

HEALTH LITERACY

Raising your awareness

WHAT IS HEALTH LITERACY?

In a nutshell, "Health Literacy is a person's ability to access, understand and act on health information" (Nutbeam).



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Research shows that there is a direct link between people's basic skills (Maths and English) and their health outcomes. People who have the lowest skills are the same people who suffer the worst health outcomes.



LOCAL STATISTICS

In West Lancashire alone **39.73%** of the population struggle to understand written information. This rises to **58.94%** when figures are added to the information given (time of appointment/frequency or amount of medications.)



LOW HEALTH LITERACY RELATES TO:



- Higher mortality rate
- Higher prevalence of long term conditions
- More unhealthy behaviours (smoking/obesity/alcohol dependence)
- Difficulty managing medication
- Disengagement with disease prevention (e.g. cancer screenings/vaccinations)

IMPROVED HEALTH LITERACY CAN:

- Save the NHS time (missed appointments)
- Improve practice
- Improve patient care
- Improve communication
- Save money
- Improve patient safety

