



# Health Literacy – Opportunities for learning from across the system

**Literacy** – the ability to read, write, speak and listen to a level that enables a person to **communicate effectively**

**Health Literacy** – “The personal characteristic and social resources needed for individuals and communities to **access, understand, appraise and use information and services to make decisions about health**”



43%

of English working population do not understand the health information they are given



# Health Literacy – Opportunities for learning from across the system

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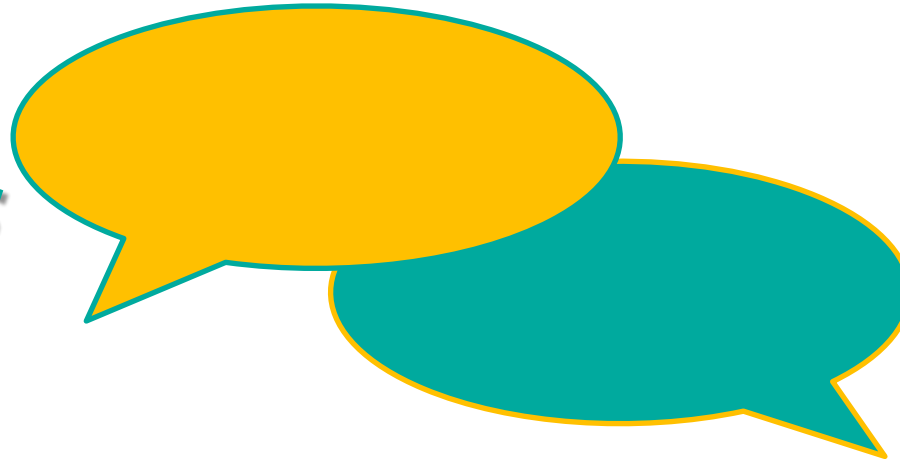
**Health Literacy** – people having the skills in language, literacy and numeracy to **understand, evaluate and engage in health services and information with confidence**

61%

Rising to;  
when ***numeracy skills*** are also required  
for comprehension

# A problem of communication?

*Clinicians*



*Public*

- Not realising that a positive test result can be a bad thing
  - Not understanding how chemotherapy will work
- Not realising link between food and diabetes control
  - “Chronic” frequently means “persistent” to clinicians but to patients “severe”?
- Not knowing where the waist is
  - Not realising that 5 a day is roughly five handfuls rather than five bags of fruit and vegetables

# *How can I help my patients understand their health better?*

Support from front desk to consulting room and onward

Face to Face Communications

Plain Language

Standardised communication tools

Pictorials

Educational Materials

“Teach-back”

Continued professional education

## Health Literacy & MECC

- Adoption of healthy behaviours
  - Positive behaviour change
  - Enhanced motivation
- Improved self care and management
- Patient engagement and involvement

# Partnership approach – Review & Learning

- 2016 - PHE, HEE and NHS England partnership committed to test and evaluate three approaches using existing work as developed across the East Midlands

## Professional Training in order to provide:

- Increased awareness of the impact and prevalence of lower levels of health literacy
- Tools and techniques to enable modification of practice, to better meet the needs of people with low health literacy

## Population Health Literacy Skills:

“Skilled for Health” the national health literacy course, delivered to people with diabetes

Utilising the raw data produced in the pilot, the pilot partners are developing early approaches to analyse whether improving health literacy can result in system efficiencies

Developing a Health Literacy HE Module

## Outputs - September

Toolkit/how to guides  
Evaluation report with examples of good practice