

# Health Literacy Council of Delaware

A healthy Delaware begins with health literacy.

Join the movement!



# Meet the Health Literacy Council of Delaware



**The Health Literacy Council of Delaware was formed in 2022** and comprises key leaders within healthcare establishments in Delaware, alongside community partners and other dedicated state healthcare champions. This council represents a diverse group of individuals and organizations committed to addressing health literacy issues in the state.

## **Our Purpose: Advancing Health Literacy in Delaware**

Health Literacy Council of Delaware has been formed in response to the urgent need to enhance health literacy statewide. It unites stakeholders committed to improving well-being in Delaware by prioritizing health literacy through a comprehensive mission and vision.

## **Our Vision: Equity Through Literacy**

**Our Mission:** The Health Literacy Council of Delaware empowers leaders, organizations, and individuals to achieve optimal health through awareness, education, and advocacy of health literacy policies and practices.

“It has been nearly 20 years since the Institute of Medicine published a *Prescription to End Confusion*. In that time, we have seen that without a coordinated effort, the work of well-intentioned people and programs can only do so much to address this need. There are few things impacting health like the phenomenon of misunderstanding. The time has come for Delaware to answer the call to action with a strategic plan to improve health literacy.”

### **Greg O'Neill**

MSN, APRN, AGCNS-BC, NPD-BC, NEA-BC  
Patient & Family Health Education Director,  
ChristianaCare, Chair of the Health Literacy  
Council of Delaware.

Delaware is behind much of the northeast and western regions regarding health literacy levels.

**341,293**

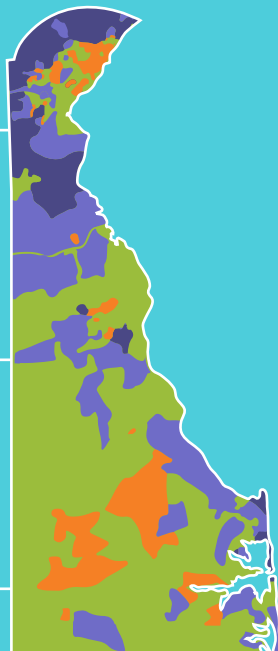
of Delawareans are not proficient readers

**129,649**

of Delawareans read below the third-grade level

**211,644**

of Delawareans read below a sixth grade level



### **Delaware Literacy Scores**

- Quartile 4 (highest)
- Quartile 3
- Quartile 2
- Quartile 1

### **Nationally**



**9 out of 10 adults struggle to understand & use health information**

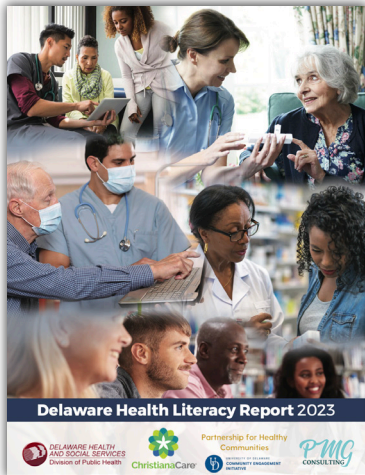
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



# Delaware Health & Literacy Report 2023

## Who is driving health literacy improvements in the state?

The Health Literacy Council of Delaware was developed through a partnership with Delaware's Division of Public Health, UD's Partnership for Healthy Communities, and ChristianaCare, and now part of the Delaware Literacy Alliance.



### Statewide strategic planning report completed in 2023

Our report, which engaged over **750 stakeholders** in the process, was thoughtfully curated by PMG Consulting. This collaboration demonstrates our commitment to inclusive, comprehensive research

## Data Gathered From



### Interviews

**31** state interviews were completed.



### Focus Groups

**7** focus groups were conducted.



### Surveys

**599** completed surveys from respondents who live in Delaware.



### Statewide Convening

**100** stakeholders participated in strategic planning.

## Findings

**33%** find it difficult to understand their health care information

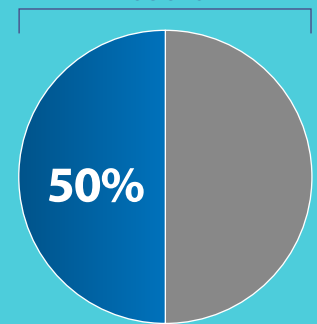
### Delaware



The most challenging aspect is understanding diagnostic information, followed by follow-up care.

A majority of respondents require assistance in reading healthcare materials at some point.

### National



Medication compliance across the United States averages only 50%, often due to the complexity of the regimen or patients being.

While this provides a glimpse into our findings, the populations facing the greatest challenges include the elderly, ESL learners, the disability community, and individuals with low literacy levels.

# Creating Awareness to Affect Change

We are creating awareness and helping Delawareans understand their healthcare through these strategies:



Policy & Advocacy Subcommittee



Community Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee



Education & Training Subcommittee

## Call to action by Healthy People 2030



Eliminate health disparities, achieve health equity, and attain health literacy to improve the health and well-being of all.



Personal health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.



Organizational health literacy is the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

## Our Statewide Strategic Plan Recommendations:

**Establish legislative policy** that provides consistent funding for Delaware's health literacy initiatives.

**Solicit high level leadership** within healthcare organizations and state systems to standardize Health Literacy policy and practices.

**Develop a health literacy awareness campaign** for public and private consumers.

**Facilitate and support the identification and utilization of health literate materials** under the Health Literacy Council's guidance to promote access to relevant, accurate quality materials for partners and consumers.

**Streamline and standardized all health literacy education** within the state, to include primary and secondary education as well as professional medical training programs.

"A lot of initiatives have come and gone because there is no state commitment, they have short timelines, and there is no long-term investment."

### Maricel Santos

Associate Professor of English,  
San Francisco State University

"We are the only country on the planet that does not incorporate health literacy into their healthcare."

### Dr. Omar Khan

President and CEO,  
Delaware Health Sciences Alliance

"We need better tools to keep the conversation at the simplest, most basic level to alleviate intimidation...Simple, clean and good information, be it written or oral, would help us do a better job."

### State Police Officer

"If you don't have health literacy, there is no way to fully understand. That's not only inconvenient, it's a dangerous situation."

### Disability Community Representative

## Join the Health Literacy Council of Delaware!

Discover how you can actively contribute to improving health literacy in our state. Here are some actions you can take:

- 1 Schedule a meeting with our council:** Connect with us to explore collaboration opportunities and share your insights.
- 2 Reach out and ask how you can support health literacy policies:** Your input and involvement can help shape and advocate for policies that benefit Delaware's residents.
- 3 Join a subcommittee:** Dive deeper into the work by becoming part of one of our specialized teams and make a meaningful impact on health literacy initiatives.

## TO LEARN MORE

Contact [ascholl@pmgconsulting.net](mailto:ascholl@pmgconsulting.net)  
and ask for the full report!

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