



# AHRQ Tools for Addressing Health Literacy

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**Cindy Brach**

**Center for Delivery,  
Organization, and Markets**



# AHRQ's Mission and Vision

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- To improve the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of health care for all Americans
- As a result of AHRQ's efforts, American health care will provide services of the highest quality, with the best possible outcomes, at the lowest cost

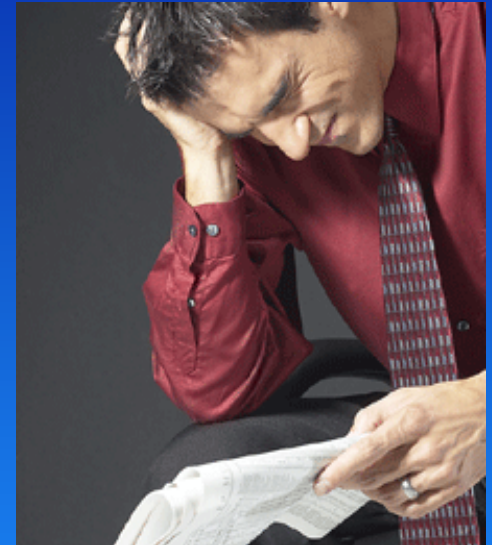
# Health Literacy Equation



**X**



**=**



**Skills/Abilities x Difficulty/Complexity = Health Literacy**



# Accessible Health Education Materials

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- Quick Tips – When Planning Surgery
- Help for Smokers and Other Tobacco Users
- Your Guide to Preventing and Treating Blood Clots

**<http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer/index.html>**

# Questions Are the Answer



Do You Know ?  
the Right Questions to Ask

[www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer](http://www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer)

- PSAs
  - Question Builder
- What is the test for?
  - When will I get the results?
  - Are there any alternatives?
  - How many times have you done this procedure before?
  - Are there any side effects?



