Organizational Health Literacy:
How to implement changes in community-based organizations

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Acknowledgements

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Disclosures

- The presenters have no relevant financial relationships with any commercial interests to disclose.

Objective

- Participants will be able to describe a strategy to achieve organizational change to improve health literacy for clients and patients.

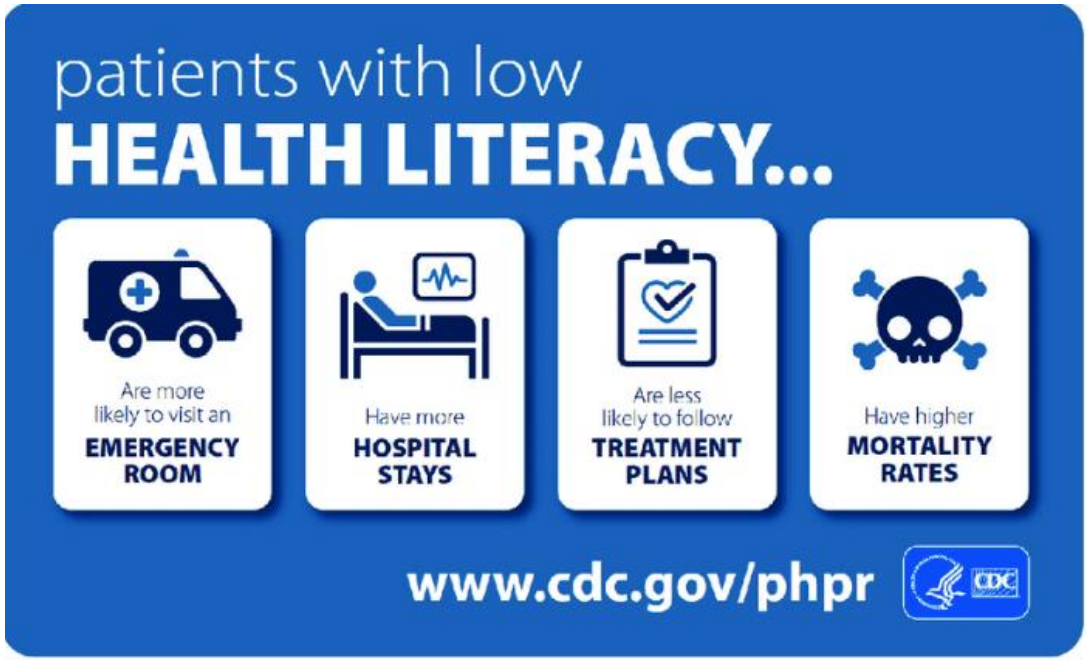
Community

Health &
Compassion

Trust &
Helping Hand

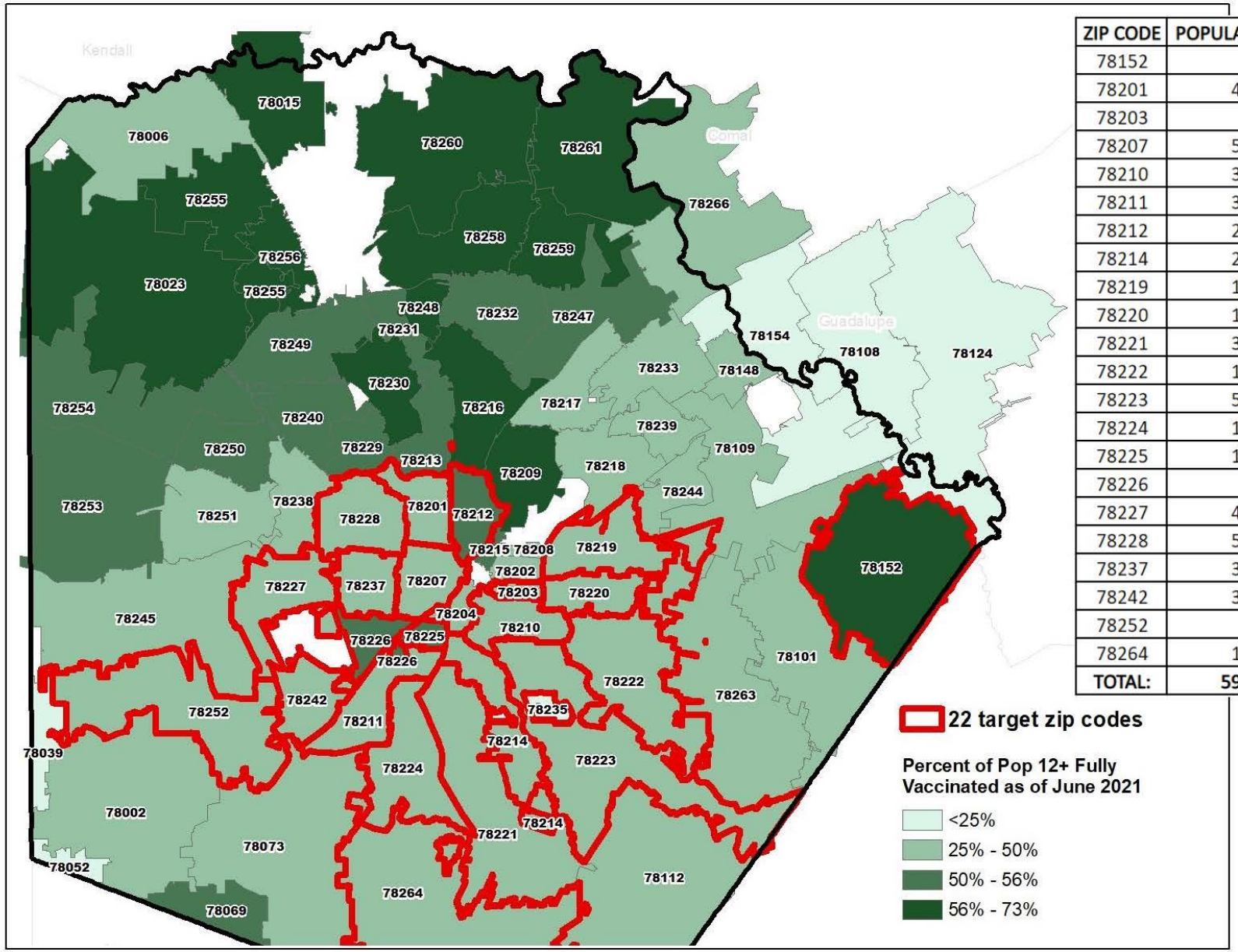
HEALTH
CONFIANZA

What is health literacy?



According to Healthy People 2030:

- **Personal health literacy** is the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.
- It is a social risk, associated with worse health care and health outcomes
- It is associated with racial/ethnic minority status, age, poverty, health insurance coverage, educational attainment, language spoken before school, self-reported health



ZIP CODE	POPULATION
78152	2,294
78201	45,307
78203	6,099
78207	55,514
78210	36,865
78211	31,944
78212	28,415
78214	23,341
78219	15,225
78220	15,965
78221	35,990
78222	19,408
78223	50,637
78224	17,601
78225	13,025
78226	6,648
78227	46,077
78228	58,811
78237	36,929
78242	31,395
78252	7,372
78264	12,339
TOTAL:	**597,201**

