

HELLO

TAS!

A TOOLKIT FOR
HEALTH
LITERACY
LEARNING
ORGANISATIONS



JULY 2020

Acknowledgements

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- Youth, Family & Community Connections
- Wyndarra Community & Resource Centre
- Wellways
- Cornerstone Youth Health Services
- City Mission (Missiondale)
- Drug Education Network
- The Link & Headspace Hobart
- Flourish. Mental health action in our hands

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- The Project Partners, working together to build a health literate Tasmania:
 - Department of Health & Human Services (Public Health Services)
 - University of Tasmania
 - 26TEN
 - Tasmanian Health Service.

This work builds on the 'Six dimensions of a health literate organisation' developed by the New Zealand Ministry of Health.

For more information on the HeLLO Tas project, and an online version of the toolkit, go to our website: www.hellotas.org.au.

TasCOSS is part of 26TEN, a network of people and organisations working together to improve literacy and numeracy in Tasmania.

Further training and support is available through the following websites:

[26TEN website: www.26ten.tas.gov.au](https://www.26ten.tas.gov.au)

[Department of Health Tasmania](#)

(Public Health Services) Health Literacy website:

www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/about_us/health_literacy

Training: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/wihpw/news_and_events/events2

Resources: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/health_literacy/communications_and_health_literacy_workplace_toolkit


[TasCOSS 'How To' guides: www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to](https://www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to)

**HEALTH
LITERACY
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ORGANISATIONS**

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This HeLLO Tas! Toolkit will take you on a journey to explore your organisation's health literacy.

Health literacy ( **TOOL #1**) is not only about individuals being able to get health information. Organisations that are 'health literate' can help people to:

- understand information
- find their way through health and community services systems
- get the services they need.

The toolkit provides:

- a step-by-step process for doing a self-assessment and developing a Health Literacy Action Plan
- practical tools to help you with these tasks
- links to accreditation standards, resources and further reading material.

It will help you see what you are already doing well and what else you might do to further enhance your services. It can help support your evidence towards meeting quality accreditation standards relating to outcomes for clients, consumer rights, evidence-based practice, and community development.


Improving health literacy is all about communication, empowerment and being consumer-focused. These are things community services work hard to do well. Many of us have processes in place to ensure that we engage well with consumers and are friendly and welcoming. We provide clear information to consumers about their health and wellbeing that helps them to make informed choices. No organisation is ever perfectly health literate.. Improving health literacy is an ongoing cycle of action, evaluation and improvement.

In a health literate organisation, health literacy is part of all service planning, design, delivery and evaluation. It is everyone's business. All aspects of the organisation are focussed on the needs of consumers and cater for everyone. There is no need to identify who is, or is not, health literate.

Health literacy is the art of making it easier, not harder, for people to make decisions about their health.

ZOE, THE DEN.



Links to commonly used quality improvement standards are included in  **TOOL #7** and separately on the toolkit at hellotas.org.au

This toolkit celebrates what we are already doing and makes us strive to do even better.

MICHAEL, WYNDARRA.



Health literate organisations make it easier for people to find, understand and use the information and services they need.



Health literacy is the knowledge and skills needed to access, understand, and use information related to physical, mental and social wellbeing.



Thinking about health literacy . . .

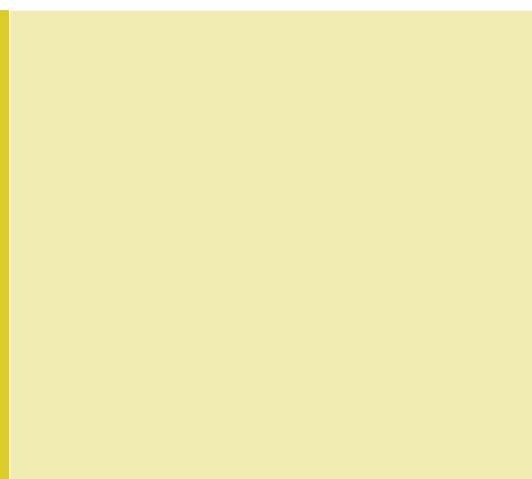
An appointment can be a very daunting process for anyone. It may involve:

- reading a letter about the appointment, then understanding and following instructions
- making a phone call to confirm the appointment
- arranging transport and time off work
- getting to an unfamiliar place
- navigating through the service to see the person you need to see
- understanding all the information provided
- making and communicating decisions made.



A Toolkit for the Community Sector

This toolkit has been developed by community sector workers for community sector and smaller community health organisations. Our organisations are less complex than hospitals and other large institutions for which a lot of health literacy materials have been designed. Many of our organisations already have strong health literacy practices in place such as community engagement processes, easy access, and consumer involvement.



