

The Crystal Clear Mark: Health Literacy in GP and Pharmacy settings

Aoife O'Driscoll, NALA

June 2015, NUIG



NALA

N National Adult Literacy Agency
Ái: Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

What is Health Literacy?

Health literacy is the ability to read, understand and act on health information.

Your treatment is...

I can't believe I have...

Expectations, preferences and skills of **individuals seeking** health information and services

meet

Expectations, preferences and skills of **those providing information and services**

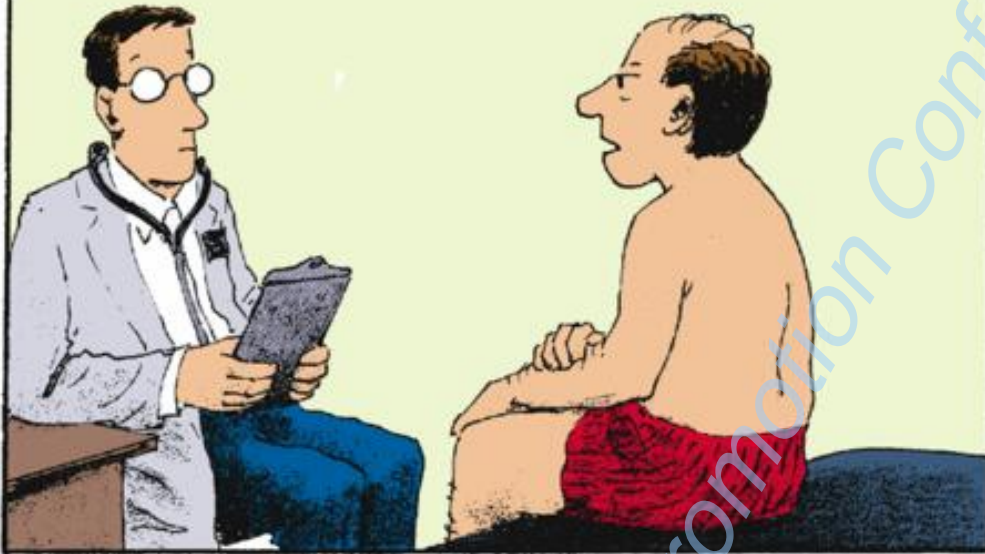


It is about mutual understanding



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh



“Doc, enough with the ‘English’ — just give it to me in plain academic medical terminology!”

40% of Irish people have limited health literacy.

This means that **4 out of 10** people who use health services find it difficult to understand and act on health information.

1 in every 4 people has a difficulty with numbers



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

What is Health Numeracy?

Health numeracy is the ability to understand and use quantitative health information, including:

- basic calculations, and
- information in documents and non-text formats such as graphs.

Health information is full of number-based concepts

Risks

Benefits

Frequency

Probability



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Everyday Examples

Prose literacy

- Patient has an appointment for blood tests and is instructed in writing to fast the night before the test.

Document literacy

- Patient is given a prescription for a new medication that needs to be taken at a certain dosage twice a day.

Numeracy

- Patient is told to buy a glucose meter and use it 30 minutes before each meal and before going to bed. If the number is above a certain value they need to take medication.



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Why is health literacy important?

One in five Irish people are not fully confident that they understand the information they receive from their healthcare professional (HCP).

43% of people would only sometimes ask their HCP to clarify the information if they did not understand something they had said.

One in 10 people have taken the wrong dose of medication because they didn't understand the instructions.

66% of people have difficulty understanding signs and directions in Irish hospitals.



2015 Health Literacy Survey

- 39% of Irish people calling for less medical jargon from their healthcare professionals
- 17% of people surveyed said they had taken the wrong amount of medication on at least one occasion
- People aged 15 - 34 years were least likely to ask a doctor, nurse or pharmacist to explain things they don't understand
- Embarrassment was ranked as the main reason for not seeking more information from a healthcare professional (24%) - this was marginally higher amongst 15 - 34 year olds in particular



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Group Discussion: What can be done?