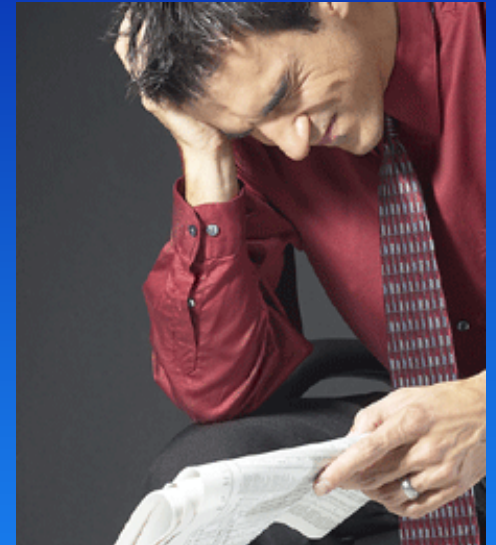
# Health Literacy Equation



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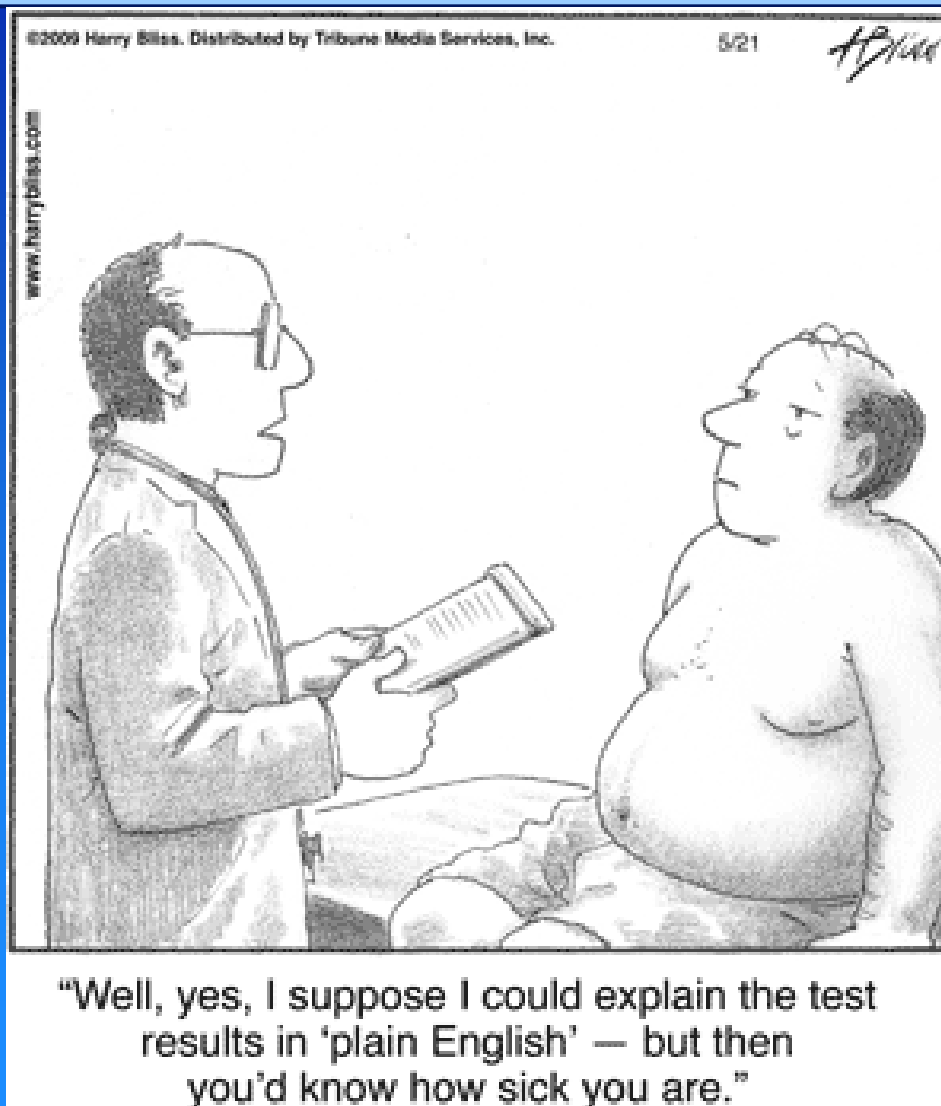


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







# Reducing Health Literacy Demands





# AHRQ Pharmacy Health Literacy Center

[www.ahrq.gov/pharmhealthlit/](http://www.ahrq.gov/pharmhealthlit/)

Name: Sarah Smith 12/15/07 Pharmacy phone number: 123-456-7890			Date Created:			
Name	Used For	Instructions	Morning 	Afternoon 	Evening 	Night 
Simvastatin 20mg 	Cholesterol	Take 1 pill at night				
Furosemide 20mg 	Fluid	Take 2 pills in the morning and 2 pills in the evening				
		Inject 24 units before breakfast and 12 units before dinner	24 units 		12 units 	



## Is Our Pharmacy Meeting Patients' Needs? A Pharmacy Health Literacy Assessment Tool User's Guide






# Re-Engineered Discharge Program (RED)



**PROJECT RED**  
Re-Engineered Discharge

**BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER**  
**BOSTON UNIVERSITY**

A Series of Randomized Control Trials at Boston Medical Center  
Funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality  
& National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

**Project RED (Re-Engineered Discharge)**

**Technology and the Re Engineered Discharge PDF (366 KB)**

Project *Re-Engineered Discharge* is a series of Randomized Controlled Trials at Boston University Medical Center. Each phase of Project RED is aimed at improving patient safety by recreating the process by which patients leave the hospital. Participants in Project RED receive treatment at an urban hospital that tends to serve a low-income, ethnically diverse population. The Project RED intervention is founded on 11 discrete, mutually reinforcing components. A specially trained nurse called a Discharge Advocate introduces the intervention to the RED participant.

This project is supported by grants from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH)-National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI). The contents of this website are solely the responsibility of Brian Jack, MD and Boston Medical Center and do not necessarily represent the official view of or imply endorsement by AHRQ, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the NIH or NHLBI.

