

Potential Barriers to Patient Engagement and Behavior Change



Health Literacy

“The degree to which individuals have the capacity to **obtain, process, and understand** basic health information and services needed to **make** appropriate health **decisions.**”

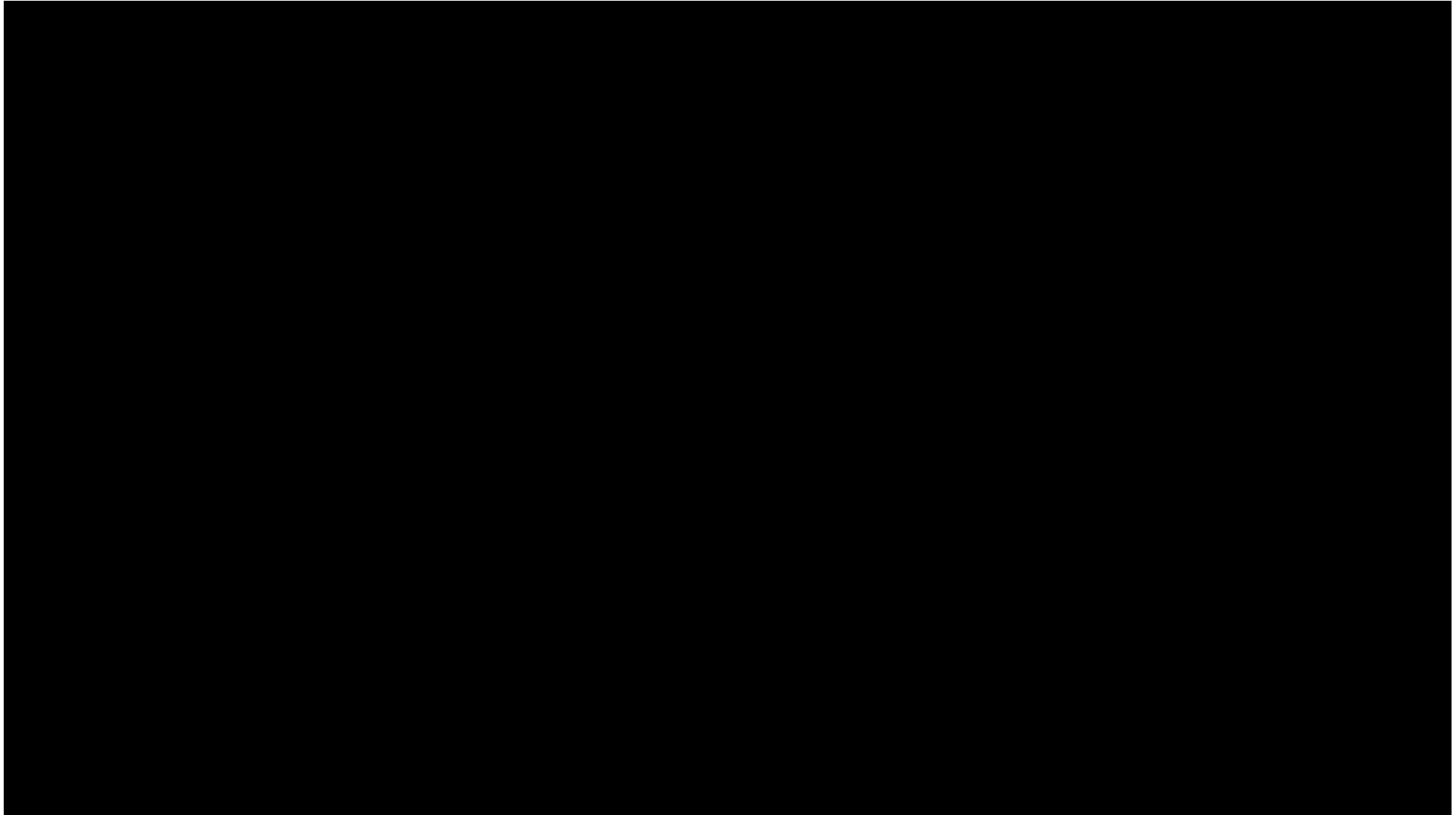
- Ratzan and Parker, 2000 / Healthy People 2010

Objective:

Identify barriers to patient engagement and behavior change.



