

Public Health Response: --- **Reduce the Demands on Patients**

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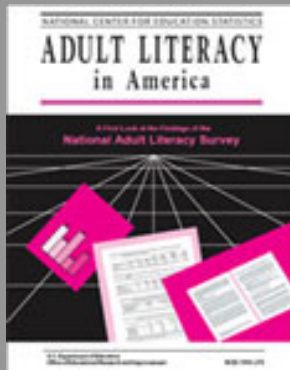
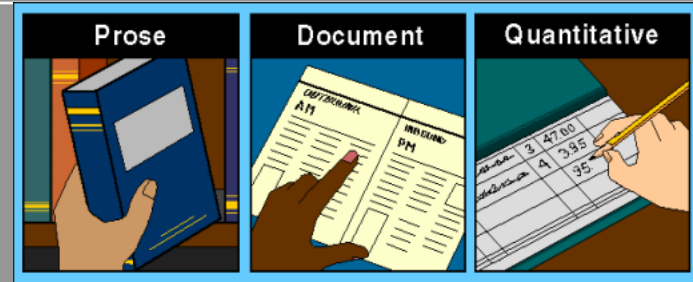


Session 3241.0 Oral Health Literacy

Literacy Skills

- Literacy influences one's ability to access information and to navigate the highly literate environments of modern society
- Those with more general literacy skills will also be more likely to have stronger health literacy skills

Adult Literacy & Health Literacy



Adult Literacy in America: The First Look at the Results of the National Adult Literacy Survey NALS 1993



