

How does plain language support health literacy?

- Plain language principles consider the vocabulary level of spoken and written language.
- Plain language principles also consider how long a written document is, and whether the words are organized on the page in a way that is easy to follow.
- Plain language improves accessibility of language and makes translation easier.
- Health literacy is the skill to find, understand and use information to make decisions about health.
- To support health literacy, organizations should present words, numbers and images in ways that make sense to people who need the information.
- Since only 12% of English-speaking adults have proficient health literacy, organizations should assume most people will benefit from plain language principles.

Working toward health equity

Health equity means everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy. Supporting health equity includes removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences.

Low health literacy can be related to poverty, discrimination, and parts of people's identity like race/ethnicity and age. Supporting people's ability to be health literate is one way to work toward health equity.

Learn more about plain language and health literacy

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers [learning resources about Health Literacy](#).

[Plain language short videos](#) from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services provide quick and fun ways to learn plain language principles.

