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ECR 2022 / C-18330

## Improving Patient Health Literacy in Imaging Departments

**Congress:**

ECR 2022

**Poster Number:**

C-18330

**Type:**

Educational Exhibit

**Keywords:**

Radiographers, Conventional radiography, CT, MR, Audit and standards, Education, Education and training, Patterns of Care, Quality assurance

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**DOI:**

10.26044/ecr2022/C-18330

**DOI-Link:**

<https://dx.doi.org/10.26044/ecr2022/C-18330>

## Learning objectives

Health Literacy is a key issue in the healthcare and its operational definition developed for the National Library of Medicine mention that is the “the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions” 1. Health literacy skills are needed for dialogue and discussion, reading health information, making decisions about participating in research activities, using medical tools for personal or familial health care, and even for voting on health or environmental...

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## Background

According to World Health Organization (WHO), health literacy refers to an individual's ability to understand basic concepts as they pertain to issues of health and healthcare, also including the notion of access to information 4. A poor understanding of health and health-related issues can lead to higher rates of illness and poor self-care 5. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the patients for healthcare providers to introduce strategies that can help improve health literacy levels among patient populations. We can find strong evidence...

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## Findings and procedure details

The inquiries of health literacy have demonstrated poor health outcome when there is a mismatch between patient skills required for the interpretation of health information and the demands of health professionals and health care system itself on patients 12. Besides, a continuum of multidimensional skill sets of competencies acquired over a lifetime are required to allow an individual to access, participate in, make judgements, and take decisions that directly and indirectly affect health. Improving Health Literacy Awareness in Imaging Departments There are very limited data...

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## Conclusion

Several studies recognize the vital role of health literacy and have prompted facilities to develop policies, which radiographers need to use to guide their practice. Health information can overwhelm even people with advanced literacy skills, especially in stressful situations like health crises. Thus, taking a little time to talk beforehand can result in exams of higher diagnostic quality, better patient safety and better health outcomes. It is important that radiographers be aware of the patient limited health literacy and how it can impact the imaging...

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## Personal information and conflict of interest

R. P. P. Almeida: Nothing to disclose B. Vicente: Nothing to disclose A. F. C. L. Abrantes: Nothing to disclose K. B. Azevedo: Nothing to disclose

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**Fig 1: Context of health literacy.**



**Fig 2: Determinants of Health Literacy defined by the WHO (2013) [12].**

#### Tips to improve radiographer communication with patient

- Use easy-to-understand language with all patients, regardless of their literacy skills
- Explain things without medical or anatomical words (as you would explain them to your grandmother)
- Focus on only 2-3 key messages (patients rarely remember more than that)
- Encourage patients to ask questions. Simply asking "do you have any questions?" isn't enough.
- Verify understanding by asking patients to repeat back what you have told them.

**Fig 3: Tips to improve radiographer communication with patient [16].**

#### Red Flags indicating Patient Limited Health Literacy

- "Forgetting" his or her glasses and needing to read materials at home
- Seeking help only when illness is advanced
- Unable to name medications or their purpose
- Opening pill bottles to identify medication
- Absence of questions
- Taking a long time to complete forms
- Forms are not properly filled out
- Repetitive head nodding
- Relevant documents are tucked away into purse/pocket
- History of missed appointments

**Fig 4: Red flags indicating patient limited health literacy that the radiographer...**