



Advocacy Tool Kit: Health Literacy

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Purpose of the Toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide information on how to advocate, specifically in health literacy.

This toolkit is made to be a resource to aid in persuading those who make decisions in a system or a leader policy towards a cause, and provides an outline on how to be successful in advocacy.

It is split into three different sections - Health Literacy, Advocacy and Strategies. These sections provide step-by-step guide through understanding and taking action.

The table of contents outlines the sections and subdivisions. The titles are hyperlinked so you can quickly get to the desired section.





Health Literacy

Health Literacy

What is Health Literacy?

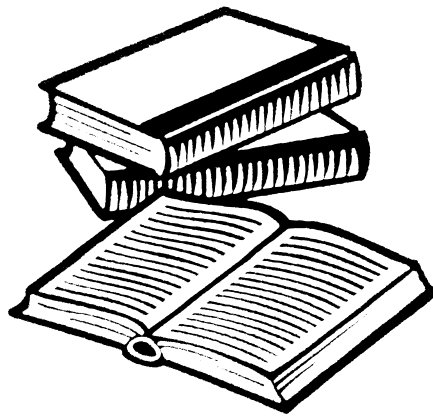
“The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.”

For the Patient, Health Literacy can:

- Increase the patient's ability to understand *and* apply the information, putting the patient in an appropriate position
- Protect health
- Better manage health as problems arise

For the Organization, Health Literacy can:

- Put pressure on organizations and institutions to accept responsibility in education
- Improve health care
- Lower health care costs and hospital stays



Health Literacy

Why is Health Literacy Important?

90

million

Americans have
low health literacy

4X

Higher Health Care Cost

6%

More Hospital Visits

2-Day

Longer Hospital
Stay

Health Literacy

Why is Health Literacy Important?

Providing education to increase health literacy can:

- Prevent healthcare problems
- Protect our health
- Better manage our own health as problems arise

Factors that Affect Health Literacy:

- Socioeconomic status
- Education level
- Age
- English proficiency
- State or federal health coverage individuals

How Healthcare Workers Can Help:

1. Speak to patients in plain, easy to understand language and terms (think 5th grade level)
2. Use more symbols & pictures in handouts
3. Provide education to improve literacy skills and encourage individuals in their health decision-making
4. Create patient-centered health care delivery



Advocacy

Advocacy

<p>What is Advocacy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a stance on a topic then, showing and putting pressure on a decision-maker to bring change to a system or policy • Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <u>Advocacy groups and their role in rare diseases research</u>
<p>Why Should I Advocate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a better position for yourself or others by pushing for policy change within a system
<p>What Does it Look Like & How Can I Advocate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Bring together people that care and believe in the same thing ◦ A community and team to help advocate together (educate, put together events, etc.) • Vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Go out and vote for what you believe in! ◦ Push others to vote too • Connect with a Representative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Call or write to your federal, state and local officials to show them you care about this topic • Educate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Put together events to train others and share your thoughts ◦ Forward article, news, or social media post to others • Be Present <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Show up to events ◦ Walk in rallies to support ◦ Visit the capital to advocate



Strategy

Strategy

Research

The amount and length of research will vary depending on the issue addresses.

- Find Evidence-Base for your Advocacy Efforts
 - Credible sites:
 - Center of Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov>
 - National Institutes of Health: <https://www.nih.gov>
 - USDA: <https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/resources/health-literacy>

Strategy

SWOT Analysis

Let's look at the SWOT analysis table for our communities/states/regions. This exercise will provide a baseline to help optimize your advantages, decrease risk, and highlight advocacy efforts.

S Strengths	W Weaknesses	O Opportunities	T Threat
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are your pros? Compared to others, what do you do better? How do others see as your advantage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can you improve? How do others see as your disadvantage? What should you stay away from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What gaps are available that you can fill?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What challenges are you facing? What are others doing? Competitors doing? Can any of your disadvantages threaten your objective?

Risk Analysis

This tool will help answer "what are the impacts of these risks?" and "how are they prioritized?"

