

Health Literacy Staff Assessment: Focus on Discharge and Use of Teach-back

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Lewis County, New York

- Rural community health system, Critical Access Hospital.
 - Emergency room is open 24/7: 10,951 patients seen in 2022, 913 monthly average. Exceeded this number in 2023 to date.
 - **Inpatient acute care: average of 55 inpatient discharges per month.**
 - Outpatient clinics.
- Population served: 26,456 (2020 census).
- Age groups
 - Largest: ages 45-54 and 65-74.
- Education
 - 91% of Lewis County residents hold at least a high school education.
 - Only 18% hold a bachelor's degree or higher (Community Health Needs Assessment).

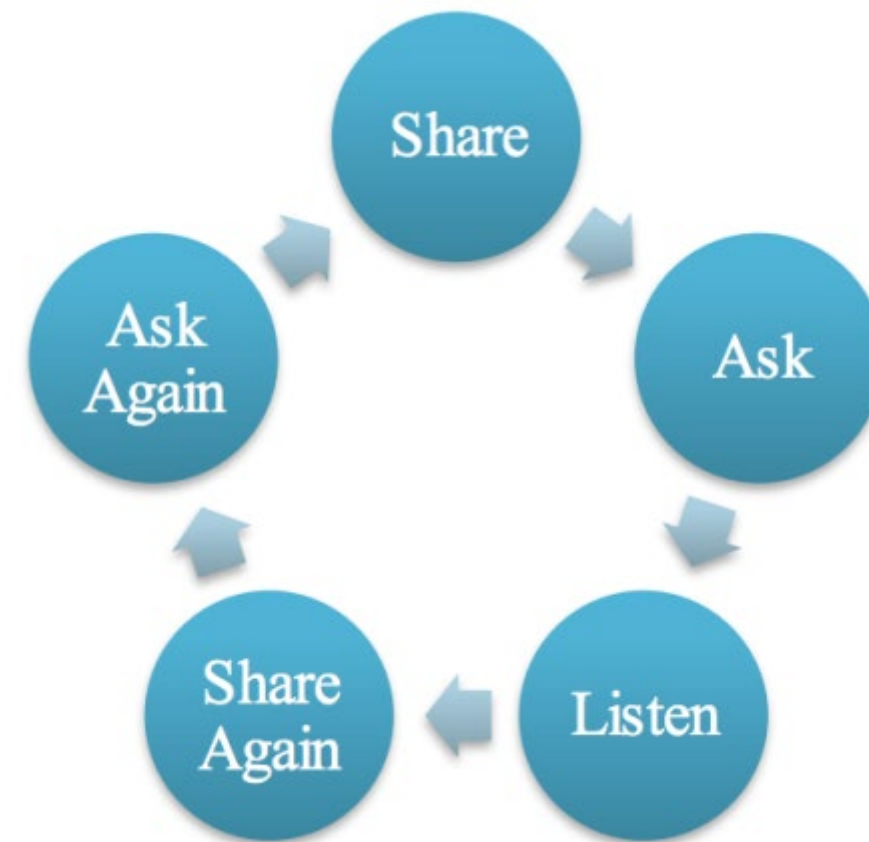
Health literacy and teach-back

What is health literacy?

- **Personal health literacy:** how well someone can find, understand and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions.
- **Organizational health literacy:** how well organizations enable individuals to find, understand and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions.

What is teach-back?

- **Teach-back:** a teaching method where healthcare providers ask patients to repeat in their own words what they need to know or do about their health.




HealthyPeople2030,
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2023

Why this project?

- Low health literacy directly impacts patient safety, leading to negative outcomes.
- Patient education is necessary to improve outcomes and ensure patient safety.

patients with low
HEALTH LITERACY...