What's in the Toolkit

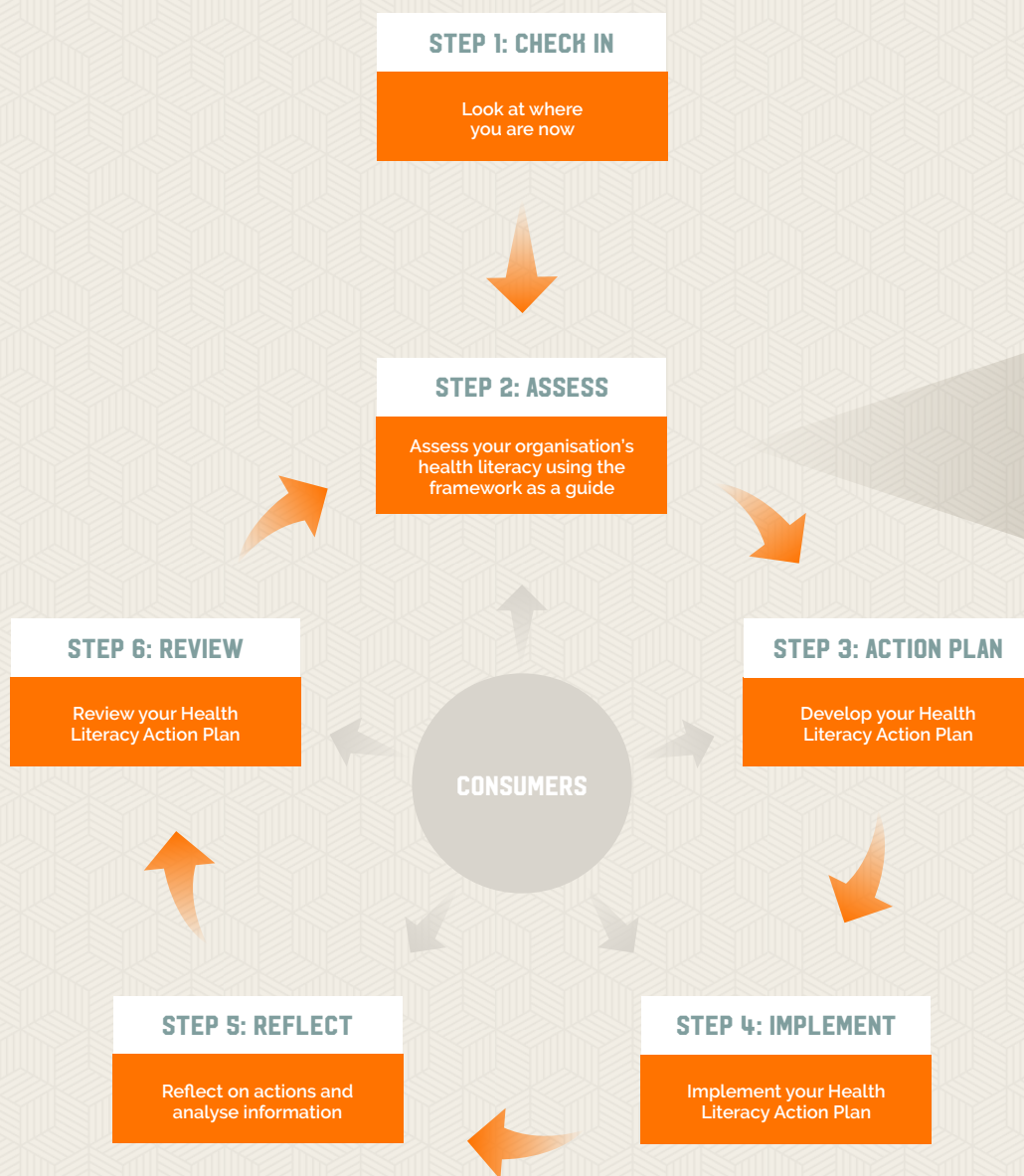
Component	What is it?	How can you use it?
PART ONE: THE PROCESS		
The Process to Becoming a Health Literate Organisation (p9) (🔑 TOOL #1) (🔑 TOOL #2)	This is a simple step-by-step quality improvement process to enhance your organisation's health literacy.	The organisational health literacy framework guides you through the process of doing a health literacy self-assessment and developing an action plan for your organisation. Once you have completed these steps, you can undertake an ongoing process of information gathering, analysis, review and renewal.
PART TWO: SELF-ASSESSMENT		
The Self-Assessment Checklist: How health literate is your organisation? (p23) (🔑 TOOL #3) (🔑 TOOL #4) (🔑 TOOL #5) (🔑 TOOL #6) (🔑 TOOL #7)	The Self-Assessment Checklist is the core assessment tool used in the toolkit.	A copy of the Self-Assessment Checklist is available in this toolkit and is also available on our website. When filling out the Checklist, we suggest you involve as many people from your organisation as possible, including consumers, in discussions. There are other tools to assist in gathering additional information. These can be used at any stage in the process.
PART THREE: THE ACTION PLANNING		
Health Literacy Action Plan template (🔑 TOOL #8) (🔑 TOOL #9) (🔑 TOOL #10) (🔑 TOOL #11) (🔑 TOOL #12)	The Action Plan captures the priorities you have identified through the Checklist.	You can use the Action Planning to decide what needs to happen, when, by whom, and how you will measure success, monitor progress, reflect, evaluate and review. An example Action Plan is included (🔑 TOOL #9). There are other tools included to assist you in making changes and improvements.