1. Categorize the risk in the table below:

	Minor	Moderate	Major
Frequent	Medium	High	High
Likely	Low	Medium	High
Remote	Insignificant	Low	Medium

(Adapted from Toolshero)

2. Adapt advocacy plan to:


- Prevent risks from occurring
- Discuss root of threat and decrease risk
- Pass risk to another group
- Recognize the risk with no action and address once it is present

Strategy

Identify Target Audience

Target audience are people that make decisions in health literacy legislative (bill, act, policy). Influencers are people who have close contact with these direct decision-makers.

Find Your Legislators

Who is Your Representative?	
<i>Use This Link:</i> https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials	
<i>Scan Barcode:</i>	

Explore Their Websites

Think about the following questions.

- Is health literacy important to the public? Do they know what it means?
- Do leaders prioritize health literacy? Or do they need persuasion?
- What are these leaders motivated by? What are their interests?
- What leaders make this decision? Who surrounds these decision-makers?
- Do other departments agree with health literacy advocacy that can be an ally?
- Do influential associations have high-risk participants that value health literacy?
- Can media help with influence?
- Are private sector organizations influential for health literacy?

Strategy

Project Outline

These tools can help you plan and organize your advocacy initiatives. Use the tablet below to help brainstorming project goals.

Brainstorming	
<i>What are you trying to accomplish? What is your objective?</i>	
<i>What is the problem?</i>	
<i>How do we solve it?</i>	
<i>When do you want it to be completed?</i>	
<i>What help do I have? Who else is on my team?</i>	

Research

Create Strategy

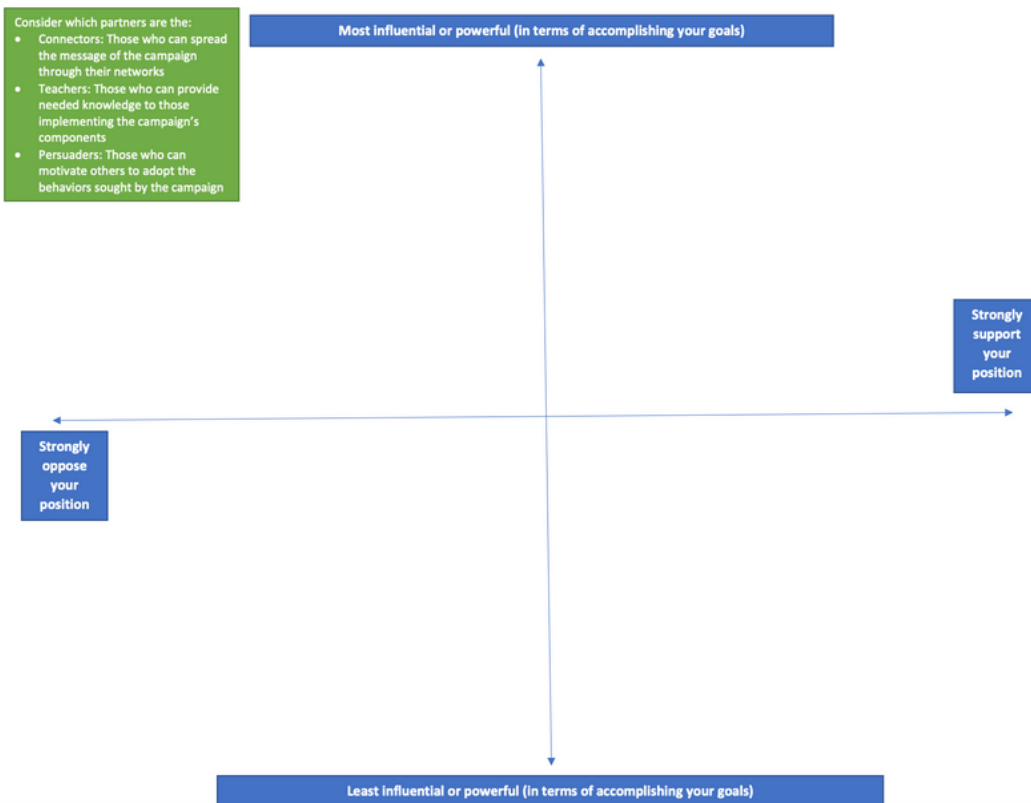
To create a strategy, we have to answer some questions:

- What is your goal?
- Obtain research (data) in agreement to your health literacy position
- Political leaders position and who needs to be persuaded
- Mapping in how to reach the leaders, and in what format

We want slow shifts in health literacy policy to help advance bigger shifts. For example, if a policy leader repeats data or anecdotes you have mentioned.

