



# Partnership for Clear Health Communication



In this issue, we are happy to report that the Partnership for Clear Health Communication is now **106 members** strong, and has distributed **more than 208,000** Ask Me 3 educational pieces to health care providers, patients and organizations.

**Mark your calendars: We hope you all will be able to join us on our New**

**Partner Conference Call, to be held Tuesday, July 20 at 3:00 pm EDT.** (Complete dial-in information and an agenda will soon be distributed.)

Please continue to provide us with your **feedback and ideas** for upcoming issues of the Partnership e-newsletter, including upcoming health literacy conferences and best practices on using Ask Me 3.

## Health Literacy News

### Institute of Medicine Report

In April, the Institute of Medicine issued a report, "Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion," elevating health literacy to a new level among the nation's most pressing public health issues and validating the work the Partnership and its members have been doing to improve our nation's health literacy. The report found that nearly half of all American adults – 90 million people – have difficulty understanding and using health information, and there is a higher rate of hospitalization and use of emergency services among patients with limited health literacy.

The Partnership is working with government agencies and other health care thought leaders to leverage current national efforts on improving health literacy. On June 17, representatives from the Partnership met with U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Richard Carmona and his staff to talk about ways to leverage the IOM report and continue to elevate health literacy among key policymakers, providers and patients.

Read the IOM report executive summary:  
<http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=19723>

### Continued Partnership Media Coverage

NAPS, a vendor the Partnership used to distribute a news release last spring about the importance of clear health communication, has reported that the story is in the top quarter of one percent of all of the releases they distribute. The release features advice for patients and links to the

## Upcoming Events

### Online Health Literacy Resource Center

The California Health Literacy Initiative, a project of Partnership member California Literacy, Inc., recently launched its online health literacy resource center. Available at no cost, the resource center was created for literacy professionals, health care providers, health educators, adult literacy and ESL students and anyone who seeks a clear understanding of health information. The site includes ten categories of information, including a directory of "who's who" in health literacy, easy-to read information on over 30 diseases, health literacy training and consultation information and multicultural and multilingual health information. The online resource center can be found at [www.cahealthliteracy.org](http://www.cahealthliteracy.org).

California Literacy will host its 39th annual state conference from October 14th - 16th in San Francisco, "Bridges to the

Ask Me 3 Web site.

Based on NAPS's experience, a typical story will generate between 100-400 placements. The Partnership's health literacy story, titled "Understanding Medical Language: Simple is Better," has generated 720 placements, estimated to have a total readership of nearly 29 million. The story continues to run in community newspapers across the country. We encourage you to [download the article](#) to share with your members and affiliates.

- [The Nation's Health](#) (June/July 2004)
- [The Journal of the American Medical Association \(JAMA\)](#) (May 12, 2004)

## ■ 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.*

[The Peter Ho Memorial Clinic at Saint Michael's Medical Center](#), in Newark, New Jersey, is the oldest and largest facility providing services for HIV/AIDS patients in the state of New Jersey. The clinic provides medical services, case management, psychological services, nutrition, drug and alcohol counseling and transportation for more than 2,000 patients a year.

The center has shared Ask Me 3 brochures with patients and visitors, and representatives have communicated about the Ask Me 3 program in patient and organization presentations within Newark and surrounding areas. Presentations have recently been made to provider groups, including nursing associations and home health aides, about encouraging patients to use Ask Me 3.

"The Ask Me 3 program helps explain to healthcare providers, patients and their families how to talk about important health information," said Mike Valentin, manager of social services. "We plan to continue to spread the word about asking 3 in our community and beyond."

Recent presentations have been made to the Staten Island AIDS task force, Garfield Senior Citizens Health Center, Recent Advances in HIV Health Care-Gilead Therapeutics Program, Hyacinth AIDS Foundation, Jersey City Medical Center, Positive Connections and the National Latino Conference on AIDS.

The center is also using Ask Me 3 and Clear Health Communication guidelines to develop the first phonetic pronunciation of anti-retroviral medication guide sheets for

Future: Information, Access, and Action." For more information and to download the call for presenters form and registration form, visit [www.caliteracy.org](http://www.caliteracy.org)

### **Camera-ready ad**

Download the [Ask Me 3 camera-ready ad](#) to place in your organization's publication or newsletter

### **Banner**

Place an [AskMe3.org banner](#) on your organization's Web site.

its patients.

## ■ Partners Spreading the Word

### **Partnership for Clear Health Communication Speakers' Bureau**

We continue to invite partners to participate in the Partnership for Clear Health Communication Speakers' Bureau. Members of the Bureau will be selected to speak at health literacy conferences and/or participate in media interviews on behalf of the Partnership. Please complete our [questionnaire](#) to ensure that we place you with opportunities that best fit your geographic location, areas of expertise and health literacy topics of interest. Return completed questionnaires to [davisco@fleishman.com](mailto:davisco@fleishman.com) or fax to (202) 296-3977.

[The Miami-Dade County Health Department](#) launched a county-wide Ask Me 3 program this spring and worked with Mayor of Miami-Dade County Alex Penelas to proclaim April 29, 2004 as Ask Me 3 Day. The Mayor's office, County commissioners and Miami-Dade County Health Department are working together to encourage the community-at-large to adopt the Ask Me 3 program as a public health measure to improve medical outcomes and overall quality of life.

[The American Geriatrics Society Foundation for Health in Aging](#) (FHA) has just released the second edition of *Eldercare at Home*, a step-by-step resource for families taking care of an older person at home. Written by a team of over 45 health care professionals with extensive experience in geriatric care, the resource provides clear, practical instructions for dealing with common caregiving problems and supports a problem-solving approach to managing care at home and working cooperatively with health professionals. To download a free plain text version and learn more about ordering illustrated workbooks, visit [www.healthinaging.org](http://www.healthinaging.org).

[The Medical Library Association](#) has been educating members, others in the healthcare community and consumers about the importance of health literacy through brochures, continuing education courses and a video, "Reading Between the Lines: Focusing on Health Information Literacy." MLA also distributes "Deciphering Medspeak" in both English and Spanish, a brochure that defines common medical terms and prescription notations and suggests useful health websites for consumers. These resources can be found at <http://www.mlanet.org/resources/healthlit>