COVID-19 Health Literacy Strategies

Small Group Discussion

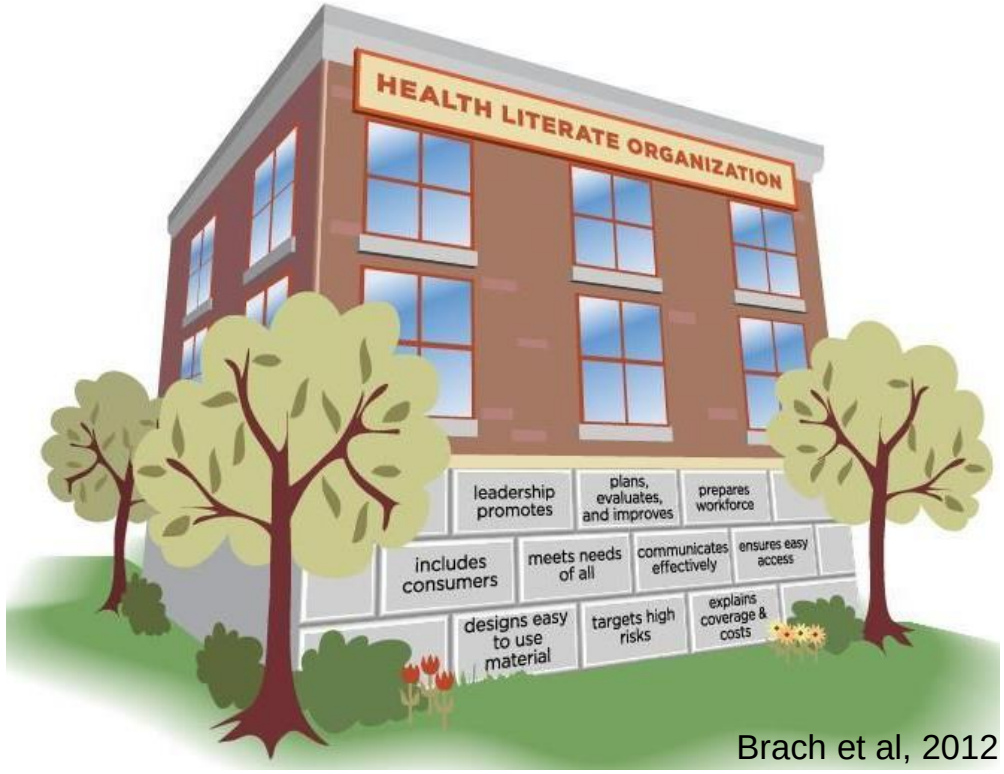
Health Confianza Strategies

COMMUNITY

HEALTH PROVIDERS

ORGANIZATIONS

What is organizational health literacy (OHL)?



Brach et al, 2012

According to Healthy People 2030:

- **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.
- It is a social determinant of health.
- Improving OHL may reduce disparities.

How would you address OHL at your organization?

10 min brainstorm

A Novel Idea: Health Literacy Pledge Program

<u>Goal</u>:

Help San Antonio health and social service organizations

evolve into more health literate organizations.

- Make it easier for clients to access and use COVID-19 information and services and overcome cultural and linguistic barriers.
- Improving health literacy at the community-based organizational level will increase health equity for San Antonio community members.

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

Overview of Pledge Program

- Voluntary program that organizations apply to: Sought 10 for this pilot
- Team Formation: 3-5 Health Literacy Champions representing different staff levels
- To achieve the pledge certificate, the organization will:
  - ✓ Conduct health literacy needs assessment (HLE2) to identify areas for improvement
  - ✓ Participate in an 8-month learning collaborative
  - ✓ Develop an Organizational Health Literacy (OHL) Plan – actionable steps towards policy and practice change
  - ✓ Present findings as the Health Confianza Summit in June 2023
  - ✓ Complete a follow-up assessment to document long-term organizational change.
- A media campaign advertises the pledge program to the public and what it means
- No other known city-wide health literacy pledge program like this!

Learning Collaborative

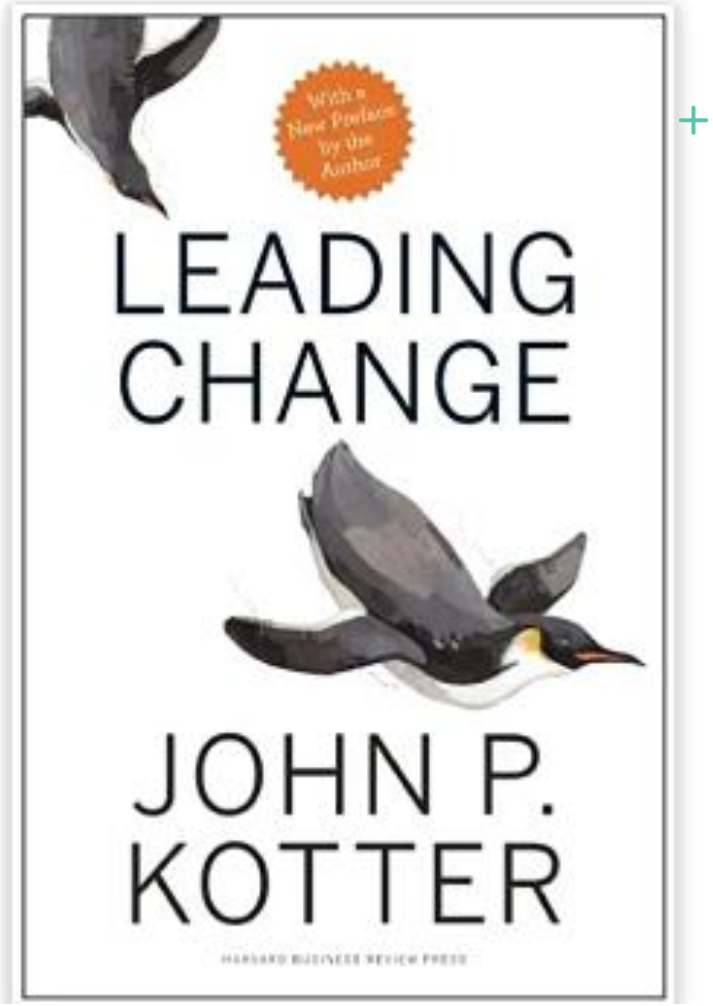
**modeled after IHI Breakthrough Series*