Planning Action

Map out how the process may look like



Map out how the process may look like:

1. What is your long-term goal?
2. Identify short-term goals that contribute to the long-term goal?
3. Think of approaches or procedures that can cause change.
4. Monitor and evaluate advancements with goals.

Strategy

Create Goals

S • **Specific:** What are you exactly trying to complete?

M • **Measurable:** How can you monitor the outcome?

A • **Achievable:** Is this goal within your reach to accomplish?

R • **Relevant:** Is the goal pertinent to the end goal?






T • **Timely:** When do you want the goal to be achieved by?

Example:	Ex: Ex: I will write a letter for health literacy advocacy to 5 representatives in the next month
Now Write Your Own:	

Strategy

Timeline

Second, creating a timeline can make sure you stay on track. Below is a Project Timeline example.

Project Timeline Example:						
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Week 1</i>	<i>Week 2</i>	<i>Week 3</i>	<i>Week 4</i>	<i>Week 5</i>	<i>Week 6</i>
Plan Strategy						
Get Involved						
Conduct Research						
Communicate						
Follow-Up						

Research

Stakeholder Management

1st: Analyze time, resources, current supporters

- Stakeholders offer: network, information, financial resources, skill
 - Who are my stakeholders? What influence do they have? What are their interests? Who knows health literacy?
 - This determines how/when to communicate, how to gain support and interest to bring action

2nd: Rank stakeholders value

- Who will bring the most benefit to the issue?

3rd: Comprehend

- Ask stakeholder questions about themselves to understand their point of view, opinions, interests and decision-making

4th: Consideration

- Review goals and adjust as needed based on analysis
- Grid Tool - categorize stakeholders
 - Keep Satisfied: maintain informed, high communication, limited time
 - Manage Closely: important role, invite to events, keep connection
 - Monitor: don't use too much resources, maintain informed
 - Keep Informed: high communicate, high influence

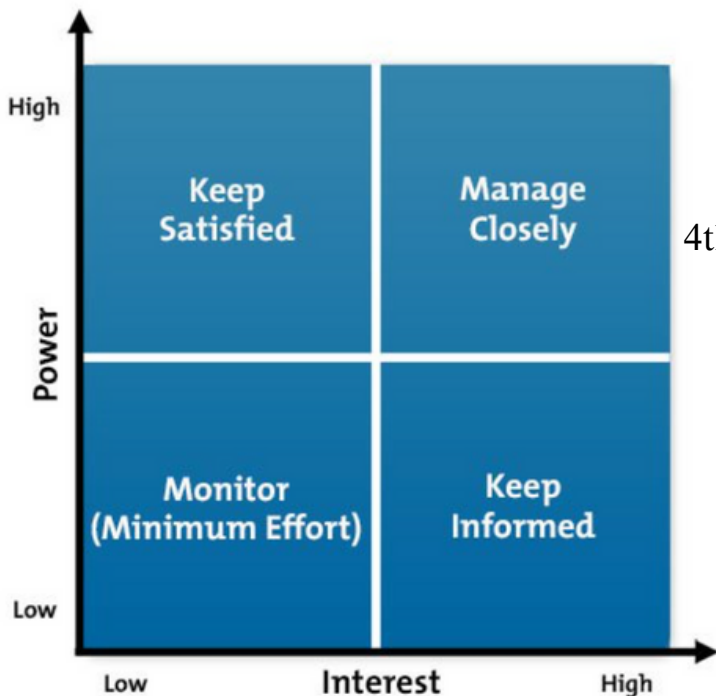


Image source: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_07.html

Research

Budgeting

How much monetary costs will be used toward advocacy?

