

# Evaluation of Health Literacy on Family Engagement in the Adult Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Setting

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## Problem

Family engagement is an essential component of safe and effective care in the intensive care unit (ICU) setting. Many families remain limited on their involvement in the care of their family members in the ICU. Research shows the founding principles of engagement are collaboration, information sharing/communication, partnering and active involvement in care. However, family engagement remains complex and there is little guidance on how to execute it.

## PICO

**Population:** adult patients in the intensive care setting

**Intervention:** health literacy platform

**Comparison:** current practice

**Outcome:** influence family engagement

**PICO:** In an adult intensive care setting, how does a health literacy platform compared to current practice influence family engagement?

This inquiry aims to find evidence to support providing health care related information through a web-based platform increases family engagement of patients in the ICU setting.



## Literature Search

The following three electronic databases were searched: PubMed, CINAHL, and Google Scholar. Studies published in the last ten years and in English were included in the search. MeSH terms included health literacy and family engagement. General search terms included health literacy, family engagement, ICU setting and family support. A total of 137 articles were identified. Of those articles, 8 studies were included in the final review based on title relevance, abstract study quality and article appraisal. The 8 studies in this literature review included qualitative and quantitative studies.

## Evidence Summary Table

Level	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Article #	1	0	2	0	4	1	0

## Data

Family engagement contributes to safe, effective, and quality care in the ICU setting. There is little to no research on how the process of information sharing should occur. It is found to be complex, and little is known about effective practices.

## Stakeholders

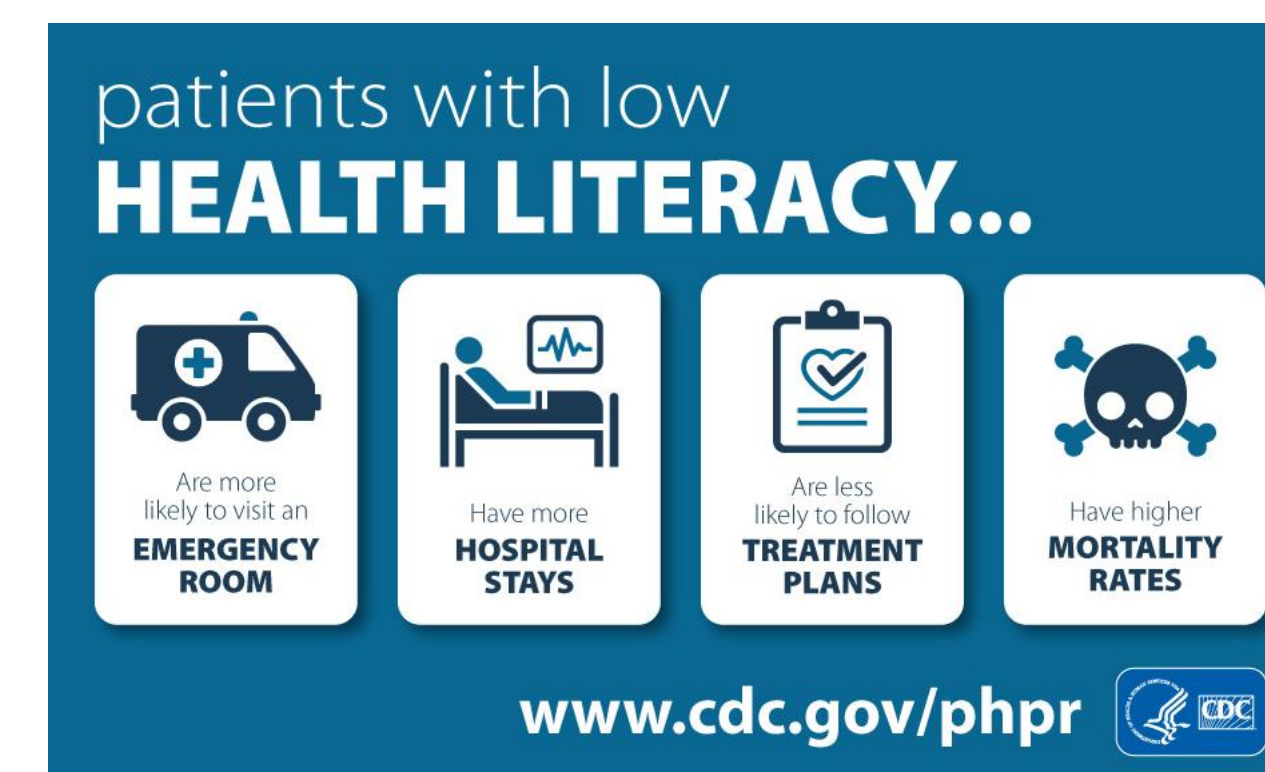
Patient Education Coordinator, Patient Experience, Marketing, Adult Intensive Care Leadership & nursing staff representatives, Evidence Based Practice Coordinator, family/visitors and patients.



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute for Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL)

## Return on Investment

There are no planned additional costs for this project. In-kind costs for salaried staff. The return on investment for this project could be increased family/visitor engagement reflecting in Qualtrics Patient Engagement survey results. Other impacts may be reflected in metrics such as mortality, length of stay, falls and other quality measures.



## Recommendations

Increasing health literacy knowledge through information sharing is considered crucial to its success. This knowledge helps families make decisions. For two decades, Healthy People has had a major public initiative to track and report digital health literacy data at the national and sub-population levels. When resources aren't available to families, it leads to frustration for nurses. Nurses feel they are making or "talking families into" decisions due to the family's lack of knowledge or understanding.

Improving communication with families aligns with national recommendations to better support patients with advanced illness and their families. One study found that the majority of families were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the web-based tools. ICU environments should be designed to invite families to be present and support family perception of inclusion. There is supporting evidence that providing health care information to families of patients in the ICU can lead to increased family engagement. Barriers to success include lack of buy-in and ability to promote change in the clinical setting, managing the workload of implementation, lack of staff awareness and interest, and funding to support initiatives.

## Summary

The diffusion of telehealth, patient portals, websites, social media, and mobile applications suggests the health sector's future is digital. Digital technology has become more central in our lives, and the ICU has long been a technology-rich environment. The findings of this literature review support the development of a web-based platform accessible to families to promote health literacy. In this time of the digital decade, technology should be utilized to create a platform to connect with families. The possibilities are left open for organizations to explore existing platforms. Important factors to consider are literacy levels and user comfort level with digital technologies.



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