Health Literacy – AMA



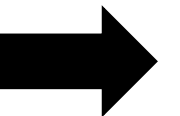
Health Literacy



A **patient's ability** to obtain, understand and act on health information.



A **provider's capacity** to communicate clearly, educate about health and empower their patients.





Impact on Self-Management

21% of the U.S. adults read **below the 9th grade level.**

- Impacts
- Reading prescription labels
- Finding their way in a health care system
- Fully understanding written materials.

Functional Health Literacy

Literacy is not only about reading and writing.

- **Listening** for understanding
- **Evaluating** if the message sent was the same as it was received
- **Speaking**
- The ability to **ask questions**



GNINAEELC – Ot erussa hgih ecnamrofrep, yllacidoirep naelc eht epat sdaeh dna natspac revenehw uoy eciton na noitalumucca fo tsud dna nworb-der edixo selcitrapp. Esu a nottoc baws denetsiom htiw lyporposi lohocla. Eb erus on lohocla sehcuot eht rebbur strap, sa ti sdnnet ot yrd dna yllautneve kcarc eht rebbur. Esu a pmad tholc ro egnops ot naelc eht tenibac. A dlim paos, ekil gnihsawhsid tnegreted, lliw pleh evomer esaerg ro lio.



Why are patients at risk?



Reliance on the written
word for patient
instruction



Increasingly complex
healthcare system

More medications

More tests and procedures

Growing self-care requirements

Esoteric language

Who is at risk?

- Elderly
- Ethnic and racial minorities
- Limited education
- Immigrants
- Low socioeconomic status
- People with chronic disease



Case Study Discussion

- Jonathan is a 14-year-old adolescent recently discharged from a mental health unit. This was his fourth admission over an 18-month period. His mother assumed responsibility for seeing that he took his medications as directed. His mother knew the names of his medications and faithfully monitored his taking of them. But Jonathan's behavior began to deteriorate again.
- At one of Jonathan's follow-up visits, the nurse asked him to show her the meds he was on, and how he was taking them. It turned out that Jonathan's mother couldn't read, got the meds mixed up, and was administering the daily med three times a day, and the TID medication once daily.