The 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy 2005



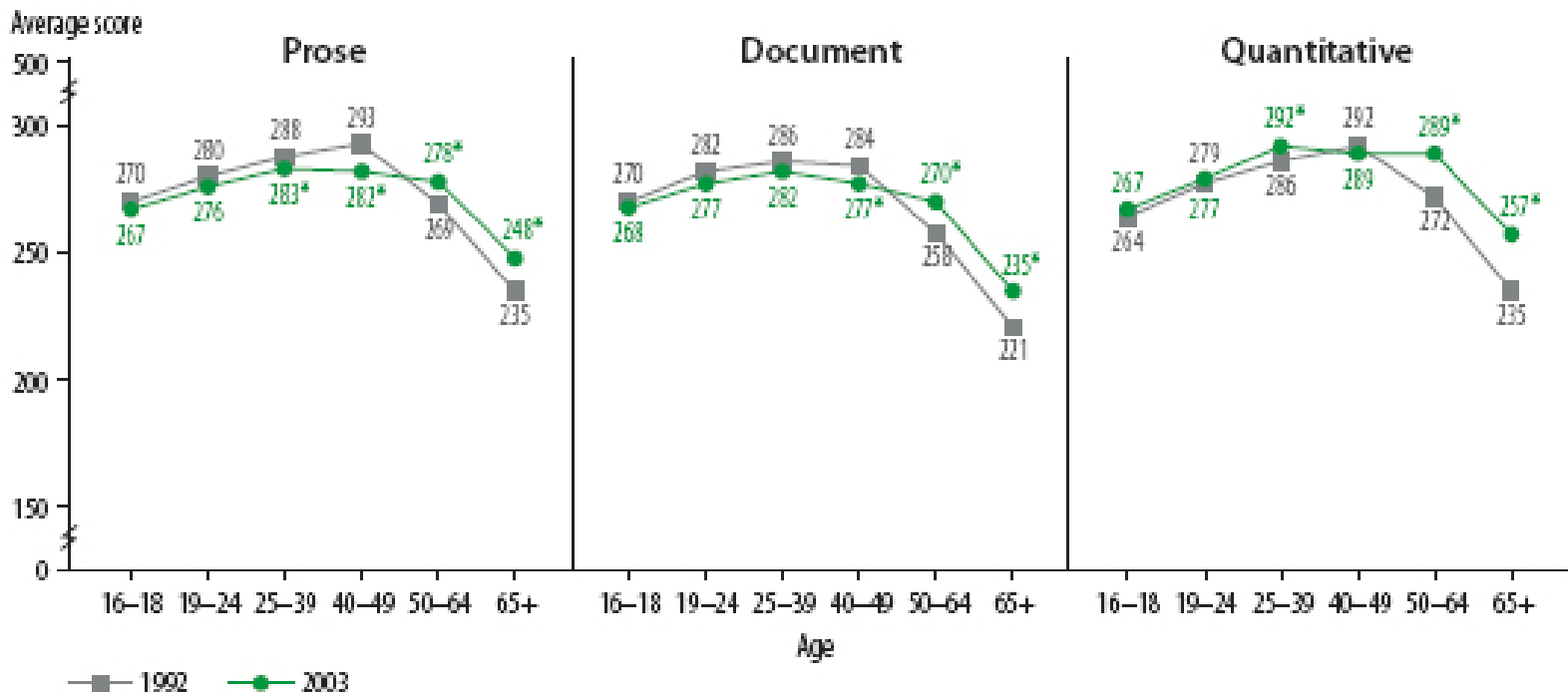
Literacy and Health in America 2004



The Health Literacy of America's Adults 2006

NALS 1992 / NAAL 2003

Average prose, document, and quantitative literacy scores of adults, by age:
1992 and 2003



Measures of Literacy Skills

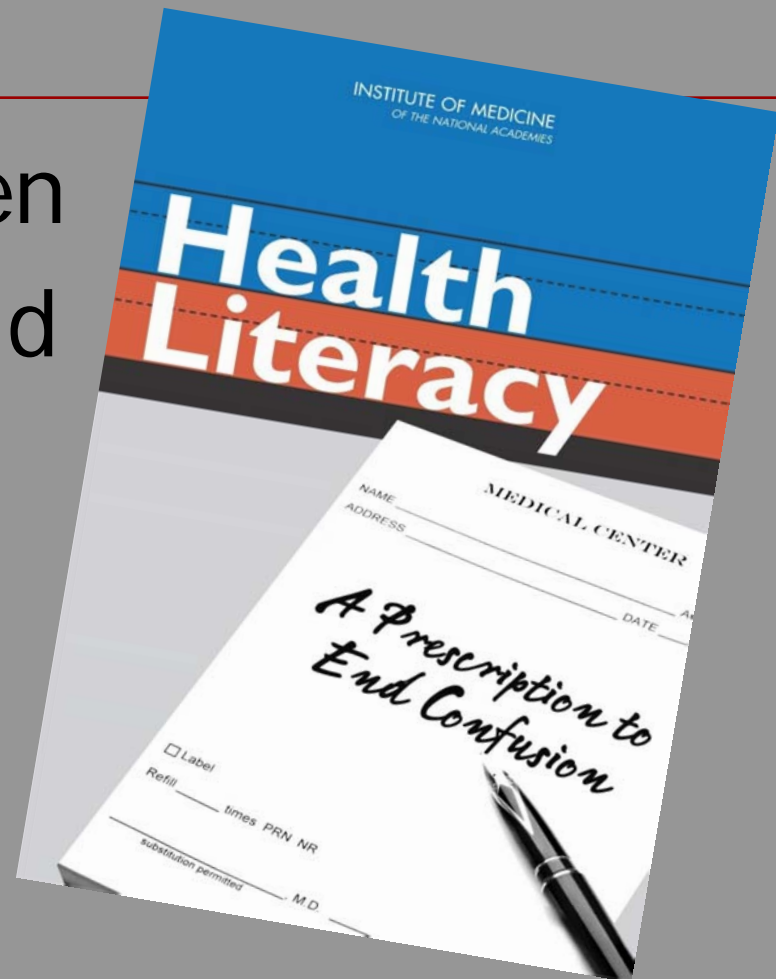
[NALS, IALS, ALLS, NAAL]

- Significant numbers of adults in most industrialized nations are limited in their ability to use everyday materials to accomplish mundane tasks
- Significant numbers of US adults have low-level literacy skills that constrain their participation in the economy and in society.
- There are strong relationships between
 - Literacy skills and social determinants [education, income, access to resources, age, minority status]
 - Literacy skills and health status
 - Literacy skills and health outcomes

Health Literacy

An interaction between
skills of individuals and
social demands

IOM 2004



Shift in Emphasis

- From: Portraits of adults with limited literacy skills
- To: Examinations of the interplay of social factors

Context: Demand Side

World wide, we see an increased demand from complex health care systems & increased responsibility for individuals interacting with health care systems

Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Surveys, 2003

Dual Responsibility

Patients' ability to understand health and medical issues and directions is related to the clarity of the communication.

