

Health Literacy and Patient Satisfaction

Health Literacy

- Health literacy skills include the ability to:
 - Understand health concepts,
 - Share information with doctors
 - Make healthy choices
 - Engage in self-care and disease management¹
- If a person does not have adequate health literacy skills, he or she is unable to
 - Understand health risks,
 - Evaluate different health behaviors & treatment options
 - Follow health care recommendations¹

Patient Satisfaction

- Patient satisfaction is used as a measure of quality health care². Areas of patient satisfaction include:
 - Access to care
 - Continuity of care,
 - Courtesy
 - Emotional support
 - Overall coordination
 - Patient education
 - Patient preferences
 - Pharmacy access
 - Specialist care
 - Visit coordination³

Health Literacy and Patient Satisfaction

- Areas where patients with lower health literacy were less satisfied
 - Access
 - Courtesy
 - Patient preferences
 - Emotional support
 - Patient education³

- Lower literacy accounted for worse scores in seven areas of patient satisfaction:
 - Access
 - Courtesy
 - Patient preferences
 - Emotional support
 - Patient education
 - Specialist care
 - Overall coordination³

- Other studies show that patients with limited health literacy:
 - Are more likely to be dissatisfied with the status of their medical condition
 - Report worse results from medical care
 - Report more difficulty in getting care ⁴
 - Report less satisfaction for:
 - Clarity in communication
 - Explanation of condition
 - Explanation of the care process⁵

- Other issues associated with limited literacy include:
 - Reduced trust in provider
 - Worse assessment of the quality of care received⁶

Patient Satisfaction of Written Materials

- Patients with low literacy have greater satisfaction of materials written in an easy-to-understand manner⁵
- Providers who have participated in programs designed to simplify educational materials, such as "Creating Reader-Friendly Print Materials" workshops have improved patient satisfaction⁷

References

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