

# “Addressing Health Inequities”

**Welcome!** We'll begin soon.


While we wait, **please use the chat** to tell us your name, affiliation, and any experience integrating adult ed with health issues.

# Addressing Health Inequities Through Collaborations with Health Partners

A Webinar of the Open Door Collective  
A National Program of Literacy Minnesota  
March – May 2021

# Welcome!

- We'll start now, but please continue introducing yourselves via the chat.



Our current U.S. health context ...

# Adults with lower income & basic skills disproportionately impacted by Covid-19

Black & Latinx adults concentrated in work and living environments with higher Covid exposure – compared with white populations:

- Black adults have 1.4 X rate of Covid, hospitalized 3.7X & dying at the rate of 2.8
- Rates for Latinx adults are higher – infected at rate of 1.7
- Native American (NA) likewise impacted (e.g., in NM, NA are 10% of state population BUT 23% of Covid cases and 41% of deaths)
- Disabled & older adults also disproportionately affected.

# These health challenges are not new.

Apart from Covid-19, the nation - especially lower-income populations -- is impacted by:

- non-communicable and communicable diseases
- emotional stress
- substance abuse
- hunger
- violence

As Dr. Martin Luther King told the Medical Committee for Human Rights on March 25, 1966 . . .

*"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and the most inhuman because it often results in physical death."*

# Amid these challenges, some good news ...

- Increased ...
  - awareness of these interwoven issues and
  - desire and action to reduce and solve these interconnected problems of health, education, poverty, and inequity.
- In this webinar, we hope to contribute to collaborative and constructive dialogue, problem-solving, and action.

# Tech Tips

- Please mute your mic.
- Use “chat” to respond to questions and submit your own questions and ideas. (Presenters will respond during or after webinar.)
- We are recording the webinar.
- If technical problems, use the chat to tell us.



# What you've told us about yourselves.



- How many participants
- From what types of organizations
- Experience integrating adult basic education with health-related activities

# Our Webinar Team

- **Marcia Drew Hohn, Ed.D.:** Consultant in Literacy and Health (MA)
- **Janet Ohene-Frempong, M.S.:** J O Frempong & Associates, Inc. and Institute for Healthcare Advancement Strategic Partner (PA)
- **Betty McKiernan and Adriana Giraldo:** Abisi Adult Education Center, Lowell, MA
- **Barbara Krol-Sinclair, Ed.D.:** Chelsea Intergenerational Literacy Program, MA
- **Greg Smith, MS:** Florida Literacy Coalition
- **David Rosen, Ed.D.:** Founding Member, Open Door Collective
- **Paul Jurmo, Ed.D.:** Chair of the Open Door Collective's Labor and Workforce Development Issues Group (DC)

# Agenda

We will discuss:

- the stakeholders
- why and how those stakeholders might work together
- how to access relevant resources
- how to get involved in ODC and other organizations, and
- follow-up actions we might take.



*Presenters will post information covered in this webinar, presenter contacts, and other relevant resources to ODC's website ([www.opendoorcollective.org](http://www.opendoorcollective.org)).*

# Key Stakeholders

- Adults with basic skills limitations who often . . .
  - have life and work situations with significant health challenges (including Covid-19),
  - despite significant strengths can have limited material and social supports to both deal with those challenges and pursue healthcare job opportunities
- “Health partners” who support public health and/or healthcare jobs in various ways
- Adult education providers (basic literacy and numeracy, ESOL, HSE, college-readiness, workforce training...) and
- Social justice advocates concerned about well-being of adult learners and their families and communities.

# How Collaborate?

*What the ODC Can-Do Guide says*

1. Health literacy education to help learners maintain their health and that of their families, communities, and workplaces
2. Healthcare job preparation
3. Direct healthcare services for learners
4. Building capacities of health partners to serve adults with basic skills challenges

*cont'd.*

# How collaborate?

(cont' d.)

5. Health-friendly adult education facilities
6. Public health service learning
7. Joint advocacy, planning, fundraising
8. Collaborative health research
9. Joint professional development

# Benefits of Collaboration

Stakeholders	Benefits
Learners	Improved ability (skills, knowledge, motivation, and connections) to navigate health systems and advance in their education
Health service providers	Improved ability to help ABE/HSE/ESOL learners deal with health issues
Adult educators	Improved ability to help learners deal with relevant issues. Connections to new community partners.

