



Merck Health Literate Glossary Initiative

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What is health literacy?

“The degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process, and understand health information and services in order to make appropriate health decisions.”

- Ratzan SC, Parker RM. 2000.

The ability to make informed health decisions
every day.

Ratzan, S.C., & Parker, R.M. (2000). Introduction. In: *National Library of Medicine Current Bibliographies in Medicine: Health Literacy*. Selden, C.R., Zorn, M., Ratzan, S.C., Parker, R.M., Editors. NLM Pub. No. CBM 2000-1. Bethesda, MD: National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Why is Health Literacy so important?

Control, Choice, Collaboration, Consequences

Poor health literacy is “a **STRONGER PREDICTOR** of a person’s health than age, income, employment status, education and race.”

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Health Literacy can affect a person’s ability to*:

- Ø **ACCESS** health care services
- Ø **USE** services appropriately
- Ø **ADOPT** health-promoting behaviors
- Ø **MANAGE** chronic conditions
- Ø **NAVIGATE** health care systems
- Ø **ACT** on health-related news and information

*US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Quick guide to health literacy. <http://health.gov/communication/literacy/quickguide/Quickguide.pdf>. Accessed February 12, 2016

**Report on the Council of Scientific Affairs, Ad Hoc Committee on Health Literacy for the Council on Scientific Affairs, AMA, JAMA, Feb 10, 1999

Pharma communicates with patients in many ways*

Pre-approval

Recruitment materials, including targeted messaging to underrepresented populations

Informed consent

Materials given to patients during trials

Plain language summaries

Patient-focused drug development including patient-reported outcomes

Patient labeling/leaflet and packaging development

Post-approval

Disease information

Biomarkers and testing

Patient labeling/leaflet

Packaging

Digital communications

US: Direct advertising to consumers

*Not all companies participate in all types of patient communications

Why was the Glossary Developed?



Efficiency

- Ease authoring and review process
- Reduce time to author/review
- Improve compliance with deadlines for these documents

Consistency in Patient Communication

- Health literate & patient focused
- Terms drawn from one primary source

Transparency

- Public access to study documents
- Merck-reviewed terms

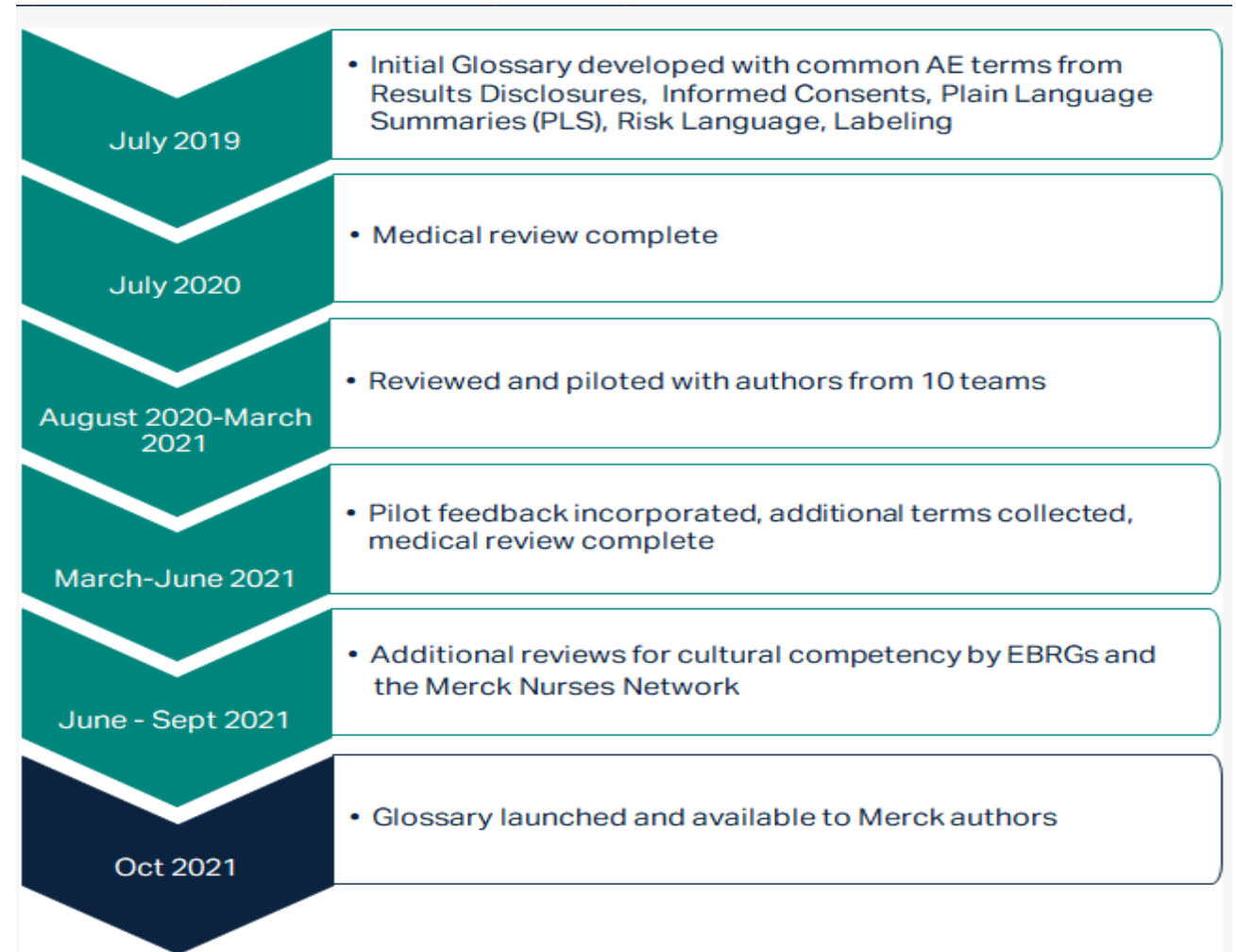
Evolution of the Health Literate Glossary

Glossary definitions developed in collaboration with Health Literacy Media using common clinical research AE terms

Initial glossary piloted across 10 group with Plain Language Summaries (PLS), Risk Language, Labeling, Publications

Cross divisional Cultural Competency reviews conducted across Merck's Employee Business Resource Groups and internal Nurse Network

Internal glossary launched in October with over 1000 terms



Challenges in Development



Locating internal HL materials



Identifying the repository



Management of expectations and risk



Process development for testing, value and cultural competency reviews



Development of graphics

Timing of Glossary Implementation and Rollout



Glossary launch October 2021

Considerations for 2022

- Options for translation

- Expansion of use within organization

- Expansion with medical device, packaging, instructions for use terms

- Graphics development

Thank You

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Back Up Slides

Merck Health Literacy Guidelines

- A reading level of 6th grade or lower
- Visual elements that are a clear match to age, gender, and culture of the intended audience
- A clear purpose stated at the start of the material
- Scope limited to information that directly supports the purpose
- A summary or review of the key points
- Instruction that describes “how to” skills concretely or provides specific action steps
- Content that includes (as applicable): plain language, conversational style, active voice, simple sentences, short lists, explanations of technical terms and data that are easy to understand