Innovation in Health Literacy

Dr. Holli Seabury
What problems do you have with patients that are related to communication?

(Hint: they are ALL related to communication.)
Health Literacy

The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.
Health Literacy Skills

Print Literacy
- Reading
- Writing
- Numbers

Communication
- Listening
- Speaking
- Questioning

Information Seeking and eHealth
- Technology
The 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy assessed the English literacy of more than 19,000 adults in the United States.
Below Basic Reading Levels

- 32 million adults in the U.S. can't read.

- Nearly one in five high school graduates in the US can’t read.

- More than one in three US adults reads below a 5th grade reading level.

- 75-90% of people in the 2 lowest reading levels describe themselves as being able to read/write English “well” or “very well”.

DELTA DENTAL FOUNDATION
Adults living below the poverty level (17% of the adult population) represent 43% of those with below basic health literacy skills.
Please reduce the speed of your vehicle until you attain 0 miles per hour. You are being asked to change your vehicle speed because you are approaching an intersection where the north/south traveling traffic continues unimpeded. You are traveling on the east/west road and, as this road is less trafficked than the north/south road, traffic speed on your road will be interrupted for the safety of all drivers. Failure to follow these directions could result in a traffic citation or could result in your causing a traffic accident. Motor vehicle accidents are a leading cause of death, especially for younger drivers. For teen drivers, motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death. In 2018, 4.5 million people were injured in car crashes in the US, nearly 40,000 died.
Do sealants have any other benefits in addition to preventing decay?
Sealants can also stop small areas of decay from becoming larger. Reliable clinical studies have confirmed that properly placed sealants, if kept intact, will stop decay in the enamel.

Is sealant application a complicated procedure?
Sealants are easy for your dentist to apply, and it takes only a few minutes to seal each tooth. The teeth that will be sealed are cleaned. Then the chewing surfaces are conditioned to help the sealant adhere to the tooth. The sealant is then 'painted' onto the tooth enamel, where it bonds directly to the tooth and hardens. Sometimes a special curing light is used to help the sealant harden.

How long do sealants last?
As long as the sealant remains intact, the tooth surface will be protected from decay. Sealants hold up well under the force of normal chewing and usually last several years before a reapplication is needed. During your regular dental visits, your dentist will check the condition of the sealants and reapply them when necessary.

Sealants are just for kids, right?
The likelihood of developing pit and fissure decay begins early in life, so children and teenagers are obvious candidates. But adults can benefit from sealants as well.

What factors could make an adult a candidate for sealants?

Do sealants help save money?
Prevention is better than treatment. When one considers that properly applied and maintained sealants are extremely effective in preventing pit and fissure decay, sealants are a very cost-effective measure. Savings in both dollars and discomfort can be gained by application of sealants, rather than allowing decay and requiring the tooth to be restored. For over 20 years the American Dental Association has evaluated sealants, and a number of different brands have been awarded the ADA Seal of Acceptance, a symbol of a product's safety and effectiveness. In addition, many private dental plans cover sealants. If your plan does not, contact your employer's benefits manager to suggest that sealants be included in future dental plans.

Key ingredients in preventing tooth decay and maintaining a healthy mouth are twice-daily brushing with a fluoride toothpaste; cleaning between the teeth daily with floss or interdental cleaners; eating a balanced diet and limiting snacks; and visiting your dentist regularly. When shopping for toothbrushes, toothpaste and other oral care products, choose those that bear the ADA Seal of Acceptance — an important symbol of a dental product's safety and effectiveness.
Nearly 9 out of 10 adults has difficulty using everyday health information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Motivation</th>
<th>High Motivation</th>
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<tr>
<td>High Literacy</td>
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<td>Low Motivation</td>
<td>Low Literacy</td>
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## Chronic Stressors

<table>
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<th>Stressors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug/alcohol abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incarceration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental illness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food insecurity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing insecurity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unsafe environment</td>
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<td>Physical illness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorce/Break up</td>
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<td>Poor maternal education</td>
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<td>Job insecurity</td>
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<tr>
<td>No access to healthcare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation insecurity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical/emotional abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTQ</td>
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<td>Disabilities</td>
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“Children subjected to such stress may lack crucial coping skills and experience significant behavioral and academic problems in school.”

*Teaching with Poverty in Mind* by Eric Jensen
Is linked to over 50 percent of all absences (Johnston-Brooks, Lewis, Evans, & Whalen, 1998).

Reduces motivation, determination, and effort (Johnson, 1981).

Reduces neurogenesis (growth of new brain cells) (De Bellis et al., 2001).

Impairs attention and concentration (Erickson, Drevets, & Schulkin, 2003).
Situational Stress

There are times when even the most literate individuals are not able to process and retain information.
Happy at dentist
Sad at dentist
Introduction: Extraction of teeth and other oral surgery are serious surgical procedures. Postoperative care is very important. Careful attention to the following instructions will help prevent complications, minimize discomfort, and promote proper healing.

Keep the Mouth Clean: Beginning the day after surgery, begin gently rinsing. You can use warm salt water, diluted mouthwash or simply water. Tooth brushing can resume the day after surgery as well. Avoid the areas of surgery and use a soft toothbrush. As healing progresses, normal brushing techniques may be resumed.