- Monthly learning sessions
  - Teams come together to learn about OHL, share best practices, and plan changes.
  - Small group breakouts
  - Peer presentations
- 1.5 hour in-person format (Lunch provided)
- Health literacy resource mentors available to the Champions throughout the learning collaborative
- In-between are “Action Periods” – Champions work on their Health Literacy Plan at their organizations

Learning Collaborative Curriculum

- Topics covered during the learning sessions:
  - Introduction to health literacy and its role in health equity
  - Introduction to OHL and the 10 Attributes of Health Literate Organization
  - Applying the National CLAS Standards
  - Organizational Policies and Practices
  - Developing an Organizational Health Literary Plan

- Framework used: Kotter's Steps to Leading Change



Benefits to Participating Organizations

Expert Guidance

Technical assistance and mentorship from experts for health literacy-related quality improvement initiatives

Stipend to Organization ($4,000)

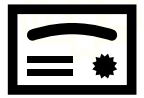
Funds will offset time for participation and/or costs for health literacy initiatives

Media / Public Attention

Earning a Pledge Certificate will bring increased awareness of your organization and its commitment to health literacy

Networking

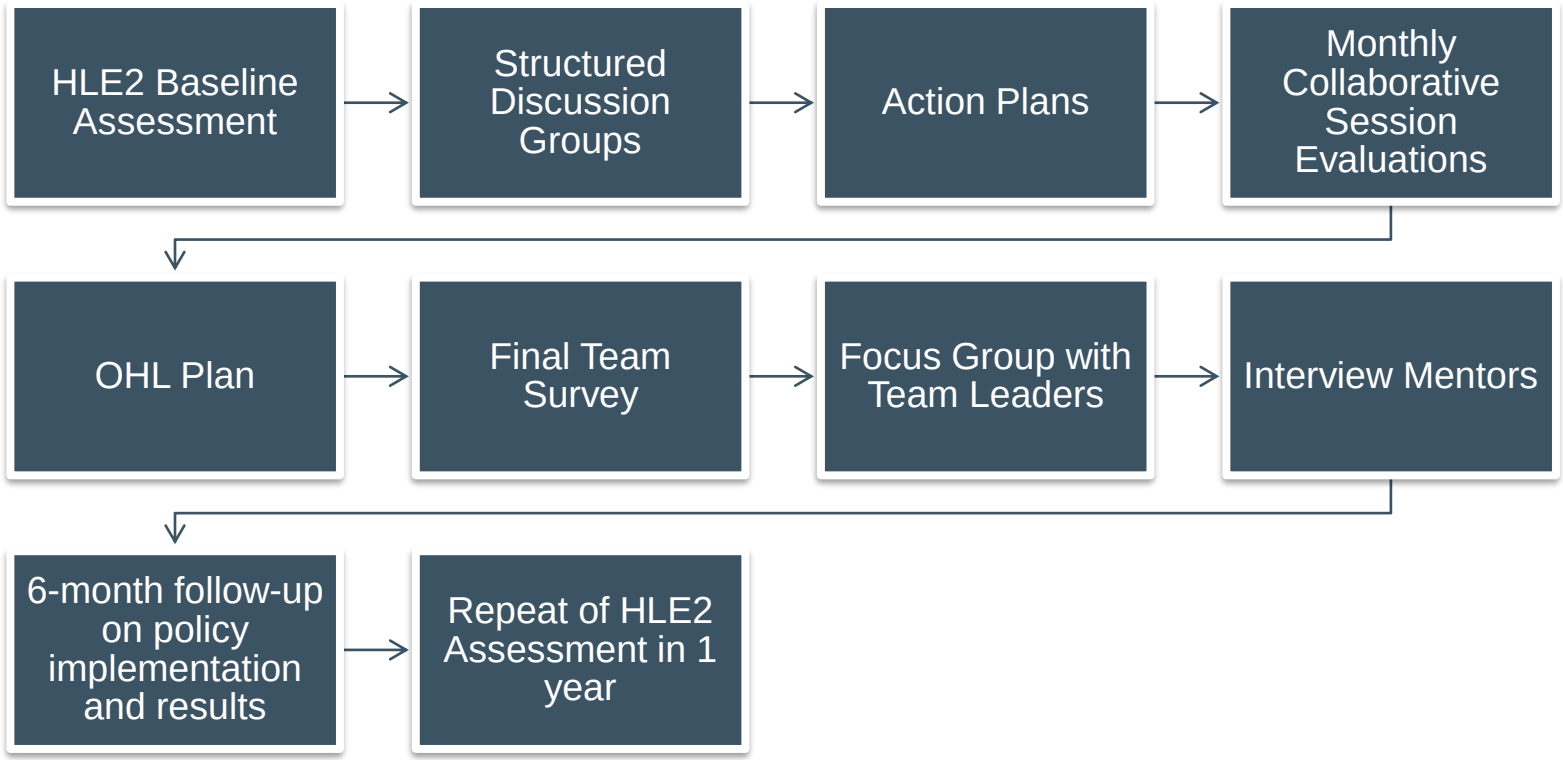
Connect with others interested in improving organizational health literacy and engaging in peer learning.



