# Disseminating Health Literacy Tools to Pharmacies: The Utility of Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory

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#### Background

- The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) supported the development of four health literacy tools for pharmacies.
- AHRQ funded this contract, in part, to disseminate the health literacy tools to pharmacies to ultimately facilitate pharmacists' and pharmacies' adoption and implementation of the tools into everyday practice.

#### Objectives

- To understand how to use and adapt Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory approach to dissemination and implementation in pharmacy.
- To describe a tailored approach used to disseminate health literacy tools to pharmacies guided by Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory.

#### Diffusion of Innovations

- Developed by Everett M. Rogers in 1962; now in it's 5th edition (2003)
- Innovativeness and adopter categories
- **Innovators**
- Early adopters
- Early majority
- Late majority
- Laggards
- Innovation-decision process











# confirmation

#### Innovation-Decision Process Adapted to Pharmacy

#### Communication Channels Persuasion Confirmation Implementation **→**1. Adoption Quality Characteristics Perceived of the Pharmacy Characteristics Improvement **→2**. Rejection of the Innovation **Process**

- Characteristics of the Pharmacy Setting
- Type of pharmacy (e.g., chain, independent, 340B)
- Culture (e.g., patient-centered)
- Staff and staffing (e.g., pharmacy interns, residents)
- Prescription volume
- Association with pharmacy school (e.g., rotation site)
- Perceived characteristics of the Innovation/Tool
- Relative advantage
- Compatibility with pharmacy
- Complexity
- Trialability
- Observability

#### Mass Distribution

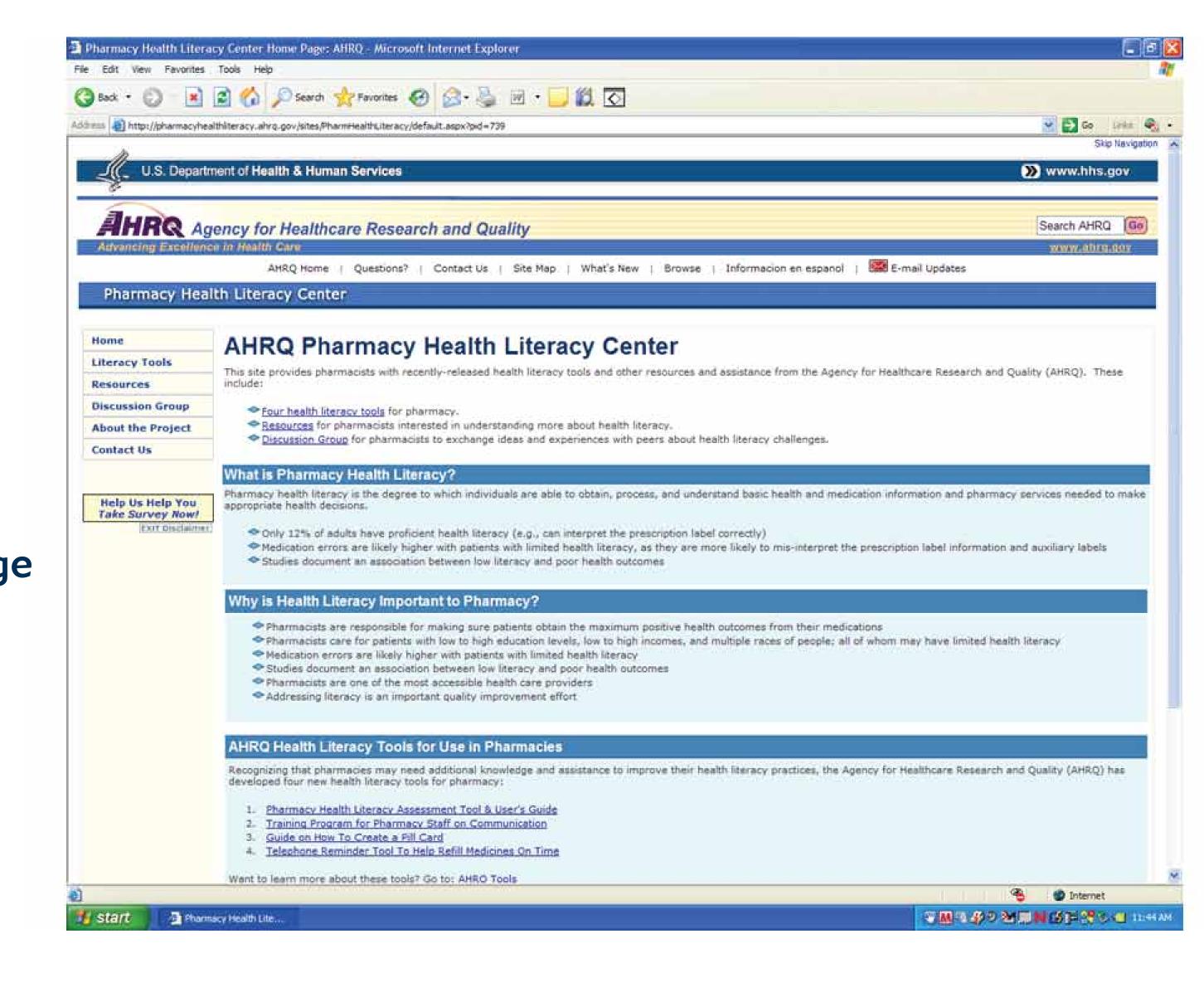
- Aim: To create awareness (knowledge) among pharmacies of the availability of the health literacy tools for pharmacy.
- Approach:
- Chain drug store newsletter announcement that reaches 38,000 pharmacies.
- Announcement in a pharmacy trade journal that reaches 140,000 pharmacists.

## **Targeted Dissemination**

- Aim: To create and/or increase awareness and persuade audience to use the tools.
- Approach:
- Mass mailing to 300 chain pharmacy's VPs of pharmacy affairs (i.e., decision-makers).
- Direct dissemination to pharmacy faculty group that focuses on underserved curriculum who are interested in health literacy and likely to be "innovators".

#### Dissemination of Comprehensive Information and Support to Implement Tools

- Aim: To create awareness, persuade pharmacists to decide and implement the tools. Approach:
  - Pharmacy Health Literacy Center website at http://pharmacyhealthliteracy.ahrq.gov
    - Provides pharmacists the information necessary to consider adopting the tools and resources to encourage implementation.
    - Information and literature on health literacy.
  - Copies of the health literacy tools.
    - Resources to support use of the tools.
    - Technical assistance for pharmacies using the tools.
  - Discussion board for pharmacists to exchange ideas and experiences with peers.



### **Assessing Dissemination Efforts**

The outcomes of the dissemination effort will be measured from:

- Circulation size of distribution mechanisms (e.g., newsletter).
- Website tracking statistics on visitor, traffic, and site usage.
- Survey of website visitors.

A report on the distribution outcomes will answer the following:

- 1. What messages, tools and other resources were disseminated?
- 2. What distribution mechanisms were used to disseminate the health literacy tools messages, and what was the circulation size?
- 3. How many pharmacies and pharmacists were reached?
- 4. By which distribution mechanisms did pharmacists and pharmacies become aware of the tools?
- 5. How many individuals visited the project's health literacy website?
- 6. What were the distribution outcomes for each of distribution effort?

#### Discussion

- Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory was instructive for designing a tailored approach to disseminating health literacy tools to pharmacists and pharmacies.
- The outcomes of the distribution efforts will be informative for further adapting and refining the designed approach for future dissemination efforts to pharmacists and pharmacies.
- The findings from this tailored dissemination approach with pharmacists will be helpful for future quality improvement efforts targeting pharmacists and pharmacies.

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