

About the *Health Literacy* *Community of Practice...*



What is Health Literacy?

Health literacy is defined as the ability of individuals and groups to access, understand and use health information in ways which promote and maintain good health. To achieve this, emphasis must be placed on the ability of the organisation to communicate and provide information in accessible ways that are relevant and appropriate to the target group.

What is a Health Literacy Community of Practice?

The Health Literacy Community of Practice is a group of people who share an interest in improving the capacity of health and community organisations to respond to the health literacy needs of consumers and communities.

How did it begin?

The Community of Practice is led by HealthWest Partnership, along with the Centre for Ethnicity and Health (CEH) and Western Region Health Centre (WRHC). In 2012-2013 these partners developed and delivered the Health Literacy Development Course to 20 health professionals. This course was evaluated by The University of Melbourne. It was recommended that the partners start a Community of Practice to continue the learnings and promote leadership in responding to health literacy in the west.

How do we meet?

The Community of Practice will meet face-to-face at least four times throughout the year. You can register online at www.healthwest.org.au/events.

We will also trial online communication to support ongoing exchange of information and easier access for those who cannot attend meetings.

What will we do?

The Community of Practice will provide opportunities to:

- Share learnings, experiences, and problem solve challenges
- Share resources and examples of good practice
- Keep up to date with current literature and research in health literacy
- Network with others interested in health literacy
- Inform regional projects of HealthWest and their partners

Who can be involved?

Anyone championing change, wanting to improve the capacity of health and community organisations to respond to the health literacy needs of consumers and communities. This may include people from health and community organisations in the western region of Melbourne, such as:

- Managers, clinicians, health promotion staff
- Participants and graduates of the Health Literacy Development Course
- Consumers (*see below*)
- Diversity staff

Academics, researchers and representatives from peak bodies are also encouraged to participate.

Representatives from health and community organisations from other areas of Melbourne and surrounds may also enquire or attend meetings casually where appropriate.

Can consumers be involved?

Consumers actively involved with health and community organisations in the west are welcome to attend meetings which are of interest to them.

Who organises it?

A leadership group which includes two community members and members from the HealthWest partnership, Centre for Ethnicity and Health and Western Region Health Centre.

Where can I find out more information?

To find out more or to add your name to the email list please contact Tanya at HealthWest on ph: 8379 9946 or tanya.sofra@healthwest.org.au.

For more information about HealthWest Partnership please visit www.healthwest.org.au