Are more likely to visit an **EMERGENCY ROOM**

Have more **HOSPITAL STAYS**

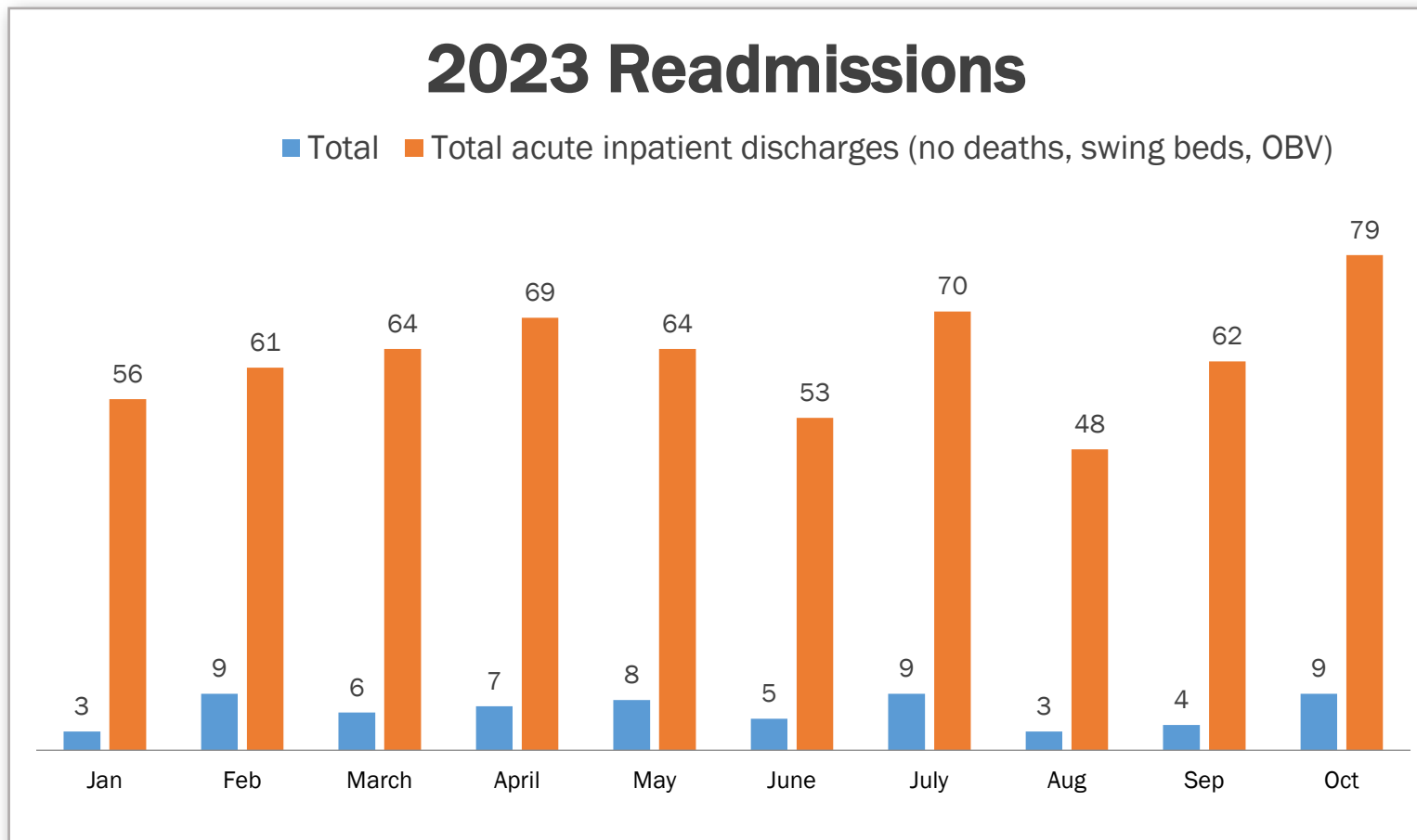
Are less likely to follow **TREATMENT PLANS**

Have higher **MORTALITY RATES**

www.cdc.gov/phpr 

The focus on health literacy aims to “eliminate health disparities, achieve health equity and attain health literacy to improve the health and well-being of all.” – Healthy People 2030

Why this project?



2023 Readmission Rates	
Jan	5.4%
Feb	14.8%
March	9.4%
April	10.1%
May	12.5%
June	9.4%
July	12.9%
Aug	6.3%
Sep	6.5%
Oct	11.4%

Project outline

To provide clear and effective education to patients, staff need awareness of health literacy.

Target population:

- Acute care nursing staff involved in the discharge process.

Goal:

- Increase staff knowledge of health literacy related to discharge.

Interventions:

- Staff will complete a pre-education survey that will assess base line knowledge of health literacy.
- Staff will complete education related to health literacy, discharge planning and the teach-back method.
- Staff will complete a post-education survey that will assess knowledge gained from education provided.

Health literacy staff assessment

- Limited health literacy is associated with:
 - A. Higher mortality rates
 - B. Lower levels of health knowledge
 - C. Greater use of inpatient and emergency department care
 - D. Poor medicine adherence
 - E. B and D
 - F. All of the above
- You can tell how health literate a person is by knowing what grade he or she completed in school.
 - A. True
 - B. False
- Which of the following skills are considered to be components of health literacy?
 - A. Ability to understand and use numbers
 - B. Reading skills
 - C. Speaking skills
 - D. Ability to understand what is said
 - E. Writing skills
 - F. All the above
- Being anxious affects a person's ability to absorb, recall, and use health information effectively.
 - A. True
 - B. False
- What is the average reading level of U.S. adults?
 - A. 4th-5th grade
 - B. 6th-7th grade
 - C. 8th-9th grade
 - D. 10th-11th grade
 - E. 12th grade

- What is the grade level at which health-related information (like a diabetes brochure) is typically written?
 - A. 4th-5th grade
 - B. 6th-7th grade
 - C. 8th-9th grade
 - D. 10th grade or higher
 - E. 11th grade or higher
 - F. 12th grade or higher
 - G. college level
- What is the best reading level for written materials used with patients?
 - A. 3rd-4th grade
 - B. 5th-6th grade
 - C. 7th-8th grade
 - D. 9th-10th grade
 - E. 11th-12th grade
- To use good health literacy practices, staff and clinicians should use which of the following words/phrases when talking to or writing instructions for a patient or family member?

