

HEALTH LITERACY AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES PROGRAM FOR ROMA IN ROMA SETTLEMENTS

for local Roma educators and mediators

- **Module 1: HEALTH LITERACY**
 - **Chapter 4: Accessing, understanding and appraising health information**

SUMMARY:

For patients to self-manage their health and disease, it is important that they are able to access, understand, and appraise health information. However, many Roma people experience difficulties doing so and this Chapter is focusing on tools to overcome those difficulties.

OVERVIEW of Module I: Health Literacy



- **Chapter 1: What is health literacy?**
Exploring the concept and definitions of health literacy. Various aspects of health literacy.
- **Chapter 2: The concepts and consequences of limited health literacy. How big is the Roma health literacy problem in Europe?**
Roma Health Literacy is considered a European problem and challenge affecting a large proportion of the continent's population. This Chapter, explores the extent of the health literacy problem in European Roma communities.
- **Chapter 3: Barriers in communication between healthcare professional and Roma patients.**
Roma patients with limited health literacy often experience barriers in the communication with healthcare professionals and health mediators, experiencing for example – language barrier, mistrust, racial discrimination or simply the use of medical jargon. The Chapter also addresses the challenges concerning the delivery of health information Roma communities in a variety of non-clinical settings, both in-person and via information technology.
- **Chapter 4: Accessing, understanding and appraising health information**
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**MODULE 1
Chapter 4: Accessing,
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health information.**



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Addressing Roma Health Literacy as a Skill

- Health literacy, or a person's competence to access, understand, appraise and apply health information, can be considered a mediating factor between socioeconomic characteristics and health disparities.
- Socioeconomically disadvantaged Roma communities in particular present with less health literacy skills.
- To develop targeted interventions tailored to their real needs, it is important to understand how they learn and what difficulties they encounter when dealing with health information.



Accessing, understanding and appraising health information

Graph by **Anthea
Burnett**, IAPB
Knowledge Team,
November 2022



Accessing

People access information in different ways

Understanding



People have different levels of knowledge and understanding of eye health



Appraising

People have different abilities to decide which information is trustworthy or relevant

Remembering



Health knowledge needs to be remembered and retrieved when needed



Using

Using knowledge involves daily decisions about prevention, managing symptoms and making or attending appointments



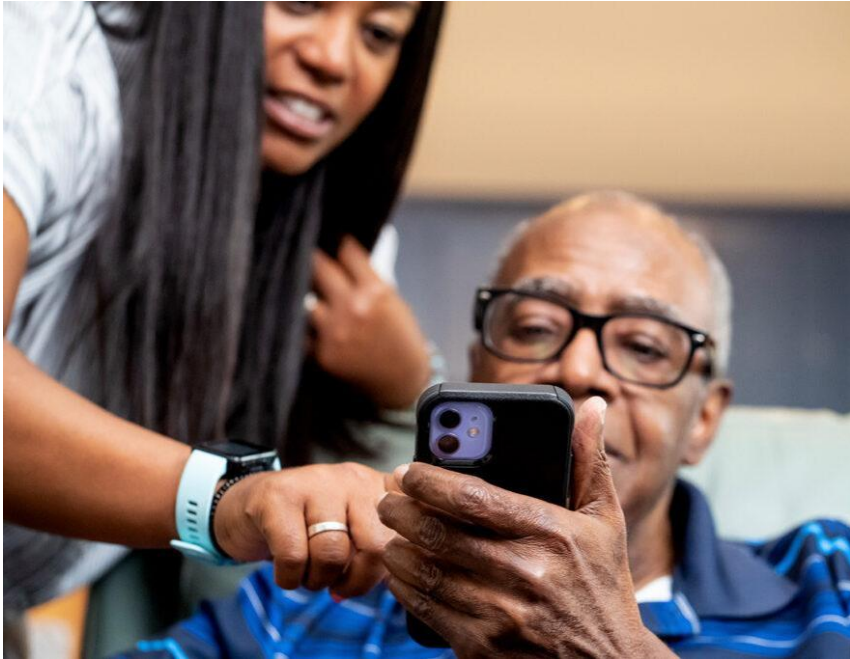
Health Literacy Skills and Information

- Patients with inadequate health literacy skills are unable to effectively communicate with health professionals, understand health information and choose appropriate treatment recommendations.
- When patients receive insufficient information to participate in decisions regarding their care, it limits the extent of their participation and thwarts early recovery.



Health literacy is how people access, understand, appraise, remember and use health information and services.

Increased health literacy can empower individuals and communities to actively engage with and use the healthcare services they need.



- Healthcare professionals play a critical role in helping patients obtain and understand health information.
- In addition, nursing professionals are often viewed as “communication brokers” between doctors and patients and are required to translate “medical language” into “everyday language” for patients. Meanwhile, they are the main professionals responsible for patients’ health education and health promotion activities.



Right to Access Personal Health Information

By law, patients and their legal representatives have the right to view and get copies of their personal health information from health care providers who treat them.