# Benefits of Collaboration

(cont'd.)

Stakeholders	Benefits
Healthcare employers	Improved access to employees with relevant basic skills and health knowledge
Policy makers, funders, researchers	Increased ability to help ABE/HSE/ESOL learners deal with health issues
Larger community	Community members more informed and active on health issues (and improved community health).



# Examples of Collaborations

- Marcia Drew Hohn
- Janet Ohene-Frempong
- Adriana Giraldo and Betty McKiernan
- Barbara Krol-Sinclair
- Greg Smith

*Feel free to post comments, questions for presenters in chat.  
We'll try to respond in the Q&A after the presentations.*



# Health Integration in Massachusetts

Marcia Drew Hohn

# MA history of integrating health

- 1990, ABE practitioners & health educators meet to discuss health inequities – Informal Health Team
- 1994, the state awarded ABE additional fund from tobacco tax dollars
- Advocacy by health team results in Comprehensive Health Projects
- Focus was on strong participation of learners and student health teams

# Comprehensive Health Projects

1994-2015 50+ program funded over multiple years

- Used an empowerment model for learners to decide what health topics to study and how to study them – Bootstrap is a strong example
- Built a strong knowledge base in the state
- More appropriate literacy-level health materials developed by learners, LINCS, public health and medical providers
  - Learners' materials more on target – prevention & Breast Cancer
  - Also building knowledge of broader environmental concerns

# Some important findings

- ABE is a good place to teach about health
- Learners' input on topics, approaches, methods critical
- Raised learners' awareness – “I didn't know what health disparities are. I was living them but didn't know what they are.”
- Instruction contextualized in health content provides strong base
  - Builds collective efficacy

# Findings continued

- Project-based learning enhanced retention and use of health information learned
- Students teaching other students beneficial
  - Understand cultural barriers
  - Help other students with concepts of prevention/early detection
  - Help identify where health messages go awry

Broadened ABE awareness of role in addressing national problem of health disparities

# Shifting emphasis in ABE to Workforce Development

- The Comprehensive Health Projects (CHP) fading out by 2015 with new emphasis in ABE on workforce development
- However, health continued to have a strong presence in many of the funded programs
- Chelsea Intergenerational Literacy and Lowell Adult Education are strong examples
- Growing awareness of broader dimensions of health literacy

# The Pandemic Uponds Everything

- Health disparities in covid rates, hospitalizations and death in low-income, low literacy, minority groups highlight role of ABE in addressing national health crisis
- Beyond developing health literacy & facilitating access to health services
- New emphasis on individual responsibility to wear masks and socially distance





# Introducing a New Concept

Janet Ohene-Frempong, MS

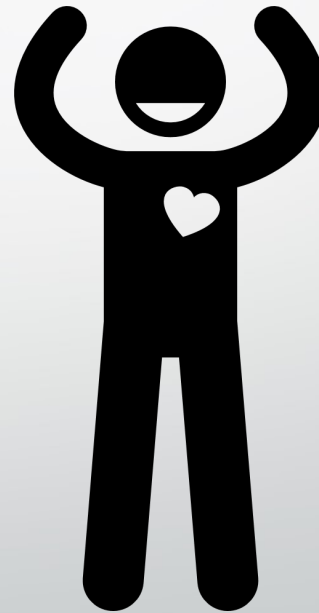
# Health Literacy

## Simply Put

It's essentially about your ability to figure out what's needed for you, and others, to stay alive and as well as possible.



**Alive**



**Well**  
(as well as possible)

# Civic Literacy and Health Literacy:

## A New Focus on an Old Concept

Janet Ohene-Frempong, MS

### **Understanding health literacy: An expanded model Zarcadoolas, Pleasant, and Greer, 2005**

Their model suggests that becoming functionally health literate actually requires some key abilities in 4 central domains – additional kinds of literacies – including:

- fundamental literacy
- science literacy
- cultural literacy
- **civic literacy**

Understanding health literacy: an expanded model  
Christina Zarcadoolas, Andrew Pleasant, David S. Greer  
*Health Promotion International*, Volume 20, Issue 2, 1 June 2005, Pages 195-203  
Published: 23 March 2005  
<https://academic.oup.com/heapro/article/20/2/195/827483>

# How Having Basic Civic Literacy Can Help

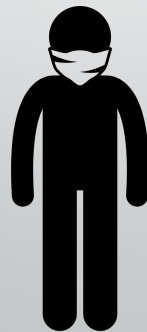
**Civic literacy** refers to abilities that enable citizens to become aware of public issues and to become involved in the decision-making process.