Health Literacy Certificate ($2,000 value)

One Champion per organization can enroll in the self-paced, online IHA Health Literacy Certificate program.

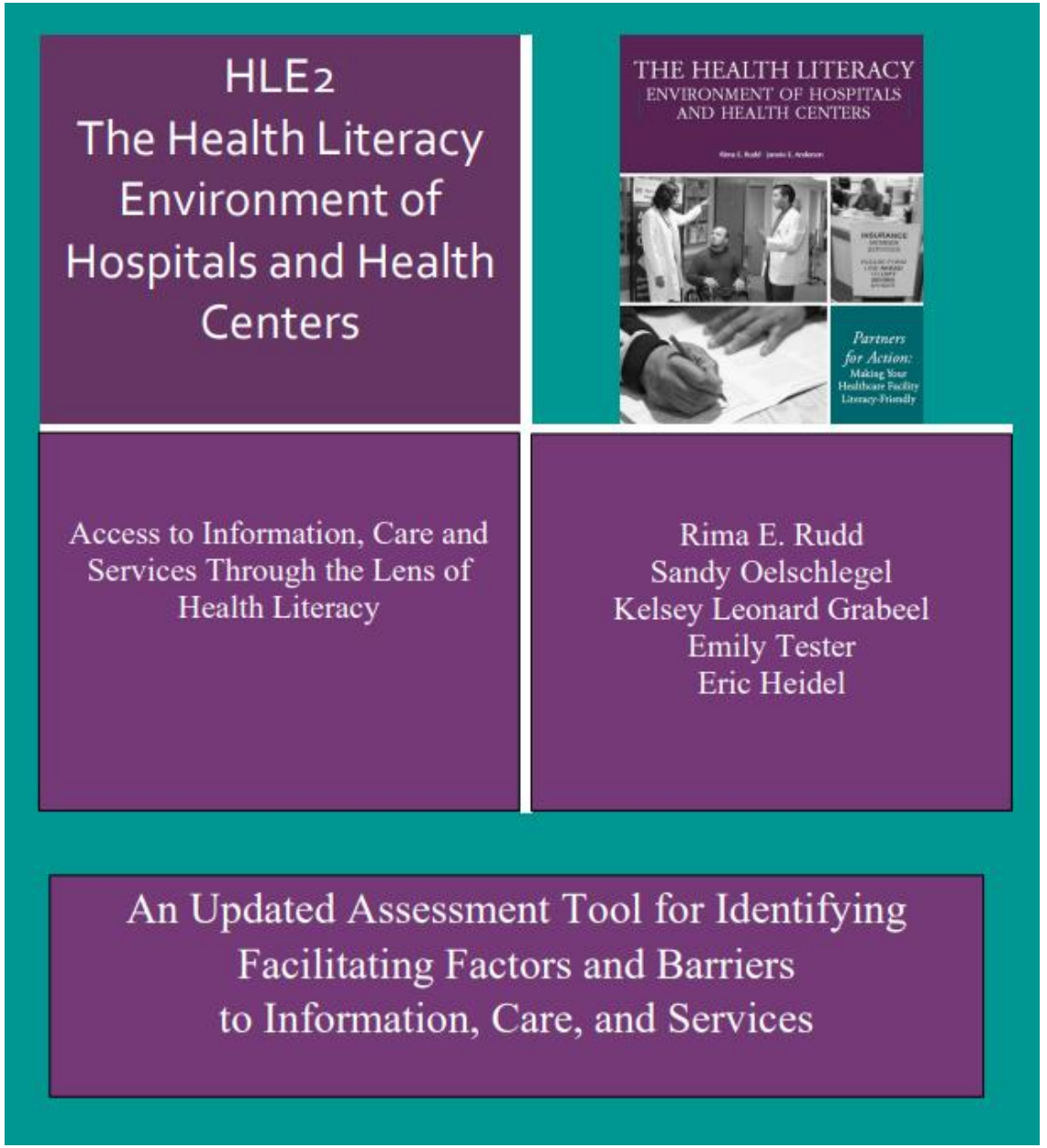
Data Collection



HLE2 Assessment

5 sections:

