



Partnership for Clear Health Communication Spring 2005 e-Newsletter



Ask Me 3 updates:

In print: The Partnership has now distributed more than **500,000** posters, brochures and program implementation guides to hospitals and health centers, universities, adult literacy organizations, patient groups, employers and others nationwide.

On the Web: We're happy to report that more organizations are now featuring Ask Me 3 on their Web sites, and information about Ask Me 3 can be found on approximately 20 sites. Some of these include:

- [America's Health Insurance Plans](#)
- [American Medical Association](#)
- [Institute for Healthcare Advancement](#)
- [National Council on the Aging](#)

Thanks to all who are sharing important health literacy information with their colleagues and affiliates!

■ Health Literacy News

The [Star-Ledger \(NJ\)](#) ran an article on March 11 regarding a survey on common causes of medical errors – and inadequate patient-provider communication about health concerns was included as a factor. The piece quotes PCHC Board member Adele Pietrantonio, R.Ph., in stressing the importance of empowering patients to share questions and concerns with their providers. The three Ask Me 3 questions are highlighted, and www.AskMe3.org is cited as a consumer information source.

The Society for Public Health Education recently featured an article by Beccah Rothschild, M.P.A., health literacy manager for the California Health Literacy Initiative, entitled "[Health Literacy: What the Issue is, What is Happening, and What Can Be Done?](#)" The article examines the impact of health literacy and outlines steps needed to address the issue. Ask Me 3 is included as a successful working model used to promote health literacy.

The American Medical Association Foundation, the Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research Foundation and the National Library of Medicine launched a national pilot program in Dunedin, FL on February 14 with nearly 4,000 Florida physicians. The program, Information Rx, is

designed to improve patients' health literacy and health outcomes by providing free, reliable and consumer-friendly health information online. Pilot programs also are under way in Iowa, Georgia and Virginia. [Read more](#)

■ Ask Me 3 in Action

In each e-Newsletter, the Partnership for Clear Health Communication will highlight a health center, organization or individual taking action to promote clear health communication.

Iowa Health Systems (IHS) – a community-based, statewide organization of physicians, hospitals, civic leaders and volunteers who are open to new approaches and share a vision of affordable, accessible healthcare – supported the 15th Annual New Readers of Iowa Conference last fall. The conference, *"Health and Literacy Working Together,"* focused on helping adult learners create a health literacy statement, improve individual literacy and better understand prescriptions in order to effectively manage their health care.

"The reason for having a health literacy conference is to develop confidence in adult learners to speak up about their health literacy problems, for adult learner groups to build partnerships with health professionals and for health care providers to learn from our patients," said Mary Ann Abrams, M.D., lead consultant at Iowa Health System on health literacy. "Getting health professionals to recognize health literacy issues and take steps to improve communication could be a major step to improving care and lowering health care costs."

The conference, which included close to 100 attendees from ten states, was met with strong enthusiasm. Conference participant and adult learner Archie Willard said the event "encouraged us to ask more questions and to take more responsibility for our own health care."

To read more about this conference or Iowa Health Systems, visit www.ihs.org.

■ Partners Spreading the Word

Partnership Speakers' Bureau

The PCHC Speakers' Bureau continues to share health literacy information in national and regional events across the country. Upcoming events where Partnership members will be speaking include:

- ["System Change for Better Communication": Second Symposium for Policy Makers in Mid-Atlantic States; April 15, Philadelphia, Pa.](#)

- *"Virginians Improving Patient Care & Safety": Fifth Annual Conference; May 25, Richmond, Va.*

We are continuing to identify speaking opportunities throughout the remainder of 2005. To recommend a health literacy-related conference or individual to join the Speakers' Bureau, please contact Jessica Lass at lassj@fleishman.com.