They listed 3 requirements to achieve some degree of civic literacy related to health:

1. An awareness that individual health decisions can impact public health

**For example:**

**“Should I wear a face mask to protect other people, or not?”**



**Yes!**



**No!**

# How Having Basic Civic Literacy Can Help

**Civic literacy** refers to abilities that enable citizens to become aware of public issues and to become involved in the decision-making process.

They listed 3 requirements to achieve some degree of civic literacy related to health:

2. Some level of media literacy, as the news applies to safety, health, and healthcare-related issues.

**For example:**

**“Should I get my information about the pandemic from this source of news or that source of news?”**



**This?**



**That?**

# How Having Basic Civic Literacy Can Help

**Civic literacy** refers to abilities that enable citizens to become aware of public issues and to become involved in the decision-making process.

They listed 3 requirements to achieve some degree of civic literacy related to health:

3. A basic knowledge of civic and governmental processes as they apply to health issues

**For example:**

**“What do I need to do to figure out how to safely vote by mail in the midst of this pandemic?”**



# An E-X-P-A-N-D-E-D way of thinking about health literacy

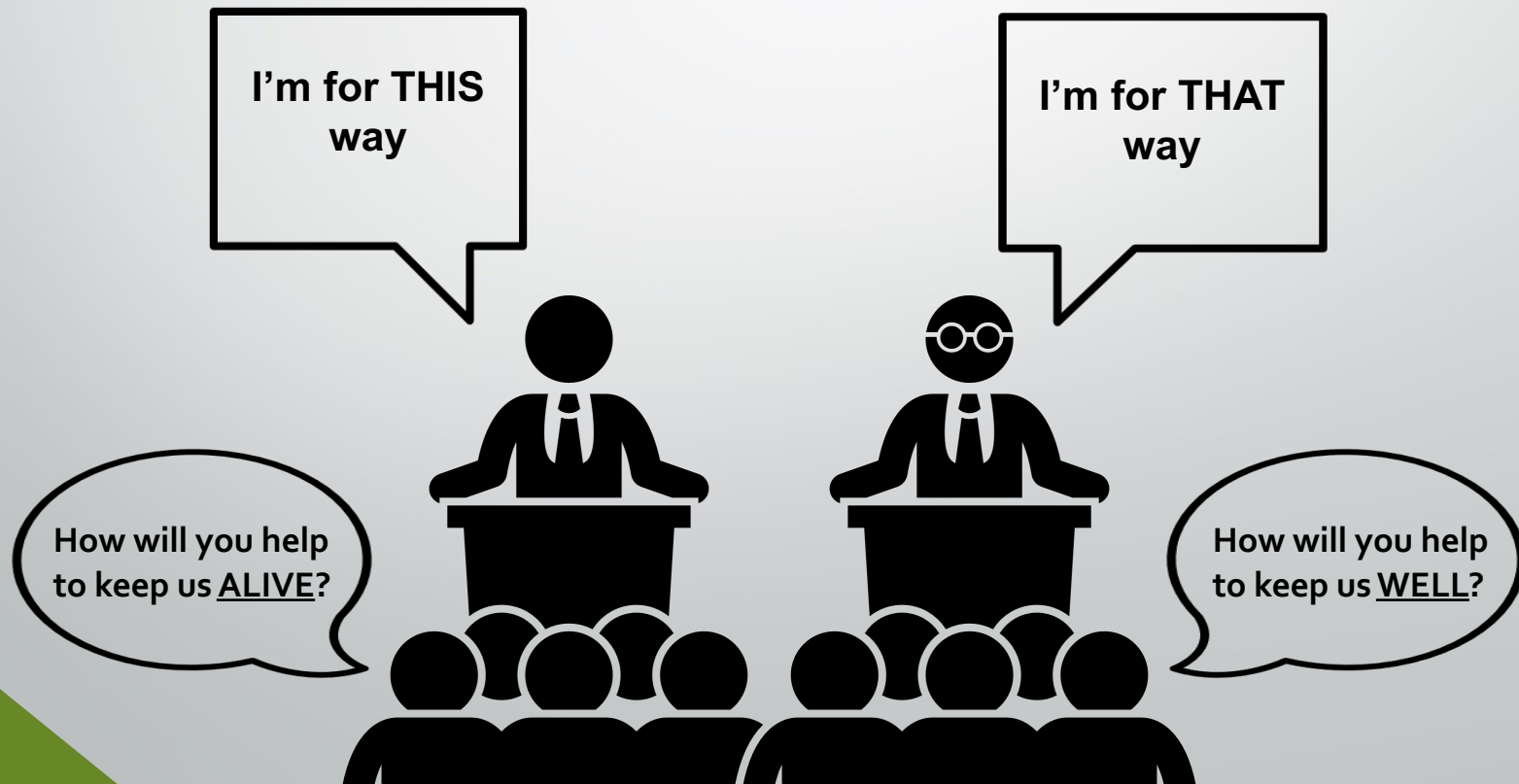
A paradigm shift that points out the fact that in order to have some personal control over your ability to stay alive and as well as possible, you need something more than just FUNDAMENTAL literacy skills ...



