

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Targeted Rural Health Education Project



HEALTH

EQUITY

CONFERENCE

PRIORITY ALIGNMENT

- **CMS Priorities**
 - **CMS Framework for Health Equity 2022-2032**
 - **Priority #4:**
 - “...Language access, health literacy, health insurance literacy, and the provision of culturally tailored services play a critical role in health care quality, patient/consumer safety, and experience, and can impact health outcomes and enrollment in coverage...”
 - **CMS Rural Health Strategy**
 - **Objective #4**’s key supporting activities:
 - “...Collaborate with rural communication networks to develop and disseminate easy-to-understand materials to help rural patients navigate the health care system...”
 - “...Foster the empowerment and engagement of rural patients in their health care through targeted outreach efforts...”

PRIORITY ALIGNMENT

- **Additional federal agency priority alignment:**
 - **Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion's Healthy People 2030**
 - For the first time in its five iterations, Healthy People 2030 includes [health literacy](#) as a central focus
 - Healthy People's Health Communication objective, [HC/HIT-04](#):
 - "...Increase the proportion of adults who talk to friends or family about their health..."

DEFINITIONS

Health Literacy (Expanded in Healthy People 2030):

•**Personal health literacy:** 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:** 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.

Source: Santana, Stephanie et al. "Updating Health Literacy for Healthy People 2030: Defining Its Importance for a New Decade in Public Health." *Journal of public health management and practice* : JPHMP vol. 27,Suppl 6 (2021): S258-S264.

DEFINITIONS

Plain Language:

- is communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it.
- Language that is plain to one set of readers may not be plain to others. Material is in plain language if your audience can:
 - Find what they need
 - Understand what they find the first time they read or hear it
 - Use what they find to meet their needs

Source: <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/about/definitions/>

Targeted Rural Health Education (TRHE)

Student writing project

- Based on their rural community-based clinical experiences, students author a plain language health education article suitable for publication in rural newspapers
- Learning objectives:
 - Experience how newspapers inform rural communities
 - Experience the “Power of Plain”
 - Writing in plain language promotes speaking in clear language
- Power of ‘The Small “N”’

TRHE-focused Health Literacy

Health Literacy (Expanded in Healthy People 2030):

Personal health literacy:

TRHE's role provide plain language education to the community

- “the degree to which individuals have the ability to find,”
 - health education articles “deliverable/discoverable/sharable” in rural newspapers
- “understand,”
 - Use plain language

Stakeholders (community residents) = action opportunity:

- “and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.”

RURAL NEWSPAPERS AS TRHE PUBLISHERS

Why rural newspapers?

- 2014 National Newspaper Association survey:
 - **Almost 70%** of “small” community residents get a weekly newspaper
 - <https://www.nna.org/two-thirds-of-residents-in-small-towns-and-cities-read-community-newspapers>
 - Anecdotal: Shared with the 30% who don’t
 - Anecdotal: Articles generate community conversation
- West Virginia University NEWSTART:
 - 2021: “Black and White and Read All Over”
 - <https://www.newstart.media/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Baranowski-NewStart-Newspaper-Innovation.pdf>
 - Rural newspapers are important information disseminators

RURAL NEWSPAPERS AS THE PUBLISHERS

Why rural newspapers?

- “Newspapers are read, re-read, clipped, and saved. That clipping is taken to clubs, card games, and shared in all kinds of settings. It’s a natural medium for rural America...”
 - Surveys: 85% of rural residents get a weekly newspaper
 - Offers different information than radio/TV soundbite

*Allen Beerman, Executive Director, Nebraska Newspaper Association

Source: Rural Health Information Hub (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/>)

- 2017: “Rural Health Literacy: Who’s Delivering Health Information?”
 - <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/rural-monitor/delivering-health-information/>

TRHE PARTICIPANTS

Who Writes

Any health UNDSMCH health professions student

- Majority: Medical students
- Two Occupational Therapy doctoral students

What They Write About

Sources for story ideas:

- Community Health Needs Assessment: “Targeted community-identified need
- Educational need identified by students’ patient care experiences

Why They’re Writing

- Elective choice: “Heard about it and want to do it”
- Mandatory curriculum component (2019): Longitudinal MSIII clinical rural rotation