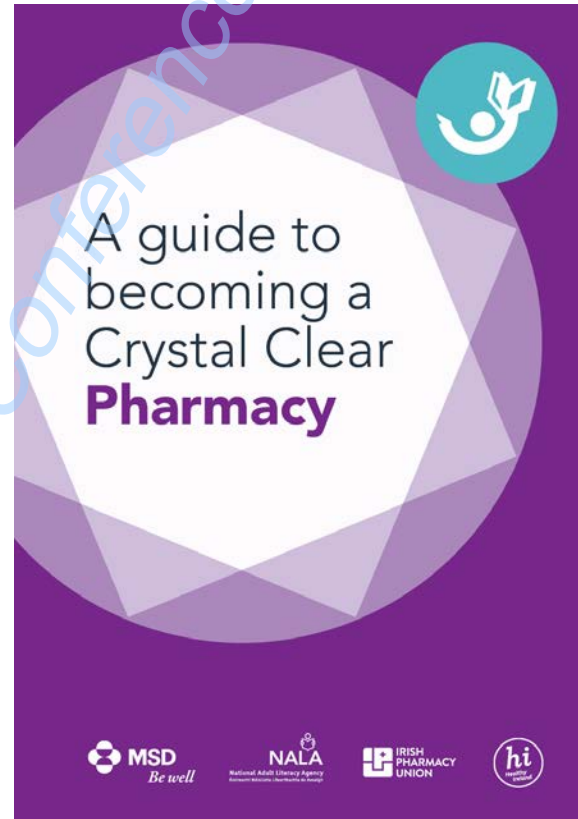
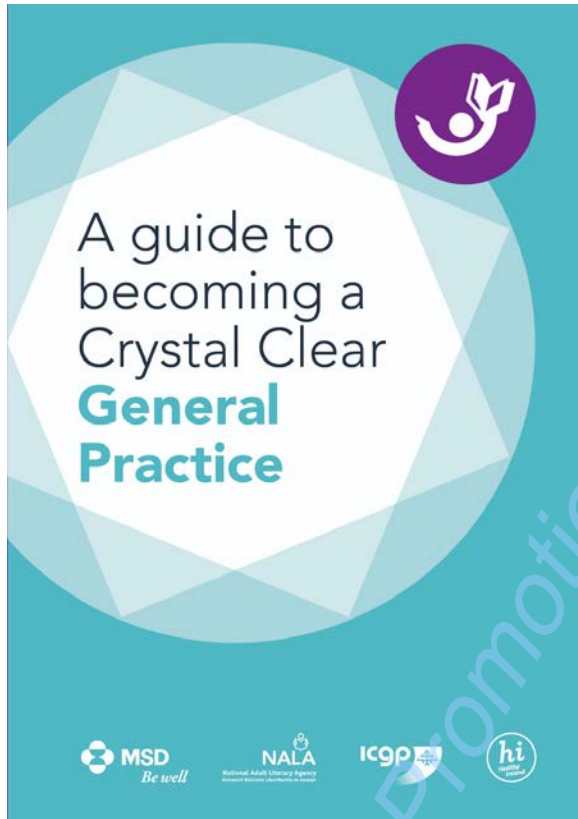
- **Where are problems likely to arise?**
- **Think of specific examples of the difficulties people may be experiencing**
- **What practical things can be done?**



NALA

N National Adult Literacy Agency
Ái: Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

The Crystal Clear Mark 2015



Health Promotion Conference 2015

Online Audit Tool

www.nala.ie/crystalclear

Crystal Clear Mark | National Adult Literacy Agency

1800 20 20 65 50050 find a course Search

Need Help Literacy in Ireland Tutors What we do Resources

Crystal Clear Mark

Home > Crystal Clear Mark

Welcome to the Crystal Clear Programme

This national programme offers pharmacies and general practices the opportunity to gain a unique quality mark. It has been developed by The Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU), MSD and NALA.

Pharmacies and general practices play a critical role in helping patients understand their health issues and the steps they can take to improve their health. This **Crystal Clear Mark** recognises pharmacies and general practices that deliver a health literacy friendly service to their patients. This means the service takes account of the literacy and numeracy needs of its patients. It also recognises that the service regularly evaluates and improves its health literacy practices.