# An E-X-P-A-N-D-E-D way of thinking about health literacy

... You need some basic CIVIC literacy skills, as well.

Civic literacy **➡** includes being informed about, and active in, political decisions that affect your ability to stay alive and well.






# Civic Literacy and Health Literacy Tell Us Your Thoughts

Use the poll to tell us: How interested (on scale of 1 to 4) would your learners be in learning how to be informed and active vis-a-vis health issues if the information were:

- practical and useful for busy adults?
- non-partisan?
- easy to find, read, follow, understand?

Use the chat to tell us: If anyone you know is using such materials already, what seems to be the most helpful?



**Learner Access to Health Services:**  
**Collaborating with**  
**Community Health Centers**

Marcia Drew Hohn

# Adult Basic Education (ABE) & Community Health Centers (CHCs): Overlapping Responsibilities

- Documented connection between low literacy, limited English and poor health
- CHCs – primary/preventive care for such underserved populations – struggle to reach
- ABE serves the educational needs of this same population


# MA Community Health Centers

- There are 52 Community Health Centers in MA  
[www.massleague.org/CHC/Overview.php](http://www.massleague.org/CHC/Overview.php)
- At the forefront of prevention and health services for low income, limited English and low literate groups
- Serve the same populations as ABE
- Strong in providing linguistically/culturally competent care
- Diverse staff – the health providers “look like me”

# ABE & CHC Partnerships

## Great Benefits for Both Partners in Improving the Health of ABE Learners

- Robust models exist of how partnerships work
- ABE programs – provide expertise in teaching low-literate learners, greater learning time, and a trusted environment
- CHCs – provide medical expertise and access to services
- CHCs – provide critical prevention services and build knowledge about local health services



**Example:**  
**Frederick Abisi Adult Education Center,**  
**Lowell (MA)**

Betty McKiernan  
Adriana Giraldo

# WORKING IN COLLABORATION WITH YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER



Abisi Adult Education Center



# Community Health Partners and Health Education

Lowell CHC and partners provide workshops on various health topics including:

- Nutrition
- Stress and Depression
- Oral Health
- Flu Prevention and Education
- Health Insurance 101 and enrollment
- Stanford Program- Chronic Disease Self Management
- Exercise

**Since 2004, Lowell CHC runs six on-site clinics during the school year.**

**Beginning in 2019, Lowell Community Health Workers(CHW) are on-site once a week.**

Funding for this initiative is included in our DESE grant as it is considered a proactive project to address our students' needs.



# GLHA - Mental Health Grant



AAEC Director and Student Services Coordinator addressed each class to explain the project and the importance of Mental Health.