- Organizational Policies
- Organizational Practices
- Navigation
- Culture and Language
- Communication: Print Materials, Forms, Websites, Patient Portals



Action Areas

An Example:

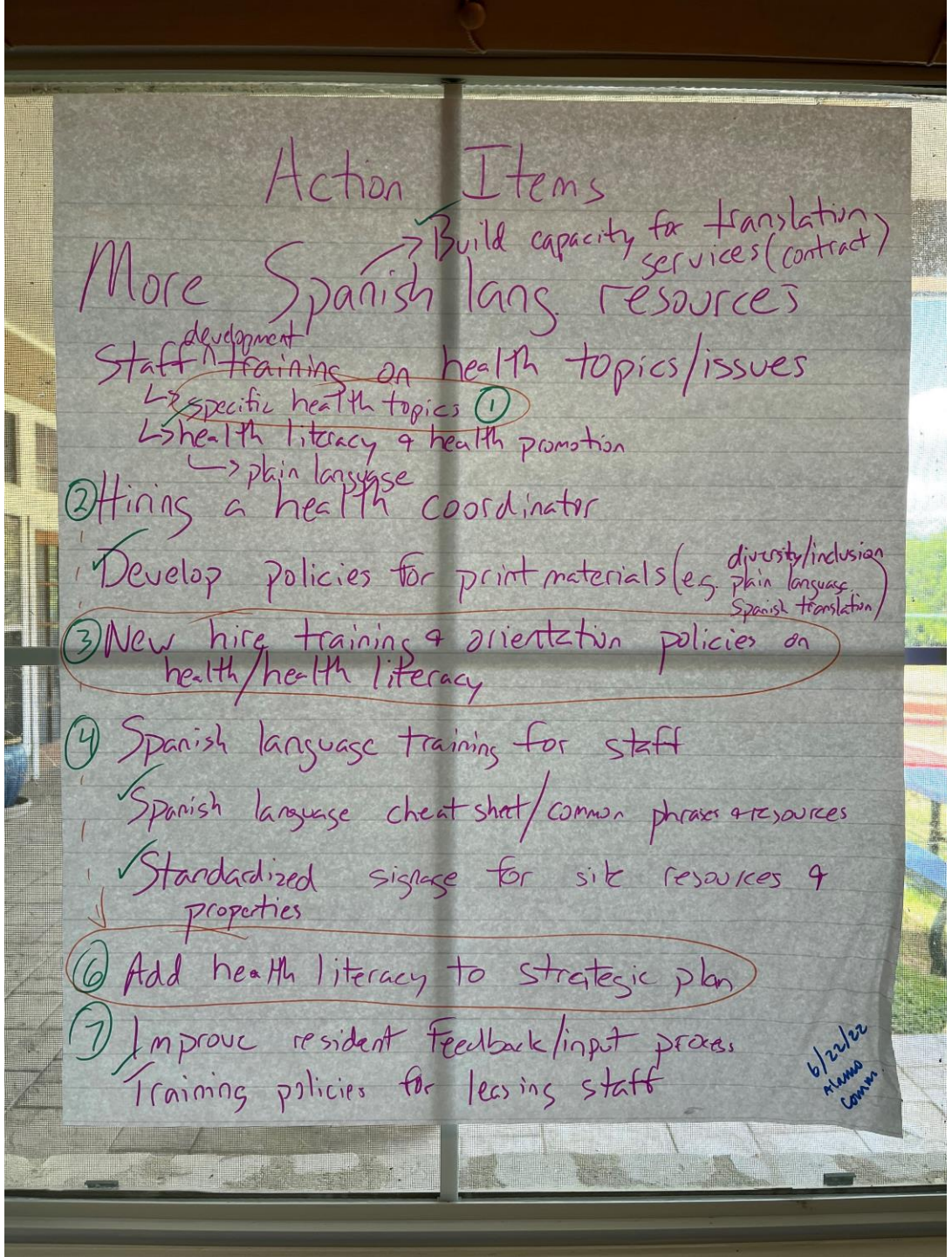
Priority Action Areas

Short-Term (Sept. – April)

1. Provide health literacy training for new hires and current staff.
2. Train the Communications director and frontline staff on plain language and design.
3. Develop staff identification badges or buttons.
    a. Create a policy in the employee handbook for wearing identification by staff.

