

Health Literacy and The Vital Conditions for Health and Well-Being



Grace Hrustich, Elena Lynn, Katlyn Culhane-Suluai, MPS, Alexandra Wynn, PhD, Yendelela Cuffee, PhD, MPH, Jennifer Horney, PhD, MPH, CPH

Introduction - The State Health Assessment

- The State Health Assessment (SHA) evaluates the health of Delaware residents based on the Vital Conditions for Health and Well-Being framework
- The SHA is conducted every five years:
 - Data collection took place from September 2022 to July 2023
- SHA Methodology:
 - Focus groups and primary surveys (Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response [CASPER])
 - Secondary state data
- The outcomes of the SHA provided multiple ways to think about health outcomes related to health literacy due to its social and structural components
- The SHA was released for a public comment period in September 2024
- Feedback from the community stated that they wanted to see the Vital Conditions for Health and Well-Being from a health literacy lens

Objectives

- To display the relationship between the SHA, health literacy, and vital conditions
- To identify how the components of health literacy are interconnected with the Vital Conditions and how they can contribute to reducing health disparities in Delaware

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Background - Health Literacy

- **Personal health literacy** is how individuals can find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions from themselves and others [4]
 - Deemed a social risk
- **Organizational health literacy** is the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others [4]
 - Determinant of health due to its place in the health care system
 - Interconnected with each of the Vital Conditions to influence health outcomes
 - Health literacy could be a contributing factor to the health disparities seen in Delaware [4]



Figure 1. Vital Conditions for Health and Well-Being [6].

Results - The Vital Conditions

- **Basic Needs for Health and Safety**
 - The dissemination of information related to health behaviors and information play a role in preventing harmful exposures, accessing health care, and improving community well-being [5]
- **Humane Housing**
 - Individuals without housing report lower levels of personal health literacy and require more access to care. As housing and renting costs rise, many individuals experience housing insecurity, which impacts their general health status [2]
- **Meaningful Work and Wealth**
 - Personal health literacy is a factor mediating socioeconomic status and health disparities. Financial literacy is a factor, as one's ability to manage financial resources influences the ultimate decision to utilize health services [3,7]
- **Lifelong Learning**
 - Health education begins in K to 12 grade school programs to equip students with health literacy skills. This is dependent on local and state governments to determine the curriculum [1,4]
- **Belonging and Civic Muscle**
 - Individuals with lower levels of health literacy ultimately have poorer health outcomes, general health status, and use of health resources. Consequently, this leads to those having limited opportunities to engage and contribute to their communities [8]
- **Reliable Transportation**
 - Pedestrian safety behavior, the actions one can take to minimize the risk of traffic accidents, positively influences health outcomes through physical activity levels. Both physical activity and health literacy are determinants of pedestrian safety behavior [9]



Implications for the SHIP

- The Delaware State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) is a report completed in tandem with the SHA
 - The SHA identifies the health needs of residents
 - The SHIP takes the findings and outlines the actionable steps needed to improve population health
- Health literacy will help guide the SHIP in addressing barriers to access, education, and/ or interventions
- The SHIP's efforts will include providing resources to empower residents to navigate the health care system and make informed decisions about their health
- The tools provided have the potential to aid in alleviating barriers across all of the Vital Conditions

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