Students were told to expect more discussion and activities related to Mental Health

Abisi Adult Education Center

## Mental Health

(GLHA Grant)

Why Mental Health Matters for Adults

<b>1 in 5</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>20 m+</b>
One in five American adults experience a mental health disorder in a single year.	Almost half of all American adults will experience a mental illness during the course of their lifetime.	More than 20 million Americans ages 12 and older will face an addiction.

# Mental Health Professional Development

## WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH DIVERSE CULTURES

Presented by Mercy Anampiu, CHW/ MBA  
Lowell Community Health Center

### Training Objectives:

- Introduce concepts of culture and diversity
- Develop awareness of the impact of culture on human dynamics
- Define cultural competency
- Describe the cultural competence continuum
- Establish the importance providing equitable services
- Describe tools for providing Culturally Appropriate services

# Mental Health Classroom Preparation & Follow-up

- Vocabulary and concepts related to mental health were adapted & introduced
- Opportunity for students to talk about areas of mental health, pose questions and make connections with services in the community.
- Mental Health articles in monthly student newsletter

## **Mental Health Outreach after School closure**

- Used different ways to stay in contact: phone, email, text, WhatsApp, ...
- Quickly developed a communication system and network to address student's needs
- Gathered and adapted material related to the pandemic to review in class.

# Covid-19 - Equitable Vaccine Rollout

- Updates on vaccine distribution efforts. Lowell General Hospital, Lowell Community Health Center, Local Boards of Health.
- Vaccine materials
- How to support community efforts and identify what is needed
- Student survey
- Vaccination data

## Professional Development


Trusting relationship with our students provided basis for vaccinations.

# Best Practices

## Meet people where they are:

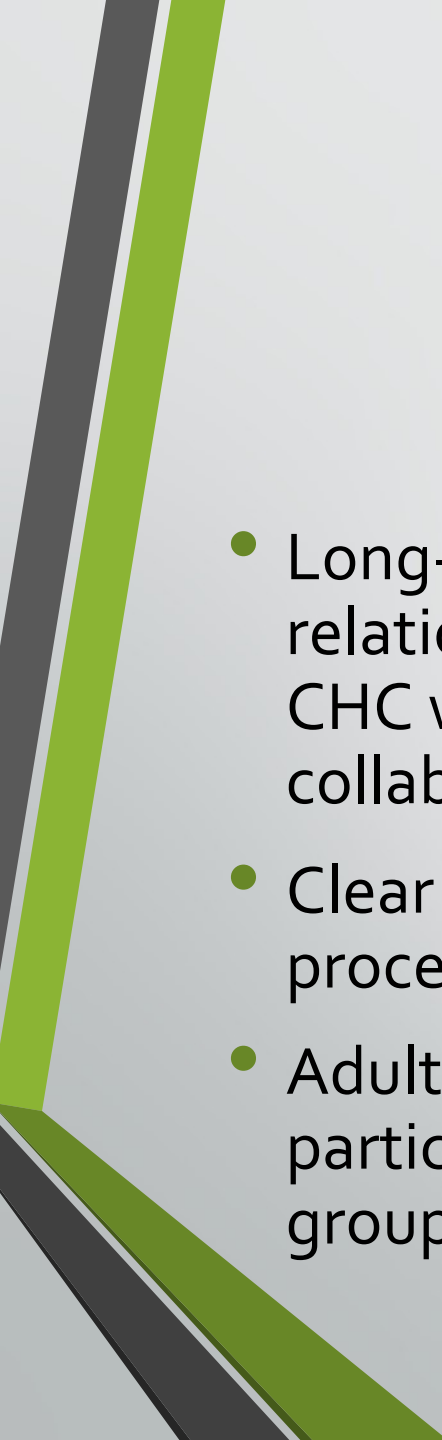
- Physically
  - Socially
  - Mentally
  - Culturally
- 
- Book appointments on site
  - Apply for Health Insurance
  - Refer for social services
  - Connect with CHWs and other staff for continuity of care





**Example:**  
**Chelsea (MA) Public Schools'**  
**Intergenerational Literacy Program**

Barbara Krol-Sinclair



## Example – ABE-CHC Partnership: Chelsea (MA) Public Schools' Intergenerational Literacy Program

- Long-term, trusting relationship with local CHC with ongoing collaborations
- Clear cross-referral processes
- Adult learner participation in focus groups
- Learner-driven health literacy focal topics
- CHC makes relevant presentations in adult classes
- Strong community-wide response team when COVID- 19 arrived



# Health Literacy in Florida

**Greg Smith, MS**



# Florida Health Literacy Initiative

- Provides grants, training, education materials and technical support to Florida adult education providers
- More than 21,700 students have been served over the last 11 years.
- A contextualized learning approach that incorporates community partnerships, project based learning and health literacy instruction.



