuous. Telligen supports communities and organizations through enhanced technical assistance and coaching to build a shared understanding and commitment to address health literacy and other social drivers, assess and prioritize action, implement evidence-based interventions, measure progress, and report and sustain change. Use [Telligen's health equity assessment](#) to take action in identifying gaps and opportunities to improve health literacy and culturally appropriate health information and services.

Where Can I Learn More?

Scan the QR code or visit www.telligenqiconnect.com/health-equity to access resources and trainings available for your organization.

¹ Berkman ND, Sheridan SL, Donahue KE, Halpern DJ, Crotty K. Low health literacy and health outcomes: an updated systematic review. *Ann Intern Med.* 2011;155(2):97-107

² <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/health-literacy-healthy-people-2030>

³ <https://www.nlm.gov/guides/intro-health-literacy>

⁴ <http://healthliteracymap.unc.edu/>