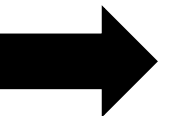


Economic Impact

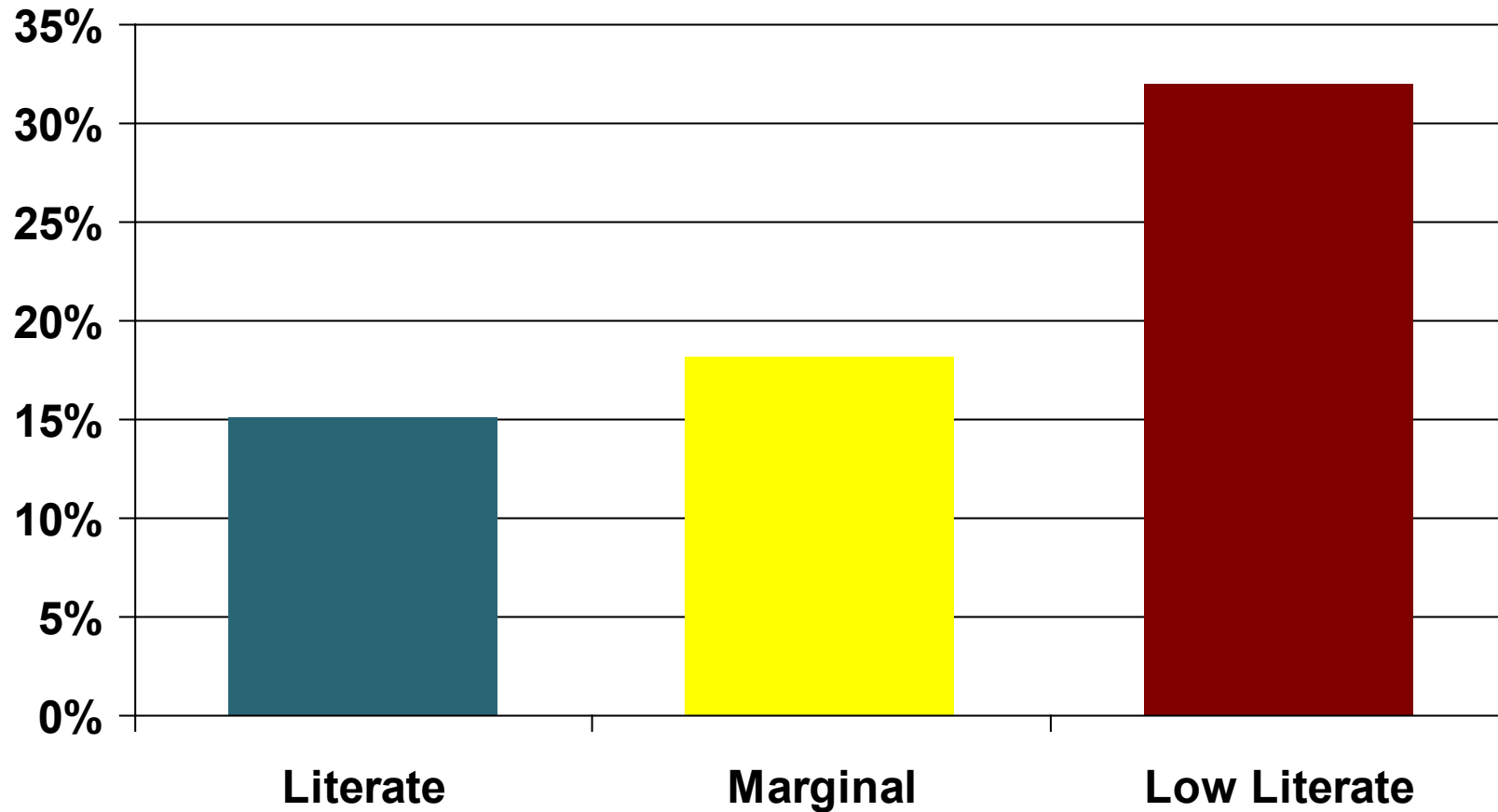


Low health literacy increases US health care costs by **\$50 billion**

\$73 billion annually*



Low Literacy Leads to Re-hospitalization



Recognizing the Red Flags



Making Excuses



**Perceived
Resistance**



**Frequently Missed
Appointments, Tests**



Has No Questions



**Non-adherent with
meds or treatment**

Creating a Shame Free Experience

Convey an attitude of helpfulness, caring and respect – by all staff

- Ask questions to help patients open up
- Listen
- Encourage patients to ask questions
- SMILE 😊

Provide assistance confidentially



Strategy: **Improve interpersonal communication**

Slow down

- Take your time

Use plain, non-medical language

- “Living room” language



Strategy:

