

TITLE: Adolescent Health Literacy, Health Information Seeking and Preferred Communication Channels

FACULTY MENTOR: Lindsay Thompson MD, MS
Email lathom@ufl.edu
Phone 627-9323

FACULTY MENTOR DEPARTMENT

Pediatrics & Health Outcomes and Policy

RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION (brief overview of background, hypothesis, methods, role of medical student, funding and relevant publications)

Background: Health literacy is recognized as a critical component of high-quality health care. Adolescent health literacy is becoming more relevant as they are increasingly involved in their own self-care, yet information is lacking as to how literate they are and how this literacy is attained. Nonetheless, media, especially online sources, are often cited as sources of health information for adolescents and are shown to influence physical and social development as well as the development of health behaviors. However, the success of interventions delivered to adolescents through media is dependent upon their ability to understand the health information being provided. Without baseline knowledge of adolescent health literacy, it remains unknown how to best communicate.

Hypothesis: Adolescents who attend an academic institution's primary care facilities have sufficiently high levels of health literacy, levels that increases with age, so that health messages can and should be delivered to adolescents using now standard forms of online adolescent-provider communication.

Methods: Using data collected from an online survey implemented at UFHealth outpatient clinics, inferential and descriptive statistics (both bivariate and multivariate) can be used to analyze the results and outline recommendations for the development and dissemination of health information resources targeting the adolescent population.

Role of medical student: A medical student will be expected to work to critically analyze data collected through an online survey in UFHealth outpatient clinics (IRB already approved, data currently being collected). They will use inferential and descriptive statistics to determine 1) success of using the Newest Vital Sign and the Single Item Literacy Screener in our patient population, 2) health literacy levels among adolescents and parent/caregiver, 3) health communication channels preferred by the population served, 4) health information seeking behaviors and 5) preferred health information sources. Expected outcomes include an oral presentation and poster presentation at UF and possibly national meetings and manuscript preparation. Advantages include a dual support in Pediatrics (clinical relevance) and Health Outcomes and Policy (implementation science, methodology and policy support and relevance towards the Health Outcomes and Policy Pathway). Students from Pediatrics and Health Outcomes and Policy will have mentoring and peer opportunities to have a shared learning experience. Any student with prior knowledge of statistics and statistical programming will be prioritized.

Funding and relevant publications: Current internal efforts by Pediatrics and Health Outcomes and Policy allow for this integrated research.

1. Ghaddar, S., Valerio, M., Garcia, C., & Hansen, L. (2011). Adolescent Health Literacy: The Importance of Credible Sources for Online Health Information. *Journal of School Health*, 28-36. doi:10.1111/j.1746-1561.2011.00664.x
2. Shah, L., West, P., Bremmeyr, K., & Savoy-Moore, R. (2010). Health Literacy Instrument in Family Medicine: The "Newest Vital Sign" Ease of Use and Correlates. *The Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine*, 23(2), 195-203. doi:10.3122/jabfm.2010.02.070278
3. Manganello, J. (2007). Health literacy and adolescents: A framework and agenda for future research. *Health Education Research*, 23(5), 840-847. doi:10.1093/her/cym069