These types of personal health information include:

- Claims and billing records
- Information related to their enrolment in health plans
- Medical and care management records
- Other records that doctors or health plans use to make decisions about patients

If this information is electronic, patients also may request to have it sent to a third party of your choosing.

A third party may be a:

- Health care provider who treats you
- Family member
- Researcher



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Right to Access Personal Health Information

Educational Video



- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WsRzlutBQk&ab_channel=OfficeoftheNationalCoordinatorforHealthIT



Understanding and uprising health information

Understanding and uprising health information, which is considered to be a lifelong process, is closely linked with one's economic and social situation, and cultural heritage. It is clear that health literate citizens are a necessary precondition.

Health education in Roma settlements is especially important in childhood as it builds healthy attitudes and behaviours to one's own health that last into adulthood.

In 2013 the World Health Organization pointed out that health literacy was related to the social gradient (scale), i.e., the lower on the social gradient, the greater the health inequality gap.

Equally indisputable is that people with higher capacity to process health information are healthier, which establishes a link between health literacy and a higher quality of life.



Understanding online health information:

Evaluation, tools, and strategies



Considering the status of the Internet as a prominent source of health information, assessing online health material has become a central issue in patient education.

It is important to introduce the Roma communities to the available strategies to evaluate the characteristics of online health information, including readability, emotional content, understandability, usability.

Effective assessment of online health information should rely on mixed strategies combining quantitative and qualitative evaluations.

Assessment tools should be selected according to their functional properties and compatibility with target material.



When looking for health information online it's critical to evaluate both the source, and the content being presented to you.

How do you evaluate health information you find on the web?

Evaluating health information can be broken down into two large steps:

- **lateral reading** and
- **closer reading.**

As a general rule of thumb when looking for health information, stick to reputable sites from educational institutions, government sources, and health related associations and societies



Lateral Reading



Lateral reading involves contextualizing the source rather than closely examining it. Two strategies for lateral reading are click restraint, and SIFT.

A quick scan of URLs, titles and page descriptions can give you a sense of your search results breadth and depth. Before clicking through and evaluating results thoroughly, see if you can determine something about the relevance and reliability of sources in your result set (are the titles on topic, are they inflammatory?, is the organization well known?)

The purpose of this method is to avoid clicking the first link or two just because they're at the top of the results display.



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How to Find Better Health Information Online: Click Restraint

Educational Video



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- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbPEiCGxVVY&ab_channel=StanfordHistoryEducationGroup





SIFT (or the Four Moves): Stop Investigate Find Trace

SIFT (or the Four Moves)

Mike Caulfield's SIFT directs you to do 4 things when looking at sources. They are:

Stop: Examine the source: is it credible? Reputable? If you're feeling overwhelmed, consider what the original objective was when you started looking at sources. Is the source/information you're looking at relevant?

Investigating the source: Look at where the information is coming from. Who published this? What was their purpose? What are the potential biases? Asking these questions before doing any reading helps determine the credibility and trustworthiness of a source.

Find better coverage: Examine the claim a source is making. Can you find other sources that confirm or refute the claim? Compare and contrast claims across different sources.

Trace claims, quotes, and media back to original context: When bits and pieces of one work is taken and read somewhere else, it loses its context, and may be misunderstood or misinterpreted. To understand a claim better, it's best to find the original source and its original context.



Roma Health Communication as a Multidisciplinary Issue



Roma health communication should be seen as a complex multidisciplinary issue that includes experts, field workers and local organisations working with Roma communities in Europe addressing social determinants of health, fundamental rights and access to rights and services for improving Roma health, through research, advocacy, policy development, monitoring and community organising.



Lateral reading is always a crucial first step in the source evaluation process.

Once you have narrowed down your source list, it's important to evaluate content with a **closer reading**.

Closer Reading

In 1998, six broad criteria for evaluating health information were published in a [Policy Paper: Assessing the quality of health information on the internet.](#)

Variations of the criteria have been used ever since.





Assessing the quality of health information on the internet

- **Credibility:** consider the source, its currency, relevance and review process
- **Content:** should be accurate and complete, with appropriate disclaimers
- **Disclosure:** the site identifies data collected, and how that data will be used.
- **Links:** should lead users to other reliable sources of information
- **Design:** does not affect the quality of the content however it can have significant effects on the delivery and use of the information.
- **Interactivity:** Interactivity does not affect the quality of the content however it is important to provide contact information and feedback options on the site.



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Reliable vs non-reliable sources of Health Information

Educational Video

RELIABLE SOURCES

of health information and products are licensed professionals who took up specialized and intensive studies in the field.



- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bkpw__1fR6A&ab_channel=LearnMA
PEH



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Module 1: HEALTH LITERACY CHAPTER 4: Accessing, understanding and appraising health information **CONCLUSIONS**

- Accessing, understanding and appraising health information is an essential package of health literacy skills that are related to one`s capacity to locate valid sources of health information, product and services.



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