



# Teaching English for Health

*A complete curriculum to  
build health literacy skills.*

**Recipient of:**

2009 Award for Improving Minority Health, Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
2010 Outstanding Achievement in Health Literacy, Wisconsin Literacy  
2012 University of Wisconsin-Madison Community Partner Award  
2014 Madison/Dane County Public Health Award

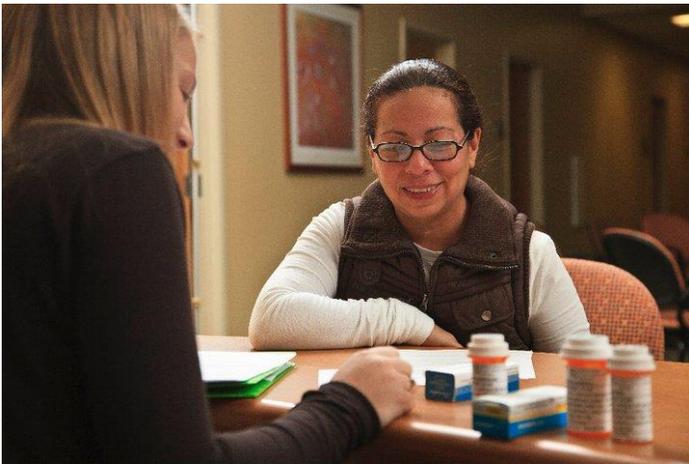
**Presented at:** Wisconsin Health Literacy Summit, Institute for Health Advancement National Conference in California, Florida Blue Sapphire Awards, Florida Literacy Conferences, ProLiteracy National Conferences.



*Literacy skills are a stronger predictor of an individual's health status than age, income, employment status, education level, or racial/ethnic group.*

*English for Health* is a complete twelve-week curriculum developed in Madison, WI over six years designed to build health literacy skills among adults. By collaborating with healthcare systems, *English for Health* improves adult learners' access and use of healthcare, and helps providers communicate more effectively with patients.

**Why Health Literacy?** Poor health literacy costs the U.S. economy approximately \$238 billion annually. It is linked to poor health outcomes and even death. Studies show that Medicaid patients who read below a third-grade level have four times the annual health care costs than average Medicaid patients. Immigrants struggle to understand the health care system, institutions, and providers. Many cannot read the date on a medical appointment card, understand the directions on a bottle of children's medicine, or follow written care instructions for an illness or wound.



*English for Health* is for adults who have low literacy and limited English proficiency. English instruction is contextualized to health literacy content. The sponsoring educational organization partners with a health clinic or hospital to deliver instruction that helps participants navigate the health care system and become informed users of health care.

The program includes 48 hours of health literacy instruction. Program content includes health information, appropriate use of emergency care, and an introduction to health insurance. We also cover information about how to navigate health care facilities, make appointments, fill out forms, describe symptoms, and communicate with staff and providers. The course features a mock clinic in which students make appointments, fill out medical history forms, learn about blood pressure, describe symptoms and review sample prescriptions and medication safety with healthcare providers. *English for Health* can be adapted to meet the needs of local programs and the adult learners they serve.

Organizations that purchase *English for Health* will receive:

- The comprehensive English for Health curriculum, including individual lesson plans and accompanying activities for each of the 24 class periods, in electronic form.
- One phone conversation to provide guidance on getting started.
- A series of hour-long training videos to help with implementation.
- **A model application that has successfully raised \$100,000 in grants.**

Literacy Network staff will guide you through the process of identifying and prioritizing technical assistance needs related to creating your *English for Health* program. Literacy Network staff will help you identify strengths and resources, and prioritize actions that will lead to successful implementation.



### Training

The *English for Health* program comes with a series of training videos that cover the following topics:

- Getting Started: Preparing for Your English for Health Program
- Using the English for Health Curriculum
- Developing and Sustaining Health Literacy Partnerships
- Program Evaluation and Sustainability

Each training video offers talking points and hands-on activities that encourage participants to discuss the information as is relevant to their particular organizations and walks through the creation of an individualized implementation plan.

Literacy Network staff will provide tested advice in a phone call to help you build your organization's capacity to develop, operate, and evaluate a sustainable, culturally competent English for Health program. We will support the knowledge, skills, expertise, attitudes, and infrastructure needed to build permanent health literacy education capacity. We will help you foster collaboration and leverage additional resources to support your program.

**Total program cost: \$349**

**To get started, or for more information, contact:**

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