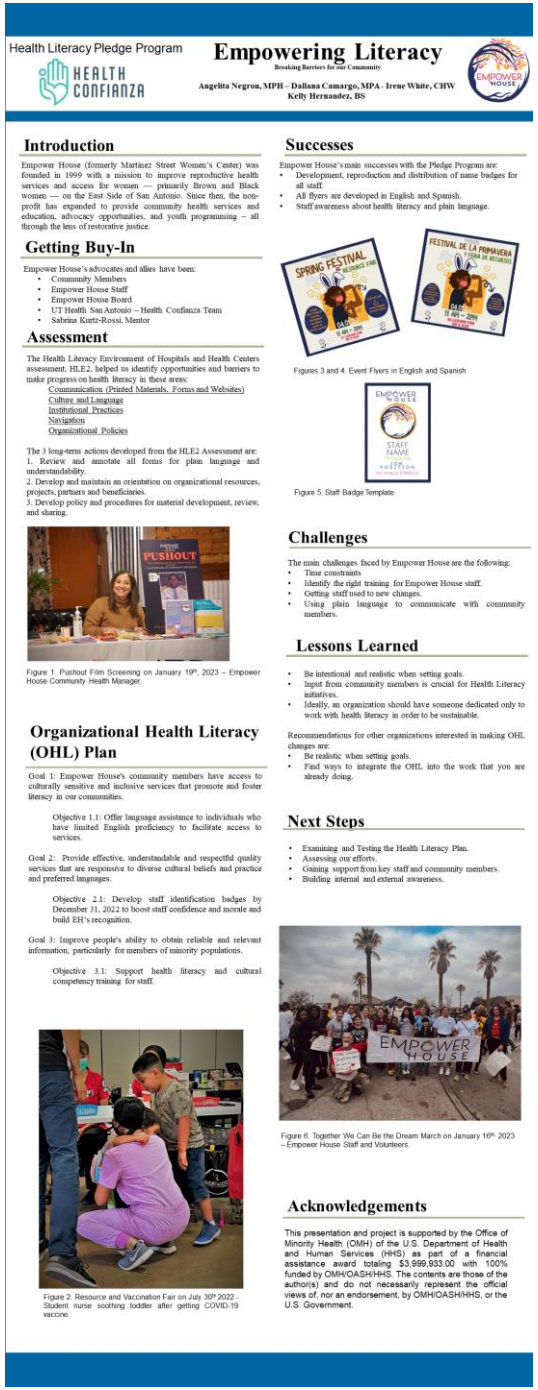
Long-Term (1-3 Years)

1. Review and annotate all forms for plain language and understandability.
    a. Send feedback on forms to funder.
2. Develop and maintain an orientation on organizational resources, projects, partners and beneficiaries.
3. Develop policy and procedures for material development, review, and sharing.
    a. Materials will be reviewed for plain language, appropriate translation, and imagery.



OHL Plans

Making Health Literacy Real:
The Beginnings of My Organization's Plan for Action
CDC
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of the Associate Director for Communication