Improve interpersonal communication

Use analogies and pictures

- Charts
- Models
- Diagrams

Limit to most important concepts

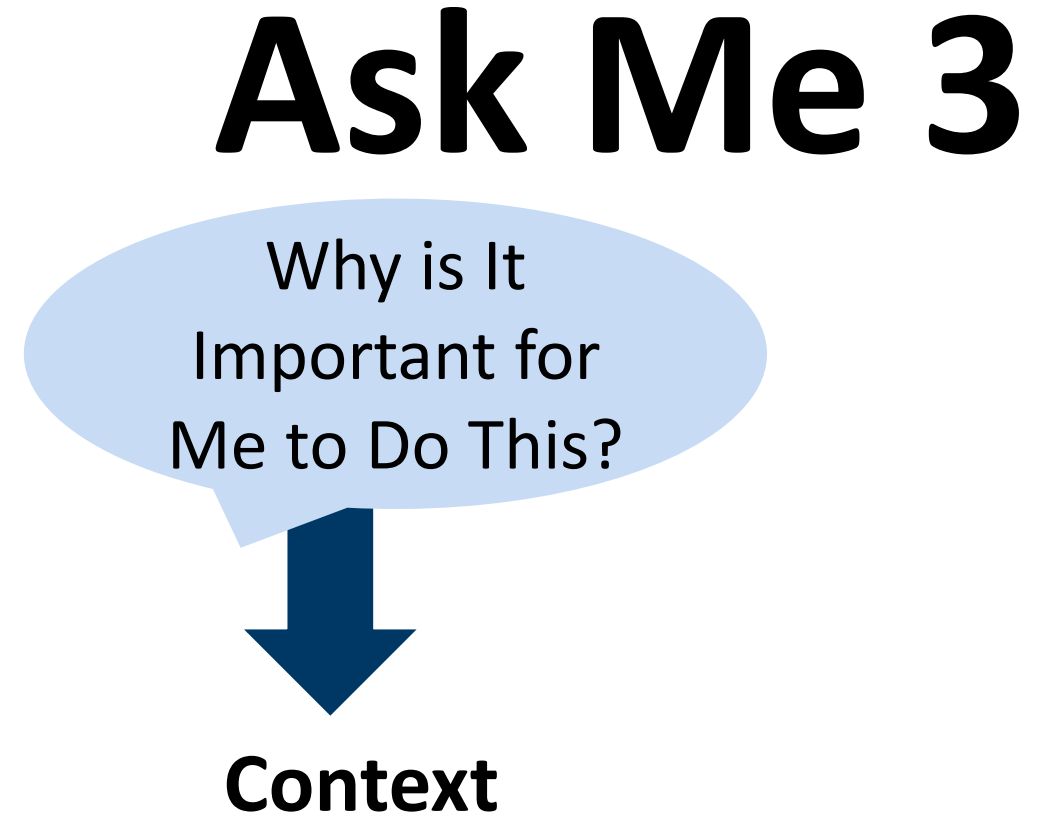
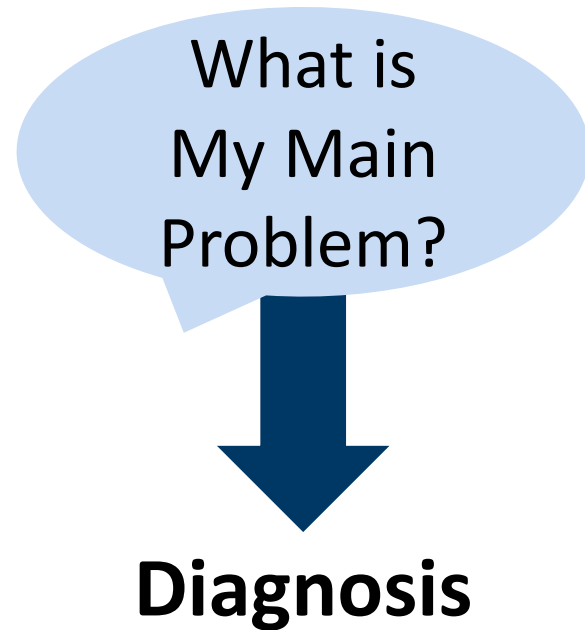
- Focus on 1-3 key messages

Repeat them



Strategy:

Empower patients



Strategy:

Use teach-back method

Asking patients to demonstrate understanding:

- What will you tell your spouse about your condition?
- I want to be sure I explained everything clearly, so can you please explain it back to me so I can be sure I did?
- Show me what you would do.

Chunk and check:

- Summarize and check for understanding throughout, don't wait until the end.

Do NOT ask...

- Do you understand?



“Understanding is a two-way street.”

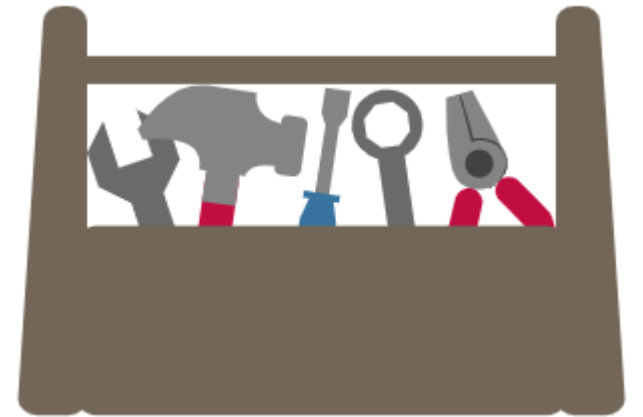
-Eleanor Roosevelt



Strategy: Identify Assessment and Support Tools

Tips

- Medi-Babble Application (<http://medibabble.com/>)
- Living Room Language Dictionary (see hand out)





Key Takeaways

- Health literacy is a barrier to patient engagement and behavior change
- Recognize who is at risk and red flags to spot health literacy
- Create a shame-free atmosphere to assess health literacy and address the patient's needs
- Utilize strategies to check for patient understanding