Communicating Health: Priorities and Strategies for Progress
Health and Human Services 2003

Failure to provide patients with information about their care in ways that they can understand, will continue to undermine other efforts to improve patient safety.

Joint Commission Public Policy White Paper, 2007

Overall Findings

- A majority of US adults do not have the literacy skills needed to use health related print materials and tools with accuracy and consistency
- Over 800 studies in public health, medicine, and oral health indicate that most health related materials are inaccessible to about half of U.S. adults

Overall Findings

- A mismatch between literacy skills of individuals and the demands of oral health materials and services may erect an unnecessary barrier to preventive care and treatment.

Consider Current Issues

Disparities

- Access to insurance and to care
- Economic Constraints
- Needs of specific population groups

Implications for public and private practice

Critical Issues for Oral Health Communication

- Use of bottled water
- Oral cancer
- Links between oral health and CVD
- Links between oral health and diabetes
- Interactions with meds [e.g. cancer, rheumatology]

Analyze Contexts & Environments

Revisit assumptions

Skills & abilities

Background

Identify expectations

Remove barriers

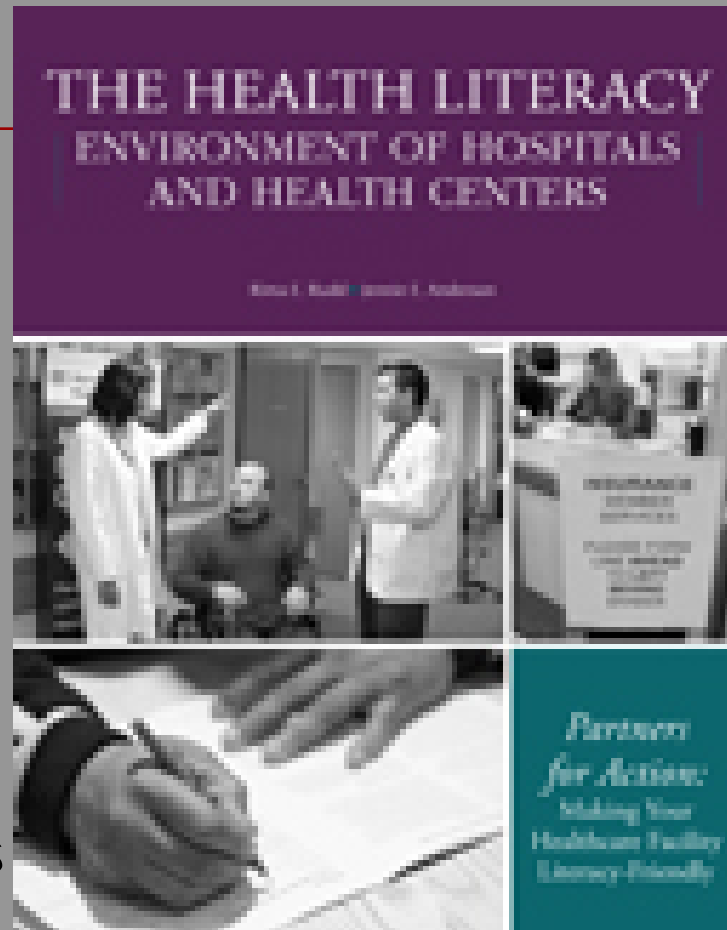
Consider environment

Improve oral exchange

Be attentive to numeracy

Improve processes & procedures

Move beyond print



Analyze Activities, Tasks & Tools

- Deconstruct activities
 - Tasks
 - Needed skills
 - Needed tools
- Shape interventions to match needs
 - Oral exchange
 - Numeracy
 - Directions, directives, actions plans

Set the Agenda for Oral Health Literacy

- Needed research initiatives
- Protocols for Practice
 - Dental Education
 - Licensing Exams
 - Public Health Dentistry
 - Private Practice
 - Research
 - Collaborations with medicine and public health