- Default - Insubstantial Part Test: can use 3-5% for lobbying
- 501(h) Election: for budgets <\$500,000 can use 20% for lobbying and 25% specifically for grassroots lobbying

Use the table below for direction:

LOBBYING LIMIT EXAMPLES			
Exempt Purpose Expenditures (Your Budget)	Max Recommended Lobbying Budget		Insubstantial Part Test
	Total Allowed Lobbying Budget	Amount Allowed for Grassroots Lobbying	Max Recommended Lobbying Budget
\$1,000	\$200	\$50	\$30-\$50
\$5,000	\$1,000	\$250	\$150-\$250
\$10,000	\$2,000	\$500	\$300-\$500
\$30,000	\$6,000	\$1,500	\$900-\$1,500
\$50,000	\$10,000	\$2,500	\$1,500-\$2,500
\$500,000	\$100,000	\$25,000	\$15,000-\$25,000
\$750,000	\$137,500	\$34,375	\$22,500-\$37,500
\$1,500,000	\$225,000	\$56,250	\$45,000-\$75,000
\$10,000,000	\$650,000	\$162,500	\$300,000-\$500,000

Research

Fundraising

Suggesting a variety of options to act, the more people are inclined to get involved - *monetarily, voice and vote*

Grassroots Fundraising: emphasis on help; a type of fundraising that asks volunteers and those that agree with position to recruit others for contributions

- Ex: crowdfunding, peer-to-peer fundraisings

Nonprofit Advocacy Campaign: emphasis on policy; support volunteers and those that agree with position to get involved in long-term goal

- Ex: enhance education, empower volunteers to get involved and increase awareness

Research

Fundraising

Practices to Adopt

1. *Connect with your current connections*
 - Ex: donors, attendees, subscribers
2. *Try different approaches for advocacy campaign*
 - Use all platforms to reach them to raise likeliness of responses/action
 - Ex: email, mail, social media
3. *Research and collect data on supporters*
 - Understand what motivates involvement (what works, communication preference, time of day)
 - Gather demographic information (age, location, gender, education, hobby, marital status, political stance)
4. *Concentrate only on health literacy legislation*
 - Keep attention on main issue so supporters grow their knowledge and maintain engagement
5. *Stay up-to-date trends in grassroots and advocacy*
 - Research more common practices in fundraising via others in the community, blogs, articles
 - Ex: the internet and social media plays a big role in fundraising

The image shows the Wisconsin State Capitol building, a grand neoclassical structure with a prominent dome topped by a statue. The building is set against a clear blue sky with some light clouds. A large, semi-transparent teal rectangle is overlaid on the left and center of the image, containing the text 'Take Action'.

Take Action

Step 1 : Develop a Collaborative or Team

Form an Allied Group

- Communities enhance influence, increase resources, and bring in more supporters
- Create connection in how both parties can "win"
- Coalition should mirror the needs, and characteristics of the community
- Tips
 - Organize advocacy practice
 - Host events to educate public on health literacy policy
 - Engage in social media to build conversation

Questions to Think About

What organizations or individuals are currently doing work on these issues locally and/or nationally?

Am I best suited to play a leading role in advancing this solution in the form of policy, or is my mission better served if I become a signatory to an existing coalition?

What is required to join an existing coalition?

In what ways can I best assist existing efforts to advance this issue locally?

What three individuals or organizations can I contact to get a better understanding of the work happening in my community on this issue?

In what ways can I best assist existing efforts to advance this issue locally?

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Step 2 : Decide on Actions

Messaging



Email (cost-effective, quick, easy)



Phone



Be Present (Attend open meetings or advocate with legislators)



Write Letters (high value, effective support to other efforts)



Step 2 : Decide on Actions

OpEds



Proclamations



Legislative Testimony

Policy Briefs

Policy Statements



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