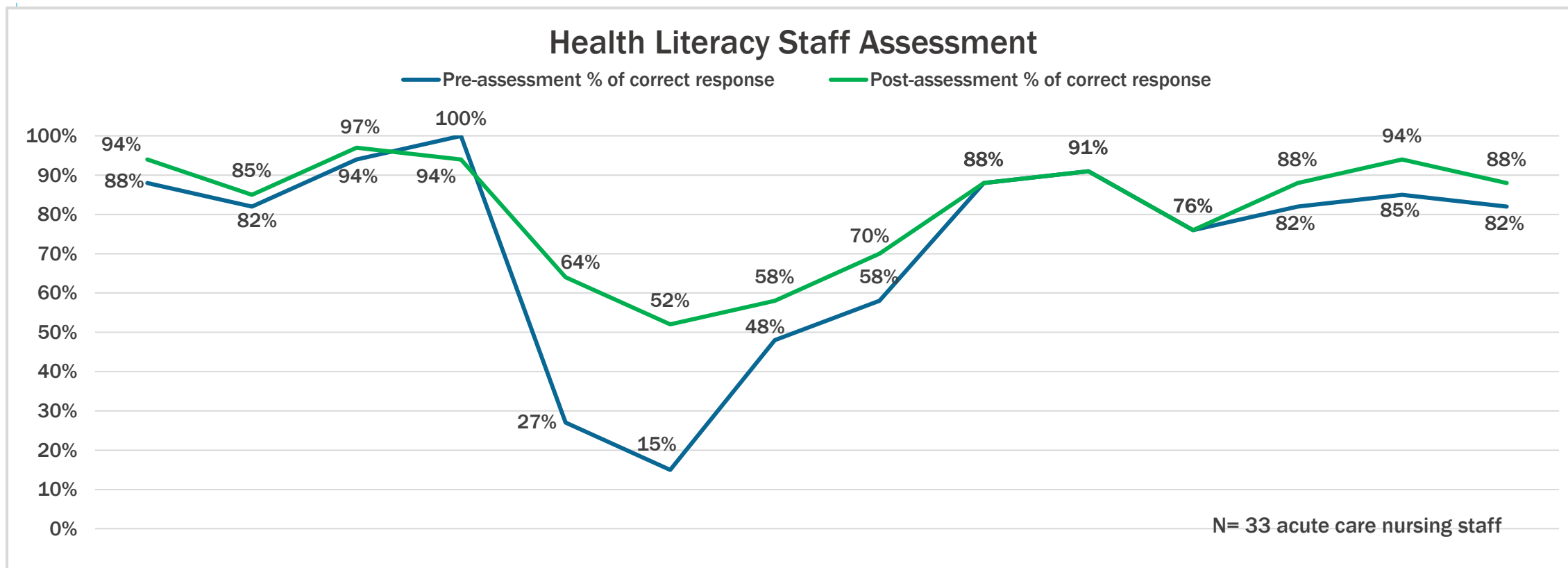
Circle the word/phase in either Option 1 or 2 in each row			
	Option 1	OR	Option 2
a.	Bad	OR	Adverse
b.	Hypertension	OR	High Blood Pressure
c.	Blood Glucose	OR	Blood Sugar
d.	You have the flu.	OR	Your flu test was positive.
e.	The cardiologist is Dr. Brown.	OR	The heart doctor is Dr. Brown.
f.	Your appointment is at 11:00 AM. Check in 20 minutes early.	OR	Arrive at 10:40 AM to check in.

- It is a good health literacy practice to assume that each patient you communicate with has limited health literacy.
 - A. True
 - B. False

Source: AHRQ Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit, 2nd Edition

Tracking improvement

- Scores for *average reading level in the U.S.* improved from 27% to 64% (36.4% increase).
- Scores for *grade level at which health information is written* improved from 15% to 52% (36.4% increase).
- Scores for *being anxious affects a person's ability to absorb, recall and use health information effectively, (true/false)* decreased from 100% to 94% (6.06% decrease).



What's next?

- Share results with staff to close gaps.
- Provide teach-back education to staff.
- Case management and social work patient screenings
- Assess discharge materials:
 - Which documents are included?
 - Are the documents easy to understand?
- Analyze patient feedback and satisfaction with discharge.
- Conduct a patient health literacy assessment.



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EXCELLENCE AND INCLUSION

Questions?

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