To become a Crystal Clear Pharmacy or General Practice, you must do an **online audit**. This involves answering nine questions. You will also need to supply evidence such as photographs of clear signage, examples of clearly written letters and describe the ways that staff communicate effectively with patients in a literacy friendly way.

You can watch a video on health literacy [here](#).

To get started, please choose which service you provide.

[Pharmacy >](#) [General Practice >](#)

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Email](#) [Print](#) [Share](#)

About

- About NALA
- Literacy in Ireland

Involved

- Our policy priorities
- Current NALA research

Resources

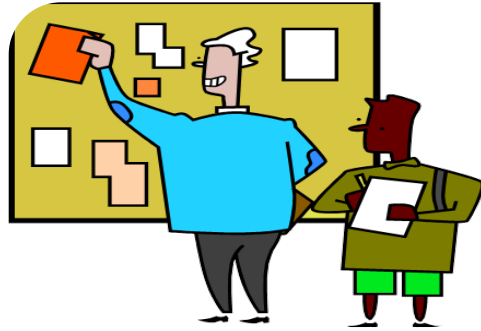
- Bookshop - members only
- Workbooks and teaching books

Courses

- Local Adult Literacy Services
- Distance Education

EN 14:51 16/06/2015

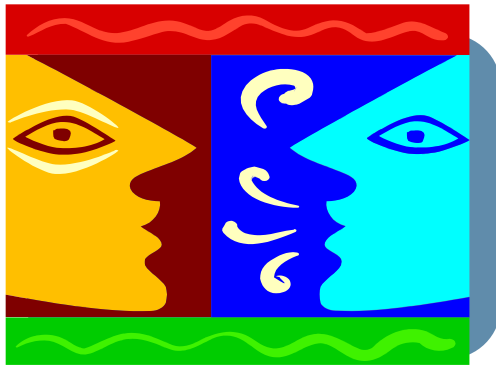
Becoming literacy-friendly



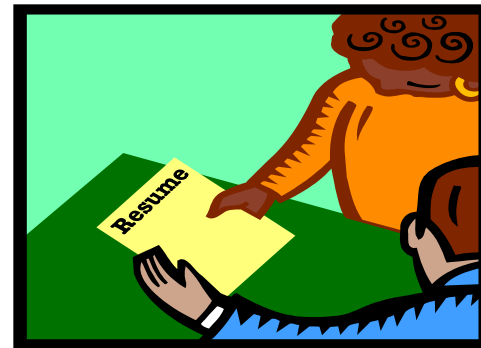
Environment



Staff Awareness



Verbal communication



Printed materials



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Policies and Procedures

1. Do you have a literacy friendly policy?
2. Do you have specific procedures to help patients find and use the important information and instructions?

Communications

3. Do staff use plain English when speaking with patients?
4. Do you use plain English on your medication labels?
5. Do you check that patients understand what you have told them?
6. Is the layout of your pharmacy/general practice clear?