Florida Literacy Coalition



Foundation

# Community Partnerships

More than 320 partners have worked with grantees

- Pediatric Care Institution
- All Faiths Food Bank
- American Diabetes Association
- American Lung Association
- America's Urgent Care
- Center for Drug Free Living
- Central FL Sports & Physical Therapy
- Community AIDS Network
- East Lake Chiropractic
- Fisherman's Hospital
- Florida Blood Centers
- Florida Hospital
- Hardee County Health Department
- UCF Medical School
- Florida KidCare
- Highlands County Soil and Water Conservation District office.
- Hispanic Health Initiatives, Inc
- Manatee Technical Institute's nursing and dental departments
- Mariner's Hospital
- FL State College Nursing Program
- Osceola County Extension Services
- Osceola County Fire and Rescue
- Pinellas Cooperative Extension Agency
- Poison Control Center-Tampa
- South Florida Community College's nursing and dental departments
- University of Florida, IFAS
- Vision is Priceless
- Immokalee Fire Department

# Field Trips and Classroom Visitors

- Clinic and hospital guided tours
- Presentations on ACA and Florida KidCare
- UF/IFAS County Extension Services
- Mock clinic at community health centers
- U pick farms
- Doctors, nurses
- Fire department
- Exercise classes
- Grocery stores
- Well water testing
- Medical, nursing, dental schools
- Health insurance navigators



# Incorporating Project-Based Learning

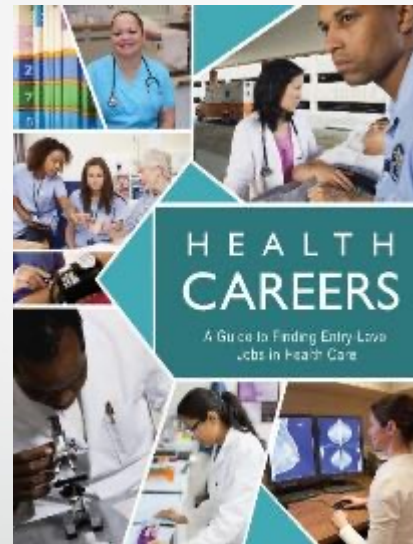
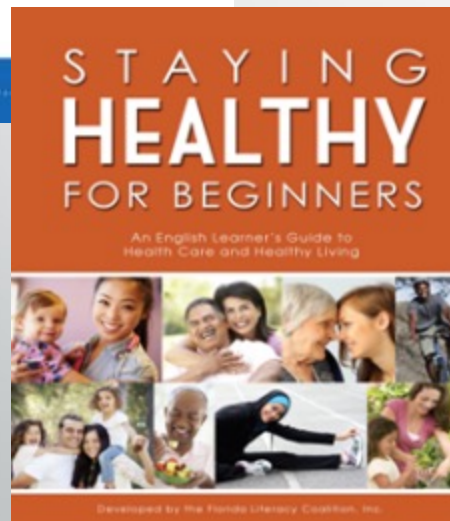
- Host a health fair
- Sponsor a Red Cross CPR or First Aid class
- Develop a community garden
- Partner with a children's hospital and the fire dept. to educate about car seats and fire safety
- Partner with sheriff department to educate about pedestrian safety
- Take a trip to the local vocational center to learn about health-related career programs
- Sponsor a “Biggest Loser” nutrition and weight loss contest
- Create videos on hand washing and reading medicine labels
- Develop a guide on community health resources for immigrants
- Research project - Health Benefits of Red Wine and Grapes
- Organize a walk to raise funds for cancer research

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgAAR8WuxzI>





# Staying Healthy Resource Curriculums



[https://floridaliteracy.org/health\\_literacy\\_curriculum.html](https://floridaliteracy.org/health_literacy_curriculum.html)

