

POSTER 74

HEALTH LITERACY IN TWO OUTPATIENT CLINICS

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Health literacy is an emerging public health issue that affects all ages, races, cultures, and income levels. Furthermore, an individual's literacy skills tend to be a stronger predictor of health status than any other demographic variable. There is currently a mismatch between individuals' health literacy levels and the complexity of the healthcare system, which could lead to poorer health outcomes of the client. The purpose of this research was to determine the accessibility of two outpatient clinics at Rusk Rehabilitation and their ability to provide a health literate environment for their clients as determined by an adapted version of the *Health Literacy Environment Review* and the *Fry Readability Scale*. The evaluation addressed the areas of written materials, navigation and signage within the facilities, and the oral communication between the client and the staff. Descriptive analysis was used to identify strengths and areas for improvement in each clinic. Initial findings indicated the need for improvement in navigation and written communication as well as strengths in the area of communication between staff and clients. Occupational therapists can contribute to future research by measuring the impact of health literacy in the healthcare environment and how it affects client health outcomes. They can further serve as consultants for adaptation of the healthcare environment to better fit the needs of the client.