Bleeding: Gauze pressure is the most effective way to control bleeding. When you leave the office you will most likely be biting on a piece of gauze. This piece should be left in place for at least 30 minutes before removing it. After 30 minutes, the gauze should be removed. It is common to have slight bleeding or oozing for several days. If heavy bleeding continues, replace the gauze with a fresh folded piece. Be sure of proper placement of the gauze over the site of bleeding. Leave this piece in place under steady pressure, undisturbed for one hour. Resting, with the head elevated on a couple of pillows, is also helpful. Do not get excited. If bleeding does not subside, call for further instructions.

No smoking, spitting, use of drinking straws, vigorous rinsing for 72 hours. This may cause persistent bleeding or dislodge of the blood clot. Smokers should be aware that smoking could impair healing. It is recommended that patients recovering from oral surgery should no longer smoke.

Pain: The local anesthetic wears off in one to three hours. Some form of pain reliever should be taken before the numbness goes away. Tylenol, aspirin or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) is usually adequate. For more involved surgery, such as removal of impacted teeth, the doctor may prescribe stronger pain relievers. Take these medications as prescribed. Do not drive or operate machinery while on this medication.

Antibiotics: If you have been prescribed antibiotics, take all of the medication as directed. This drug is meant to treat or prevent infection.

If you experience any adverse reaction to the medication, such as nausea, rash or itching, discontinue the medication. A rash or itching may indicate an allergic reaction to a medication. Antihistamines (Benadryl) will usually counteract the hives, rash, and itching. Swelling of the lips, tongue or difficulty breathing may represent a more severe allergic reaction and you should seek medical attention immediately.

Sutures: In most cases dissolvable sutures are used. These sutures will come out on their own in 2 days to 2 weeks. If any sutures are bothering you, or you have concerns regarding your sutures, please contact the office during normal office hours. If the surgeon elects to use sutures that require removal, we will schedule a return appointment for you.

Discoloration: You may develop black, blue, green or yellow discoloration resembling a bruise to the tissue. This is due to a slight oozing of blood beneath the tissue and is of little significance. This is a normal postoperative event and will resolve in a few days to a week.
So how do we engage?
Clear messages
Less words
More graphics
Video
Text messaging
Social media
How are people learning and communicating in their personal lives?
Identify your biggest challenges. Create short videos to address them.
With our new mobile site, expecting mothers will have access to valuable information about local resources to help them through their pregnancy.

Women will be able to:
- Find health tips and information
- Search for a doctor in their area
- Get personal responses to their questions
Why “plain language” is not the answer
• Semi-annual shoe stock up event
• Buy one get one 50%
• All women’s shoes in stores and at target.com
Semi-annual shoe stock-up event

BUY ONE GET ONE 50% OFF
all women's shoes in stores and at Target.com/womensshoes
Dear Parent or Caregiver:

At..., we want to make sure we are providing the best possible care for you and your family. We know that there are problems that many families face. So, we are asking everyone these questions to make sure that you know about all the resources available to you. You do not have to answer all the questions if you don’t want to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child’s Name:</th>
<th>Phone Number:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preferred Language:</td>
<td>Best time to call:</td>
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1. Do you always have enough food for your family?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

2. Do you have safe child care or preschool for your children?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

3. Do you have trouble paying your heating bill in the winter?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

4. Do you feel safe in your house or apartment?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

5. Are you worried that your house or apartment is making you sick?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

6. Are you worried about becoming homeless?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

7. Do you have trouble getting rides to the doctor’s office or other appointments?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

8. Are you able to pay for your child’s medicines?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

9. Do you often feel like you need help managing your stress?  
   - [ ] No  
   - [ ] Yes

10. Is there something you need help with right away?  
    - (For example: I don’t have food for tonight, I don’t have a place to sleep tonight)
“This form looks like someone took the time to make this and they care about the answers. The other form looks like a test and I don’t know if I will fail.”

“It looks more appealing and comfortable.”
Happy Teeth!
¡Dientes Felices!
WIC Intervention

• What is WIC?

• Serves 50% of babies born in the US

• Provided training and teaching materials
RECOMMENDED AGE OF FIRST DENTAL VISIT

Pre training: 43%
Post training: 95%
VERY COMFORTABLE WITH TALKING ABOUT ORAL HEALTH

Pre training: 36%
Post training: 86%
Figure 6. Percent of Children with Confirmed Dental Visit, 6 Months Before and up to 3 Months after Index Date: 1 Year Olds

- Pre 6 months: 16% Controls, 28% WIC Visits with Referral
- Post-1 month: 3% Controls, 31% WIC Visits with Referral
- Post-2 months: 7% Controls, 37% WIC Visits with Referral
- Post-3 months: 11% Controls, 40% WIC Visits with Referral
Two year old children were more likely to see a dentist when referred by a WIC clinic, but the frequency of dental visits among controls increased compared to children less than 2 years (Figure 7).
Two year old children were more likely to see a dentist when referred by a WIC clinic, but the frequency of dental visits among controls increased compared to children less than 2 years (Figure 7).
Figure 1. Feedback Received on Dental Referral

- Dentist won't accept Medicaid
- Dentist won't accept infants
- Not a priority for parent
- Parent/caregiver does not have time
- Other (please specify)
Brochure Apocalypse
Think about the last project you worked on where written materials were developed.

How could you have communicated in a different way?