Health Literacy Pledge Program
HEALTH CONFIANZA
Empowering Literacy
Breaking Barriers for Our Community
Angelita Negron, MPH - Dalliana Camargo, MPA - Irene White, CHW
Kelly Hernandez, BS
Introduction
Empower House (formerly Martinez Street Women's Center) was founded in 1999 with a mission to improve reproductive health services and access for women — primarily Brown and Black women — on the East Side of San Antonio. Since then, the non-profit has expanded to provide community health services and education, advocacy opportunities, and youth programming – all through the lens of restorative justice.
Getting Buy-In
Empower House's advocates and allies have been:
Community Members
Empower House Staff
Empower House Board
UT Health San Antonio – Health Confianza Team
Sabrina Kurtz-Rossi, Mentor
Assessment
The Health Literacy Environment of Hospitals and Health Centers assessment, HLE2, helped us identify opportunities and barriers to make progress on health literacy in these areas:
Communication (Printed Materials, Forms and Websites)
Culture and Language
Institutional Practices
Navigation
Organizational Policies
The 3 long-term actions developed from the HLE2 Assessment are:
1. Review and annotate all forms for plain language and understandability.
2. Develop and maintain an orientation on organizational resources, projects, partners and beneficiaries.
3. Develop policy and procedures for material development, review, and sharing.
PUSHOUT
Figure 1. Pushout Film Screening on January 19th, 2023 – Empower House Community Health Manager.
Organizational Health Literacy (OHL) Plan
Goal 1: Empower House's community members have access to culturally sensitive and inclusive services that promote and foster literacy in our communities.
Objective 1.1: Offer language assistance to individuals who have limited English proficiency to facilitate access to services.
Goal 2: Provide effective, understandable and respectful quality services that are responsive to diverse cultural beliefs and practice and preferred languages.
Objective 2.1: Develop staff identification badges by December 31, 2022 to boost staff confidence and morale and build EH's recognition.
Goal 3: Improve people's ability to obtain reliable and relevant information, particularly for members of minority populations.
Objective 3.1: Support health literacy and cultural competency training for staff.
Figure 2. Resource and Vaccination Fair on July 30th 2022 - Student nurse soothing toddler after getting COVID-19 vaccine.
Successes
Empower House's main successes with the Pledge Program are:
Development, reproduction and distribution of name badges for all staff.
All flyers are developed in English and Spanish.
Staff awareness about health literacy and plain language.
SPRING FESTIVAL
FESTIVAL DE LA PRIMAVERA
Figures 3 and 4. Event Flyers in English and Spanish
EMPOWER HOUSE
STAFF NAME
POSITION
Figure 5. Staff Badge Template
Challenges
The main challenges faced by Empower House are the following:
Time constraints.
Identify the right training for Empower House staff.
Getting staff used to new changes.
Using plain language to communicate with community members.
Lessons Learned
Be intentional and realistic when setting goals.
Input from community members is crucial for Health Literacy initiatives.
Ideally, an organization should have someone dedicated only to work with health literacy in order to be sustainable.
Recommendations for other organizations interested in making OHL changes are:
Be realistic when setting goals.
Find ways to integrate the OHL into the work that you are already doing.
Next Steps
Examining and Testing the Health Literacy Plan.
Assessing our efforts.
Gaining support from key staff and community members.
Building internal and external awareness.
EMPOWER HOUSE
Figure 6. Together We Can Be the Dream March on January 16th 2023 – Empower House Staff and Volunteers.
Acknowledgements
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Discussion

How can you replicate this in your community?

Future Considerations

Sustainment

- Offer future rounds to reach more organizations

Seek participation by organizations with wide community reach

- e.g. Public Library System

Through these collective efforts –

- Potential to move the needle on organizational health literacy
- Ultimately increase health equity

COMMUNITY

VACCINE CLINICS
129 TOTAL
3,651 VACCINES

OUTREACH EVENTS
45 TOTAL
3,721 REACHED

COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR TRAININGS
25 TOTAL
141 ATTENDEES

STUDENT AMBASSADOR TRAININGS
18 TOTAL
113 ATTENDEES

COMMUNITY CONVO
11 TOTAL
452 ATTENDEES

HEALTH CLUBS
8 TOTAL
52 MEETINGS
98 MEMBERS

HEALTH PROVIDERS

MEDICAL LECTURES
3 TOTAL
389 ATTENDEES

PARTNER MEETINGS
167 TOTAL
120+ ORGANIZATIONS

CHW TRAININGS
17 TOTAL
171 ATTENDEES

HEALTH PROVIDER TRAININGS
60 TOTAL
938 ATTENDEES

HEALTH PROVIDER STUDENT TRAININGS
3 TOTAL
68 ATTENDEES

ORGANIZATIONS

PLEDGE PROGRAM INTERVENTIONS
10 ORGANIZATIONS
50 TRAINEES

280 COMMUNITY EVENTS
8,176 IMPACTS

+

263 INSTITUTIONAL EVENTS
1,616+ REACHED

=

543 TOTAL EVENTS
9,792+ TOTAL IMPACTS

Updated 30 June 2023 - HHS

Q&A

Contact information

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HEALTH CONFIANZA

Resources

UNC Health Literacy Data Map

- http://healthliteracymap.unc.edu/

Kotter's Steps to Leading Change

- https://www.kotterinc.com/methodology/8-steps/

10 Attributes of Health Literate Organization

- https://www.ahrq.gov/health-literacy/publications/ten-attributes.html

CLAS Standards

- https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas

Building Health Literate Organizations: A Guidebook for Achieving Organizational Change

- https://dfwhcfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Building-Health-Literate-Organizations.pdf

HLE2 Organizational Assessment

- https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/135/2019/05/april-30-FINAL_The-Health-Literacy-Environment2_Locked.pdf

A Practical Guide for Consensus-Based Decision Making (Madden, 2017)

- https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/Resources/Tools/Practical%20Guide%20for%20Consensus-Based%20Decision%20Making.pdf

CDC Making Health Literacy Real- OHL Template

- https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/pdf/planning_template.pdf

CDC Health Literacy Resources

- https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/healthliteracyresources/index.html

Thank you!