

Skills for Chronic Disease Management

OVERVIEW *and*
PREPARATION
for **SESSION ONE**

HEALTH LITERACY
STUDY CIRCLES⁺
HALL/NCSALL 2005

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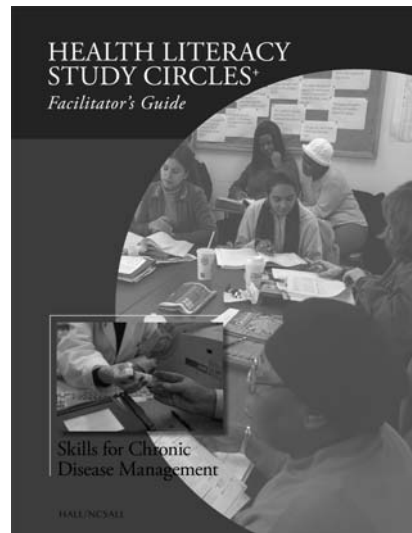
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Copies of the Health Literacy Study Circle⁺ guide, *Skills for Chronic Disease Management* can be ordered by contacting NCSALL/World Education, 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210, (t) 617-482-9485, (f) 617-482-0617 (E-mail) *ncsall@worlded.org*

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Facilitator's Guide Contents

Overview and Preparation for Session One

- Organization of the Health Literacy Study Circle⁺ Guides
- Study Circle⁺ Variations
- Preparation for Session One
- Materials to send out to participants (loose-leaf pages following this booklet)

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- Notes to Facilitator
- Overview
- Introductory Activities
- Discussion and Analysis Activities
- Planning Activities
- Closure Activities
- Materials (loose-leaf pages following the booklet)
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Session Two Booklet: Identifying Chronic Disease Management Tasks and Underlying Skills

- Notes to Facilitator
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Introductory Activities

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Materials (loose-leaf pages following the booklet)

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Notes to Facilitator

Overview

Introductory Activities

Discussion and Analysis Activities

Planning Activities

Closure Activities

Materials (loose-leaf pages following the booklet)

About This Study Circle⁺ Guide

As a facilitator of this Health Literacy Study Circle⁺, you will be engaged in a professional development course that has been well received. This guide is designed to be a training manual and a resource for facilitators who will conduct the Health Literacy Study Circle⁺ on the topic of Skills for Chronic Disease Management.

This Health Literacy Study Circle⁺ is based on five sessions. Each session is planned for approximately three hours (½ day). This binder contains all the information you will need to conduct each of the sessions. Each session has been formatted as a bound booklet so that you can easily carry it to the session and return it to the binder. Behind each booklet (including this one), you will find materials such as background reading, handouts for activities, and materials for work between sessions. These materials are in loose-leaf format so that you will be able to make copies for each participant.

The topic of chronic disease management is important because research findings show that adults with less education are more likely to die of a chronic disease than are adults with more education. Literacy skills are critically important for adults with chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, or hypertension. People who have a chronic disease need to be able to:

- Read medicine labels, follow directions, and measure dosages correctly.
- Use measurement tools to monitor their health on a regular and sometimes daily basis.
- Monitor symptoms and talk to doctors, dentists, nurses, and other professionals about their observations.
- Make critical decisions for their health care based on feelings, observations, and changes in their bodies.

During the five sessions of this study circle, you will ask participants to identify literacy skills that their adult students need in order to manage any chronic disease. Participants will discuss issues and ideas in small and in large groups and experiment with teaching methods that they may use in their own classrooms. Participants will have the opportunity to teach sample lessons and create their own lesson and unit plans focused on helping their students develop health literacy skills. This approach to health literacy enables adult educators to focus on building skills related to reading, writing, oral communication, and math using health-related examples.

Who should use this guide?

This Health Literacy Study Circle⁺ guide has been developed to help you facilitate a learning experience for adult educators. If your state education department, community organization, or adult education program is looking for a professional development tool on the topic of health literacy, this guide provides you with a manual and a resource for training adult educators.

Who should attend this Study Circle⁺?

The three Health Literacy Study Circles⁺ are designed for practicing adult educators who are interested in learning about health literacy and ways that they can integrate health literacy skills into their classroom teaching. We use “adult educator” to refer to practitioners working in adult basic education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs.

Important activities take place between study circle sessions. Participants are asked to try out activities with their students and share their teaching experiences and ideas with other participants. For this reason, it is important that participants have easy access to classrooms (ideally, their own) for the duration of the study circle sessions.

Adult educators who participate in this study circle are not asked to become health care experts. Instead, they are encouraged to use their expertise and help their students improve their reading, writing, math, and communication skills and apply these skills to health materials and tasks.

How can I avoid being cast in the role of a health educator?

Participants may look to you for expert advice on health-related issues. To insure that this does not happen, you should be careful to avoid talking about your own health care beliefs or decisions. Instead, be comfortable noting that you, like them, do not have a health background.

Similarly, adult educators who participate in this study circle are not expected to become health educators or chronic disease experts. Instead, they focus on health-related tasks. Teachers may choose to invite health experts into their classes if their students are interested in particular chronic diseases. However, the study circle has not been designed for teachers to focus on health content or to become health experts. Instead, teachers are encouraged to use their expertise and help their students improve their reading, writing, math, and communication skills and apply these skills to common health activities.

For more information and advice about one's role as an adult educator in health literacy education, you may wish to visit the Web site for the Virginia Adult Education Health Literacy Toolkit:

<http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/healthlit/index.shtml>

This Web site features a section entitled *Addressing Teachers' Concerns about Teaching Health*, which addresses several important frequently asked questions by teachers who are considering teaching health literacy. You might also recommend this site to the participants in the study circle.

How should this guide be used?

This study circle guide was developed for professional development experts, and it contains notes for facilitation, agendas, and all the printed materials and handouts you will need to facilitate each of the sessions. The guide is designed in a recommended format, but the designers expect that facilitators will review the material and adjust the format and activities to best suit the needs of the participating educators.

No matter how much experience you have as a facilitator or with study circles, we strongly recommend that you read this entire guide. It includes directions, all needed materials, guidelines for preparing materials, suggestions for working within the existing parameters of adult education programs, and facilitating tips for each session.

What outcomes do we anticipate from this Study Circle+?

The anticipated outcomes of the Chronic Disease Management Study Circle+ will be threefold:

1. **Outcomes for adult educators:** This Study Circle+ on Chronic Disease Management (CDM) will offer teachers a deeper understanding of health literacy, health literacy research, and health literacy skills. The activities used in these sessions feature a range of group discussion methods that teachers might want to try out in their classes. We hope that activities such as small group discussions, use of “triggers,” and “brainstorming,” will expand teachers’ repertoire of cooperative learning tools.

This study circle will serve as a “jumping-off point” for adult educators to help them develop ideas and activities to improve their adult students’ ability to manage chronic diseases. This study circle also provides an opportunity for teachers to form support groups and networks of colleagues so that they can continue to discuss and share their experiences teaching and evaluating health literacy activities.

2. **Outcomes for the field of adult education:** This study circle will provide opportunities for links between adult education programs and public health programs, and between adult education programs and health care providers. The health goals and objectives for the nation, delineated in *Healthy People 2010*, include the goal of improving health literacy. The health field cannot do this without the important contribution of adult education experts and a partnership with the adult education field. This study circle highlights the expertise of adult educators by focusing on critical health literacy skills.

3. **Outcomes for adult learners:** We hope that this study circle will lead to positive changes in adult learners’ abilities to interact with health care systems and professionals. The sample lessons offer opportunities for adult learners to acquire health literacy skills and increase their ability to perform critical tasks. Some of these tasks include planning and timing medicines, using measuring tools, interacting with health workers, and describing symptoms. As a result, adult learners will increase their confidence in their ability to manage a chronic disease and will gain new skills in order to meet the many challenges involved. We believe that improvements in our

adult learners' health literacy skills and their health outcomes are the most important measures of success of all the Health Literacy Study Circles⁺.

We welcome your comments and advice on how you have adopted and/or adapted the Health Literacy Study Circle⁺, and we look forward to hearing about your experience using this guide. In the future, we hope to post your suggestions and examples of the work done in your groups on our Web site.

Please feel free to contact us.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rima E. Rudd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Organization of the Health Literacy Study Circle⁺ Guides

The guides for the Health Literacy Study Circles⁺ consist of two parts. The first is a spiral-bound book titled *Introduction: Overview, Planning, and Facilitation Tips*. The second is the *Facilitator's Guide* itself, prepared in notebook format, containing all the information needed for each of the three Health Literacy Study Circles⁺. The three Health Literacy Study Circle⁺ guides in the series are Skills for Health Care Access and Navigation, Skills for Chronic Disease Management, and Skills for Disease Prevention and Screening.

Introduction: Overview, Planning, and Facilitation Tips

Introduction: Overview, Planning, and Facilitation Tips has been structured for use with all three Health Literacy Study Circles⁺. This spiral-bound book accompanies all Study Circle⁺ guides, provides background information about each of the three study circles, and offers important guidelines for planning, organizing, and facilitating. Please read this book first, in full.

Facilitator's Guide: Skills for Chronic Disease Management

This guide, in notebook format, contains six booklets. The first booklet is titled *Overview and Preparation for Session One*. This booklet offers an overview of Skills for Chronic Disease Management, study circle variations, and details for preparation for Session One. Following this booklet, you will find the materials that you need to send out before Session One.*

*You will need to send out materials for Session One **at least TWO WEEKS** before the session begins. The flow of Session One is dependent on the reading assignments.

Session Booklets

Each session booklet offers a step-by-step guide for conducting the session activities, with needed time indicated. A copy of all of the materials needed for each session is provided as well. These materials, in loose-leaf format, consist of mailings to participants, background readings, handouts for the sessions, and information and tools needed for work between sessions. The following bulleted list offers an overview of each session.

- **Session One: Introduction to Health Literacy and Chronic Disease Management**
Participants develop a shared definition of “health literacy,” discuss different types of activities related to managing any chronic disease, and identify barriers that make it difficult for people to complete those activities. Participants also prepare to conduct a needs assessment activity with their students after Session One.
- **Session Two: Identifying Chronic Disease Management Tasks and Underlying Skills**
Participants share the results of the needs assessment activity. Then they compile a list of specific health tasks and underlying skills that can be addressed with their classes. Participants also review and prepare to teach one or more sample lessons between Sessions Two and Three. These lessons all focus on skills needed for managing a chronic disease.
- **Session Three: Integrating Health Literacy Skills into Instruction**
Participants evaluate the experience of teaching sample lessons and define key health literacy skills that they wish to focus on for work with their own classes. They also begin to create new health literacy lessons and consider what a health literacy unit would look like. Between Session Three and Session Four, participants complete and teach their own health literacy lessons and develop outlines for health literacy units. Note the option for expanding Session Three to include an afternoon session focused on health materials and needed math skills.
- **Session Four: Planning Lessons, Units, and Evaluations**
Participants share their teaching experiences and discuss options for health literacy units. They also consider how to define and measure their students’ health literacy skills. After Session Four, participants use a planning template to outline a unit with an evaluation component.

- **Session Five: Developing Strategies for Success**

Participants share and analyze their plans and consider how they will incorporate the development of health literacy skills into their programs. They identify and examine barriers and supports that affect this work. Study circle participants also determine how they might stay in touch with each other and work together in the future.

Each session in the *Facilitator's Guide* follows the same general format and contains the following sections:

- **Notes to the Facilitator:** Offers brief descriptions and explanations of the activities and the discussion methods that will be used throughout the session. It offers a rationale for the focus and structure of the session's activities.
- **Introductory Activities:** Contains the session objectives and agenda, and sets the stage for the session.
- **Discussion & Analysis Activities:** Provides directions for helping participants define health literacy skills related to the study circle topic.
- **Planning Activities:** Describes the activities that participants will complete in their own classrooms between sessions.
- **Closure Activities:** Provides an opportunity for participants to consider a range of discussion methods used during the session that might be useful for their own teaching. The evaluation activity offers participants an opportunity to summarize and evaluate both content and methods.
- **Materials:** Contains copies of all the readings and handouts needed for each session.

Study Circle⁺ Variations

Variation for Session One *if* participants have already completed one of the Health Literacy Study Circles⁺

If participants have already completed one of the Health Literacy Study Circles⁺, you might want to modify Session One by skipping two activities – the Overview of the Health Literacy Study Circles⁺ (15 minutes) and viewing the DVD, *In Plain Language* (30 minutes).

You may, instead, want to include a 45-minute activity that uses photographs to trigger a discussion about the literacy skills needed for managing any chronic disease.

The full description of this activity is included in the booklet for Session One. The photographs are included with the In-Class Needs Assessment Packet that you will hand out during Session One.

Variation for an Expanded Session Three *if* you and the participants decide in advance to expand the session to a full day

You may want to consider this variation *if you* and the participants agree to turn one of the half day sessions into a full day meeting. If you choose to do the expanded session, be sure to plan for a 9:00 to 3:00 day.

The added afternoon session enables participants to first explore their own feelings about teaching math, and then examine some of the math challenges associated with managing a chronic disease. Teachers can use these insights as they develop their own lessons for their classes. Note that the added three hours include a one-hour break for lunch and two hours in the afternoon.

The activities for this variation are described in detail at the end of Session Three. This option is noted here so you can make a decision about this added time and plan ahead.

Preparation for Session One

First, note the set of handouts following this booklet. These handouts should be sent to participants in advance of the first session meeting. Some of the readings in this packet were included to provide a context for the focus on Skills for Chronic Disease Management. Other readings will help prepare the participants for the overall Health Literacy Study Circle⁺ experience and will serve as the foundation for the discussions in Session One.

Next, the information below and the accompanying checklist offer detailed preparatory steps to help you get ready for Session One.

About the Welcome Letter to Participants

Before you send out these materials, you need to customize the **Welcome Letter to Participants**. This letter is designed as a template to help you create your own welcome letter for study circle participants.

Place this letter on top of all the materials when you send them out.

- Be sure to include the date, time, and location for each study circle session.
- Tell participants that they should plan to attend all sessions. If anyone anticipates problems with the scheduled dates, he or she should let you know before Session One so that you can discuss the feasibility of his or her participation. Note that attendance at all sessions is essential.
- Ask participants to bring to the first session all the materials you sent out.

Summary Checklist

PLEASE CHECK

- Have you created your own version of the **Welcome Letter to Participants** indicating the dates, time, and location for each study circle session?

Background Materials for Session One

Background materials for Session One should be sent out to participants at least two weeks before the session begins.

- Be sure that you have a complete set of all materials for Session One.
- Copy all of the handouts and readings on three-hole paper.
- Send out the materials for Session One to all participants.
- **NOTE:** We suggest that you send out only the material needed by participants to prepare for Session One. We do not recommend that you send materials for all sessions to participants at this time.

Summary Checklist

- Do you have a complete set of background materials for Session One? (See the list of materials to be sent out before Session One.)
- Did you make copies of the materials for Session One on three-hole paper?
- Did you place the **Welcome Letter** and the **Participant Expectations** sheet on top of the background materials you are sending out to participants?
- Did you send out the background materials for Session One to all participants at least two weeks prior to Session One?

Note about Participant Expectations

It is important to give participants an opportunity to convey their own expectations for this study circle. Although you may not be able to make changes to accommodate all expectations, knowing what participants expect will give you some insight into participants' thinking about the experience.

- Ask participants to complete and return the **Participant Expectations** sheet to you before Session One begins so that you can review them ahead of time.
- When you send out the materials for Session One, be sure to include a self-addressed envelope or your address so participants can complete and return the **Participant Expectations** sheets to you.
- During Session One, you will have time to review participants' expectations and note those that will be addressed during the course of the study circle.

Summary Checklist

- Have you included a self-addressed envelope with the materials so participants can return the **Participant Expectations** sheets to you?

Facilitator Preparation

It is important for you to review the study circle guide and read all the handouts for each session well in advance. You will need to prepare all the materials for each session and for follow-up assignments (copy handouts and prepare newsprints).

For Session One, make a few extra copies of background materials in case participants have misplaced those they received prior to the start of the study circle.

Summary Checklist

- Have you read all the Session One background materials that you sent out to the participants?
- Have you read all the information in Session One?



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The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) is a collaborative effort between the Harvard Graduate School of Education and World Education. The University of Tennessee, Portland State University, and Rutgers University are NCSALL's partners. NCSALL is funded by the Educational Research and Development Centers program, Award Number R309B60002, as administered by the Institute of Education Sciences (formerly Office of Educational Research and Improvement), U.S. Department of Education. The contents of this publication do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Institute of Education Sciences, or the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.