**Click for Project RED Toolkit**

■ RCT-tested, designed to educate patients about their post-hospital care plans

■ 30 percent reduction in subsequent emergency visits and readmissions

<https://www.bu.edu/fammed/projectred/index.html>



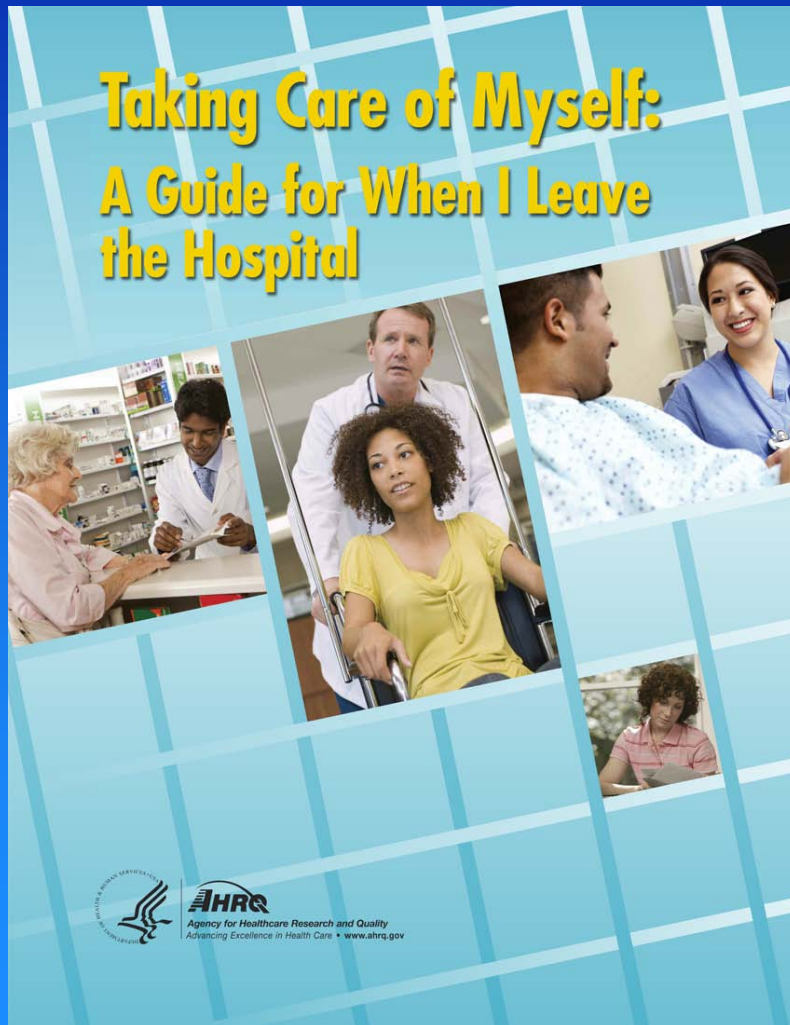
# Key RED Components

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- Discharge Educator: Teaches diagnosis, medicines, self-management, confirms understanding
- After Hospital Care Plan
- Make Appointments
- Follow-up Phone Call and Help Line

Free TA: <http://www.jcrinc.com/AHRQ-Project-Red/>

# For the Proactive Patient



- Fill-able PDF file
- Talk with the hospital staff
- Share with family and care-takers
- Bring to doctor appointments



# Measuring Patient Experiences: CAHPS®

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- Family of ambulatory and facility surveys
- Reporting about actual experiences
- Rigorous development process
- Public domain, in English and Spanish



# CAHPS® Item Set for Addressing Health Literacy

- Supplement to Clinician/Group CAHPS®  
[https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/HL/PROD\\_HL\\_Intro.asp?p=1021&s=215](https://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/content/products/HL/PROD_HL_Intro.asp?p=1021&s=215)
- Hospital CAHPS® Supplement – field testing
- Health Plan CAHPS® Supplement – cognitive testing





# Health Literacy Quality Improvement Crosswalk

Item	Question: In the last 12 months.....	AMA recommendation
HL1.	how often were the explanations this doctor gave you hard to understand because of an accent or the way the doctor spoke English?	Slow down. Use plain language and short statements. Ask for teach-back to ensure patient understanding of what the doctor has said.
HL2.	how often did this doctor use medical words you did not understand?	Use plain, non medical language.
HL3.	how often did this doctor talk too fast when talking with you?	Slow down. Break information down.
HL4.	how often did this doctor use pictures, drawings, or models to explain things to you?	Use visual aids to help understand medical information. Images should be age- and culturally appropriate.
HL5.	how often did this doctor ignore what you told him or her?	Listen rather than speak. Elicit understanding, identify information gaps, and assist patient management of care.

# Healthy People 2020 Measures

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In the last 12 months, how often did:

- This doctor give you easy to understand instructions about what to do to take care of this illness or health condition?
- This doctor ask you to describe how you were going to follow these instructions?
- Someone explain the purpose of a form before you signed it?

# Guides on Reaching Limited Literacy Audiences

## Accessible Health Information Technology (IT) for Populations with Limited Literacy:

### A Guide for Developers and Purchasers of Health IT

**Prepared for:**

National Resource Center for Health IT  
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
540 Gaither Road  
Rockville, MD 20850  
www.ahrq.gov

**Prepared by:**

June Eichner and Prashila Dullabh  
NORC at the University of Chicago

AHRQ Publication No. 08-0010-EF  
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## Health Literacy Online

### A guide to writing and designing easy-to-use health Web sites

- Strategies
- Actions
- Testing Methods
- Resources



<http://healthit.ahrq.gov>

<http://www.health.gov>



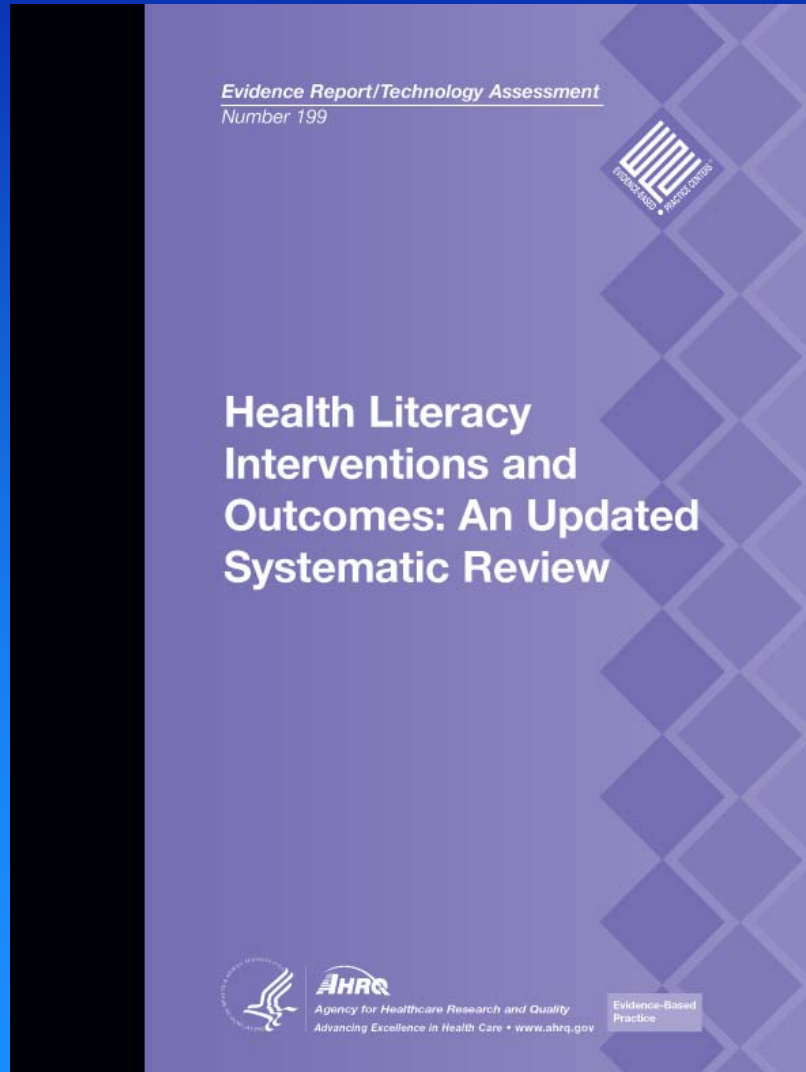
# AHQR Informed Consent and Authorization Toolkit for Minimal Risk Research

