

RESEARCH BRIEF:

# Hispanic Health Literacy

Health literacy is the ability to find, understand, and use health information. People with poor health literacy have a harder time using the health care system and taking care of their health.

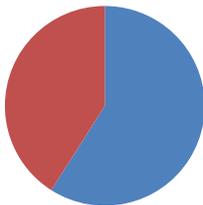
Most health literacy (HL) research in Hispanic populations focuses on individuals with limited English proficiency who speak mostly Spanish. Less is known about how Hispanic health literacy differs by English-speaking skill. We studied this question using data from a 2007 national survey which included over 4,000 Hispanics in the U.S.

Overall 38% of Hispanics surveyed were health literate. Health literacy was highest in those who spoke mostly English (58%) and lower in those who were bilingual (51%) or spoke mostly Spanish (14%). Across all levels of English skill, those with adequate health literacy were more likely to say that US medical care is “excellent.”

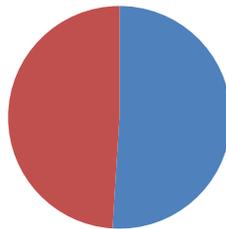
They were also more satisfied with their doctor’s help and more likely to have a medical home than those with lower health literacy. HL research that focuses only on Spanish dominant speakers can exclude a substantial percentage of English proficient or bilingual populations who have low HL.

## Health Literacy by Language Used

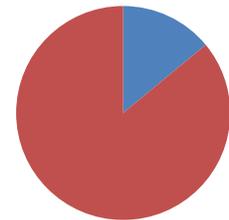
Mostly English



Bilingual



Mostly Spanish



■ Good Health Literacy  
■ Poorer Health Literacy

[continued]

For more information, visit [www.NationwideChildrens.org/CPHER](http://www.NationwideChildrens.org/CPHER)



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# The Center for Population Health and Equity Research

Nationwide Children's Hospital's Center for Population Health and Equity Research (CPHER) is a network of researchers and clinicians dedicated to generating new knowledge about what works (and what doesn't) to improve health outcomes and health equity for populations of at-risk children and families.

Our research explores the impacts of health care delivery and funding models, community interventions, and health policies. We envision that our findings will drive improvements in quality, outcomes, disparities, and cost through innovative approaches to health care financing, resource integration, community engagement, and health care.



**Deena J. Chisolm, PhD**  
*Director*



**Millie Harris, PhD**  
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