THE WRITING PROCESS

How Articles Are Written

- Draft revisions (usually 4th is final):
 - “On demand/Need to know” instruction/feedback
 - “Tell, Show, Translate”
 - Estimated student time demand: 40 hours/article
- Learning objectives:
 - Familiarization with health literacy/health education writing elements
 - limit detail; logical information ordering, transitions
 - Plain language basics
 - “Translating jargon”
 - Remember the audience: Family, family friends, friends of family friends

TRHE PUBLISHING PROCESS

How Articles Are Published

- Final review: Rural-based UNDSMHS Family & Community Medicine faculty
- Project coordinator's relationships with rural newspaper editors
- Rural newspaper editor:
 - Hard copy &/or digital editions publication
- North Dakota Rural Health Association: website digitally hosts all student stories
 - <https://www.ndrha.org/trhe/articles>

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

UNDSMHS* TRHE Participants		
Year	Elective	Mandatory (variable cohort #s)
2017	2	N/A
2018	2	N/A
2019	1	5
2020	2	9
2021	1	10
2022	1	10
2023	5 (as of 5.15.23)	Cohort of 10 starts July
Total	14	34
*UNDSMHS Med school class size ~ 70		

VIEWERSHIP DATA RESULTS

Viewership data			
Organization	Date (overlapping)	Page views	Average story views
North Dakota Rural Health Association website	9.1.2019 – 12.8.2022	5,501	N/A
	1.1.22 – 11.17.22	4,470	N/A
	5.1.22 – 4.17.2023	5,214	40 (range 5 – 378)
Participating rural newspapers	Subscription numbers: hardcopy or online viewership		

Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholder Feedback		
Stakeholder	Date	Results
Students		
Students with mandatory participation	Nov 2019 – Dec 2020 survey (N=15)	
	Electively participate?	5/10 Yes
	Experience? (Scale 1-10)	3/10 rated experience 5-7 7/10 rated experience 8-10
Student video interview	Nov 2021 video interviews (N=4)	Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjsBV_uw1_c
Rural Newspaper Editors		
Editors in communities with mandatory student participation (N=6)	Nov 2021 on-site video interviews (N=3/6) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hettinger ND Dickinson ND Benson MN 	Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjsBV_uw1_c

REPLICATION

ROLE	UND EXAMPLE
Project coordinator	CRH Workforce Specialist <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes elective project• Added duty: rural newspaper networking
Writing mentor	Primary care provider (CRH staff writer) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GME/graduate medical education experience (feedback experience) and writing expertise
Final copyeditor(s)	Family Medicine clinical faculty <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lived rural community experience• Promotes elective/mandatory project
Publishing partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• North Dakota Rural Health Association• Rural community newspapers

REPLICATION INTEREST TO DATE

State medical school faculty

- Integrate project into new rural curriculum

State collaborative interest

- Area Health Education Center (AHEC)
 - Rural scholar program
- State medical school

Rural newspaper interest

- TRHE leaders were invited guest speakers at biannual joint North Dakota/South Dakota Newspaper Associations annual meeting (May 2023)

RESOURCES

- Plain Language: <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/>
- Rural Health Information Hub (RHIhub)
- Rural Health Literacy Toolkit
 - <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/health-literacy>
- *Rural Monitor*, RHIhub's online magazine
 - "Rural Health Literacy: Understanding Skills and Demands is Key to Improvement"
--<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/rural-monitor/rural-health-literacy/>
 - "A New Era of Health Literacy? Expanded Definitions, Digital Influences, and Rural Inequities"
-- <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/rural-monitor/digital-health-literacy/>

CONTACT

DAVID SCHMITZ MD

Chair/Professor of Family and Community Medicine

University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences

david.f.schmitz@und.edu

KAY MILLER TEMPLE MD MMC

Center for Rural Health

University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences

kay.millertemple@und.edu

THANK YOU

The background is a composition of several geometric shapes. On the left, there is a large orange rectangle. To its right is a vertical light blue bar. Further right is a large yellow shape that curves upwards and to the left. In the bottom right corner, there are dark blue shapes, including a semi-circle and a larger curved area. A white semi-circle is also visible in the top right corner, partially overlapping the yellow shape.