Staff Awareness

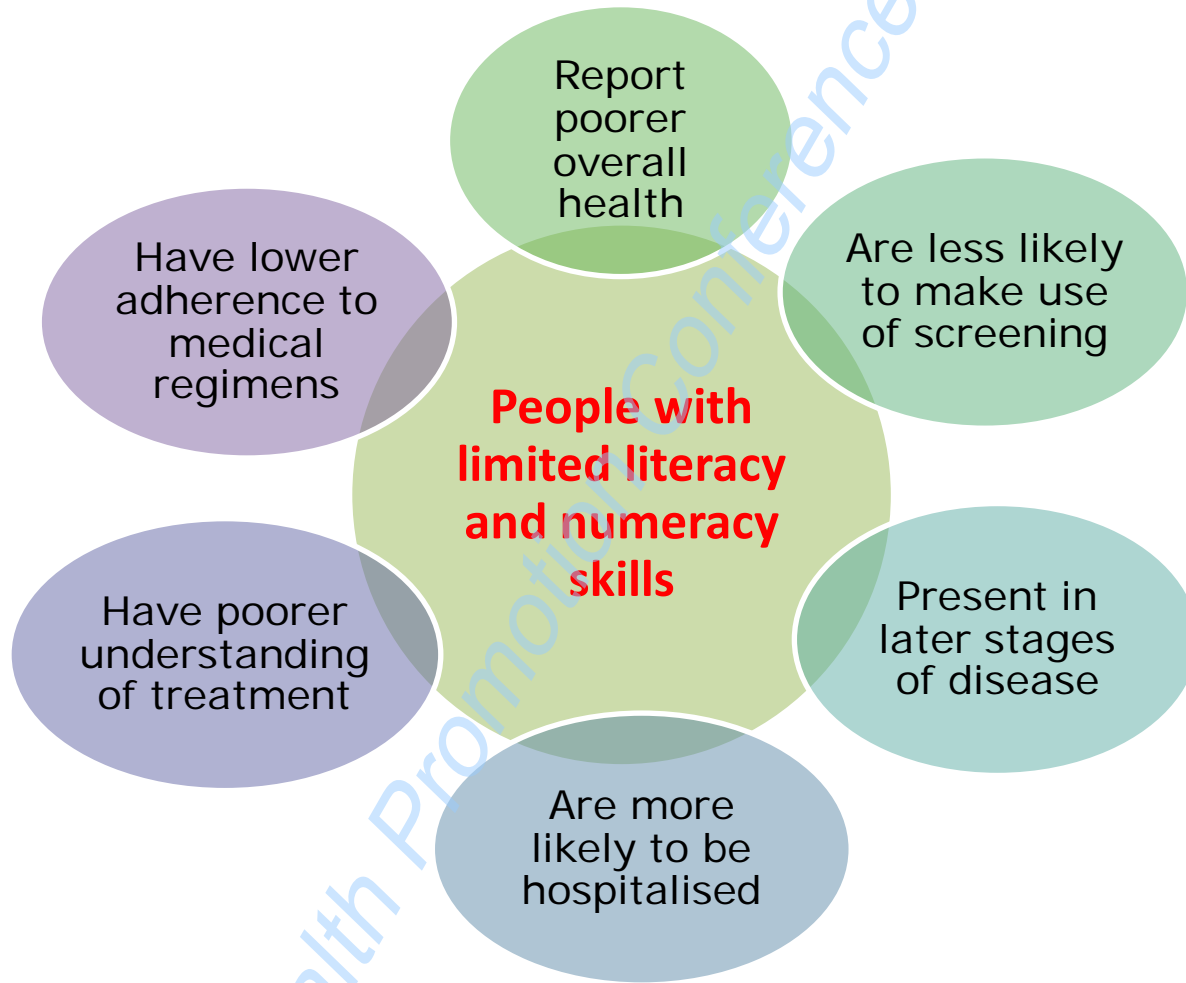
7. Are all your staff aware of literacy friendly work practices?
8. Do your staff respond sensitively to the literacy and numeracy needs of patients?
9. Do you regularly evaluate and continually improve your literacy friendly service?



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Why is health literacy important?



Reference: Rima Rudd, NALA Health and Literacy Conference, 2002

Benefits to your service

Clearer understanding

More effective communication

Better and equal access

Greater participation

Fulfil national standards

Better impact



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Conclusion

Health literacy is an essential skill for life that we develop and maintain throughout our lives

It is not an individual problem – range of responses required, from personal to practice to policy

Becoming health literacy aware means better health services

Making one small change can make a difference



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Further information

Sandford Lodge
Sandford Close
Ranelagh
Dublin 6

Tel: (01) 412 7900

Email: aodriscoll@nala.ie

Website: www.nala.ie

Crystal Clear Audit Tool: www.nala.ie/crystalclear

Plain English: www.simplyput.ie

Family: www.helpmykidlearn.ie



<http://facebook.com/nalairland>



<http://twitter.com/nalairland>



<http://www.youtube.com/user/nationaladulterac>



HelpMyKidLearn.ie



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

The Crystal Clear Mark: Health Literacy in GP and Pharmacy settings

Aoife O'Driscoll, NALA

June 2015, NUIG



NALA

N National Adult Literacy Agency
Ái: Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh