Health Literacy in Israel: Policy, Action, Research and Beyond

Presentation for the Institute of Medicine’s Roundtable on Health Literacy International Approaches to Health Literacy workshop
The New York Academy of Medicine - September 24, 2012

Dr. Diane Levin-Zamir PhD, MCHES, MPH
National Director, Department of Health Education and Promotion
Clalit Health Services, Israel
University of Haifa School of Public Health, Israel
IUHPE Global Working Group on Health Literacy
Presentation Overview

• Background
• Highlights - Promoting Health Literacy in Israel
  – Policy
  – Action and Practice
  – Capacity Building
  – Research
• Recommendations
Israel - A Country of Cultures

Jews living in Israel more than 10 years: 63.43%
New Immigrants: 16.0%
Moslem Arabs: 14.8%
Christian Arabs: 1.77%
Druze: 1.64%
Other: 2.34%
Health in Israel - Profile

• Life expectancy – Overall 82 yrs, ranks 4th in the world
• Universal healthcare coverage for all citizens of Israel primary, secondary and tertiary care, since 1995
• Risk Factors- 20.9% smokers, over 60% overweight or obese, 20-30% regularly engage in physical activity
• Average number of visits to physician – 6 per capita/yr.
• Growing rates of adult population with chronic disease
• Concern regarding out-of-pocket expenses for health
• Recognized disparities regarding health behavior and service utilization
Smoking in Israel

2.1.1 Adult population smoking daily, 2009 and change in smoking rates, 1999-2009 (or nearest year)

![Graph showing smoking rates and changes](image)

Source: OECD Health Data 2011; national sources for non-OECD countries.
Literacy in Israel

• Israel ranks 67 among with a literacy rate of 97% according to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report 2011
• Israel ranks 17 in the world among 192 countries for digital communication with public infrastructure
• Regular use of internet – 68% (Central Bureau of Statistics)
Health Literacy - Working Definitions

The cognitive and social skills which determine the motivation and ability of individuals to gain access to, understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health. (Nutbeam, 1998)

The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions (Ratzan and Parker, 2000).
Health Literacy Policy Landmarks

- Developmental goals on Health Literacy included in the 2020 goals and objectives;
- National Strategic Plan for Reducing Health Disparities
- New Directive of MoH Director General on Cultural and Language Accessibility on the Health System (2/2013)
  - Cultural mediators in health services
  - All information and signage in 4-5 languages
  - Simultaneous translation of services
  - Capacity training for health professionals
  - Culturally appropriate health promotion in community
  - Empowerment and involvement of the community
- Voluntary adoption of Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation for hospitals by Clalit Hospital System
Health Literacy Action: Focus on settings

- Community Primary Care
- Hospital
- Media/Online
Health Literacy Action - Health Care System

Clalit Health Services

• 4.2 million members; 54% of Israel’s population
• 35,000 workers
• 1,400 primary and specialized care community clinics
• 14 major teaching hospitals: 8 general, 2 psychiatric, 1 pediatric, 2 geriatric, 1 rehabilitation
• 416 pharmacies
• 40 diagnostic imaging centers
• 67 laboratory centers
• 83 physiotherapy units
• 30 occupational therapy units
• 87 diet & nutrition consultation units
• 22 mental health clinics, 70 dental clinics
• 20 alternative medicine clinics

2nd largest non-government health care organization in the world
Initiatives for Reducing Disparities: Partnerships for HP of New Immigrants

- Cross-cultural liaisons in primary care clinics - “Refuah Shlema”
- Partnering with NGOs:
  - Telephone translation
  - Community diabetes programs
- Training and coaching health staff on cultural competence skills

The program was effective in:

- Improving physician-patient relations;
- Improving availability and accessibility of medical services and
- Improving the ability to navigate the health system
- No significantly increase in expenditure on services was incurred

Refuah Shlemah has been sustained for over 14 years – the longest community program for cultural mediation implemented in Israel to date.

Brookdale Institute, 2002
"No one specific intervention, if used alone, led to major improvements in management of chronic diseases"

Health Literacy Action

Clinical Quality Indicators in the Community

Lifestyle
- Child obesity
- Smoking registration
- PA among seniors

Early Detection & Immunization
- Influenza immunization
- Mammography
- Occult Blood
- Hypertension tests
- Infant Hgb

Disease management
- Diabetes
- CHF
- Hyperlipidemia
- Hypertension
- Re-hospitalizations
Health Literacy Action

Overview of Strategies

• Health Literacy – Patient Ed Kits & Internet
• In-service Training
• Lifestyle and Self-Management Workshops
• Tailored Programs for Special Populations

Health Literacy Action

Health literacy and chronic care
Scope of workshops for diabetics on healthy lifestyle and self care

N=5330

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CLALIT 100 years The Best for Your Family
Program effectiveness

Healthy Lifestyle and self-management workshops for Diabetics - HbA1C measures

Estimated Marginal Means of measure_1

Before intervention

Following intervention

70 workshops/year

P=<0.001

CLALIT 100 years
The Best for Your Family
Addressing Health Literacy in Hospitals

• Health Promoting Hospital: Meir Hospital and others in the process: patients, workers & community

• Joint Commission Int (JCI) accreditation recognized Clalit for excellence in patient education.
“Ask Me 3”

Clalit hospitals have adopted the initiative and each of the major teaching hospitals have implemented the program, encouraging patients to ask:

- “What is my health problem/condition?”
- “What am I to do about it?”
- “Why is it important?”
On-line health information – 2.5 million entries every month – 80% unique entries
Health Literacy and Capacity Building

Computer-based Modules feature Improving Communication Skills Using Motivational Interviewing and Brief Interventions

Healthy Lifestyles
- Smoking cessation
- Physical Activity
- Nutrition
- Early detection
Health Literacy: Building a Research Base

Media Health Literacy Scale (MHL)

Action

Critical

Awareness

Identification


CLALIT 100 Year
Validated Media Health Literacy Research Model

- Socio/Personal demographic Characteristics
- Health Empowerment
- Family/Peer Co-Viewing
- Sources of Health Information
- Selected Health Behaviors
- Media Health Literacy
The National Health Literacy in Israel Study

- National survey currently in progress - close collaboration with HLS-Euro
- Methodology: Face-to-face home interviews
- Include a representative sample of 600
- Four languages: Hebrew, Arabic, Russian & Amaharic
- Instrument based on focus groups with key informants
In Summary

In Israel:

• **Tremendous challenges** for bridging health literacy gaps

• **New and preliminary policy initiatives** for health literacy as part of a systems approach

• **Complexity of health literacy action**: community, health service and media settings with potential for building a strong evidence base.

• **Research in early stages** with promising studies and projects currently underway
Health Literacy in Israel and Beyond - Building Partnerships

• Strive for Health Literacy in all Policies
• Collaboration in Research
• Building on Experience from Colleagues and Partners
• International Initiatives for Professional Training and Capacity Building
Thank you and
Happy New Year!

Dr. Diane Levin-Zamir
dianele@clalit.org.il
+972-50-6263033