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- Addresses both HIPAA Privacy Rule and Informed Consent
- Sample forms
- Process
- Adoption advice

[www.ahrq.gov/fund/informedconsent/](http://www.ahrq.gov/fund/informedconsent/)

# New Evidence Report



- +100 studies since 2004 report
- More evidence of link between health literacy and health outcomes
- Some evidence interventions can reduce disease severity, ER visits, and hospital admissions





# Improving EHR's Patient Education Materials

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- Develop Health Information Rating System: understandability & actionability
- Develop library of understandable, actionable education materials
- Identify EHR features that facilitate patient education
- Educate EHR vendors and users

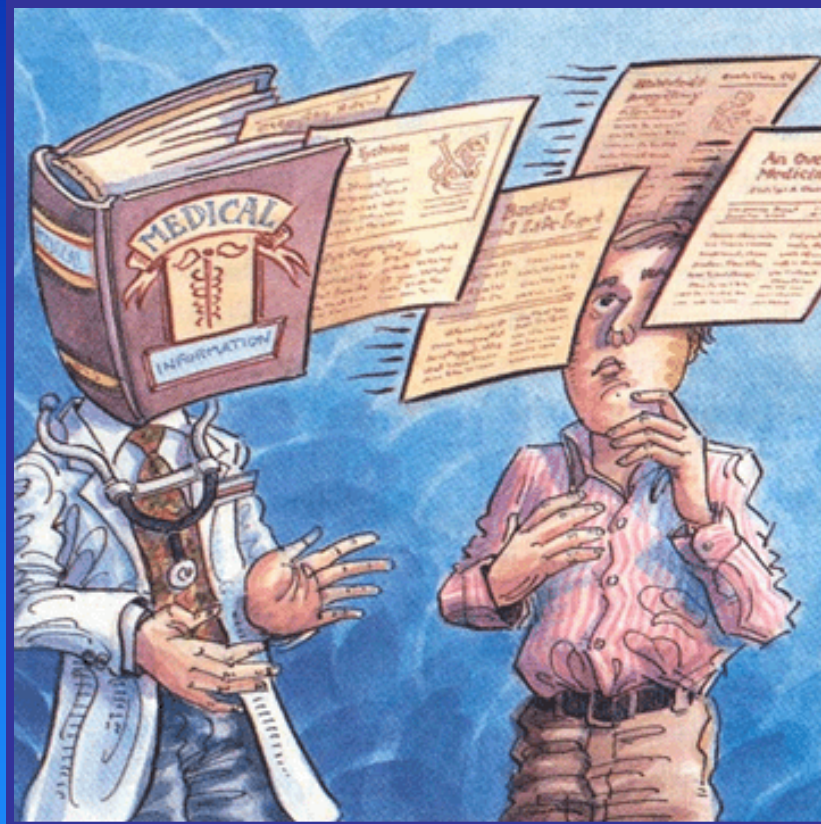


# More on AHRQ Health Literacy Materials

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- AHRQ Health Literacy and Cultural Competence Browse Page  
[www.ahrq.gov/browse/hlitix.htm#Literacy](http://www.ahrq.gov/browse/hlitix.htm#Literacy)
- 28,000+ subscribers to Email Updates  
[https://subscriptions.ahrq.gov/service/multi\\_subscribe.html?code=USAHRQ](https://subscriptions.ahrq.gov/service/multi_subscribe.html?code=USAHRQ)

# What Questions Do You Have?



[www.ahrq.gov](http://www.ahrq.gov)