# Free Online Course

The screenshot displays the user interface for the Florida Literacy Coalition Health Literacy Training Course. At the top, the course title "Florida Literacy Coalition Health Literacy Training Course" is shown with a progress indicator "(00:19 / 59:15)". Navigation links for "Resources" and "Exit" are in the top right. The left sidebar features the Florida Literacy Coalition logo and a menu with the following items: Welcome!, Introduction, Goals for training, Module 1 - Understanding Health Literacy, Module 2 - Identifying Factors that Influence our Health, Module 3 - Designing an Effective Learning Experience, Module 4 - Incorporating Health Literacy into the Classroom, and Module 5: Developing Digital Health Literacy Skills. The main content area has a yellow "Welcome!" banner, a row of three images (a group of people at a table, a man with a laptop, and two people on the floor), and a blue banner for the "Online Health Literacy Training Course". Below this is the Florida Literacy Coalition logo and a paragraph stating the course was developed by Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center, supported by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education. Navigation buttons for "PREV" and "NEXT" are at the bottom right.

Florida Literacy Coalition Health Literacy Training Course (00:19 / 59:15) Resources Exit

## Welcome!

### Online Health Literacy Training Course

FLORIDA LITERACY COALITION

This Course was developed by Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center, a program of the Florida Literacy Coalition and was made possible through the support of the [Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education](#)

◀ PREV NEXT ▶

[https://floridaliteracy.org/health\\_literacy\\_training.html](https://floridaliteracy.org/health_literacy_training.html)

# Results 2019-20 Grantees

14 organizations and 2,413 participating students

Improved HL assessment scores (pre/post test)	77%
Better prepared to address health concerns with doctor (teacher survey):	100%
If uninsured, applied for at least one type of medical insurance (Medicare, ACA Marketplace, Medicaid, Florida KidCare, etc)	31%
Began exercising regularly	44%
Changed their eating habits to be more healthful	49%
Visited a doctor	42%



# **Resources for ABE-Health Partnerships**

Marcia Drew Hohn



# Health - Catalyst for ABE Learning

- ABE teachers customize literacy skills to learners' real- life needs and purposes.
- Learners -- health information, communications with health providers, and healthcare navigation high priority
- ABE teachers find health motivating and engaging content area - many teaching/learning resources

**THEY DO NOT HAVE TO BE HEALTH EDUCATORS!**

# Resources for Teaching Health in ABE

- Wealth of resources for contextualizing ABE instruction in health -- curricula, lesson plans, easy-to-read health books and teacher stories
- CHCs - medical expertise and access to health services.

# Getting Started

- While potentially beneficial, such collaborations require careful planning, implementation, and support.
- See “How to Get Started” (Part 4) in the ODC “Can-Do Guide” for steps adult educators and health partners can take to identify and plan appropriate collaborations.



Questions? Comments? Ideas?



# Action #1: Read, use, and share ODC's health documents

<http://opendoorcollective.org>

**Can-Do Guide** (under “Resources/Workforce...” tab)

- Examples of the 9 collaboration types
- How to get started on productive collaborations
- Links to programs and documents

**Two position papers** on importance of health supports for adults with basic skills limitations (with examples of Community Health Center partnerships) (under “ODC Papers” tab)

**Health literacy resources list** (under “Resources” Tab)

## Action #2: Join the Open Door Collective.


<http://opendoorcollective.org> ( "Contact" tab)

- A diverse national network of adult educators and others
- Supports adult basic skills education as tool to reduce poverty and achieve other social justice goals
- Emphasizes collaborations between adult educators and other stakeholders (e.g., health, workforce development, digital equity, immigrant and refugee integration, criminal justice reform, services for older adults...)

## Action #3: Keep the discussion going.

- Communicate via email with the presenters.
- Read, use, and share the “Resources” handout we’ll post to [www.opendoorcollective.org](http://www.opendoorcollective.org). This will include links to:
  - Documents and information referred to in this webinar.
  - Other relevant organizations.





# Working Together in this Challenging Time

*"We may have all come on  
different ships, but we're in the  
same boat now."*

Dr. Martin Luther King

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*We look  
forward to  
working  
with you.*

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