PART ONE

The Process

The Process to Becoming a Health Literate Organisation

This is a simple step-by-step quality improvement process to enhance your organisation's health literacy. The process guides you through a health literacy self-assessment and developing an Action Plan. It is an ongoing process of information gathering, analysis, review and renewal.



This framework highlights the six dimensions of a health literate organisation. Each dimension will be explored in more detail when you start assessing your organisation's health literacy in Step 2 (p15).



Step 1: Checking in

Look at where you are now

The following questions will help you decide whether you are ready to begin:

- Are key people in your organisation supportive of health literacy, including management and the Board?
- Do you have the time and resources you need?
- Is your organisation prepared to make changes as the result of a self-assessment?
- Are you able to involve consumers in the process?
- Do you have existing Quality Improvement processes that can be linked with health literacy?
- Will improving organisational health literacy help you meet accreditation standards (for example, consumer involvement)?
- Are there people in your organisation who are interested and able to form a health literacy team? Do they need extra training or support around health literacy?

For other training and resources please visit Tasmanian Department of Health

🔗 Training - www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/wihpw/news_and_events/events2 .

🔗 Resources - www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/health_literacy/communications_and_health_literacy_workplace_toolkit

If you answered yes to all or most of these questions, you are already on the way!

Consumer engagement has to be at the forefront of whatever we are doing. It's not good enough to get half way through a process and think 'we should involve consumers now'.

JULIA, FLOURISH, MENTAL
HEALTH ACTION IN OUR HANDS





The membership of your health literacy team will depend on the structure of your organisation. Try to involve people with different roles on the team. Organisational health literacy is everyone's business, and everyone, including consumers, can contribute.

The health literacy team

While you may not need a formal health literacy team to be a 'Health Literacy Learning Organisation', it helps to have a small, dedicated group to bounce ideas around, support each other, and keep the process moving forward. It also ensures the knowledge gained is shared amongst staff and not just dependent on one or two staff members.

The first step is to decide how you will move towards becoming a health literate organisation. There are many possible ways to begin. Consider:

- whether to create a specific health literacy team, or
- if the work is going to be part of an existing group or process that is in place, for example your quality improvement committee, or a standing item at your staff meeting?

The most effective and appropriate way for your organisation will be influenced by various factors. These include:

- the size of your organisation
- the structure of your organisation
- the number of sites and teams
- your organisational culture.

Remember to consider including consumer representatives in your health literacy team.

Health literacy has very clear links to quality and safety, and communications and marketing. If your organisation has people in these roles, it is very useful for them to be actively involved.

The organisational health literacy dimensions have been mapped against the commonly used accreditation standards for Community Service organisations. (🔑 **TOOL #11**)

It is critical that senior management is represented, as leadership and management is a key aspect of improving health literacy.

Involving consumers directly on your team is a great way to ensure you are consumer focussed, and can assist you to write and prepare information that is clear and user friendly.

Consider how you are going to recruit members if you are having a special group. Are you going to call for expressions of interest? Are senior management going to nominate people to participate?

The team will need to decide on some timeframes such as:

- How often can you meet?
- What is the timeframe for completing the self-assessment checklist?
- What is the timeframe for completing your Health Literacy Action Plan?
- What is the ongoing schedule for implementing and reviewing your Action Plan?



Health literacy is a constant process of reflecting, reviewing, and making changes until it becomes a constant, natural process.



Step 2. Assessing your Organisation's Health Literacy

It's not that people don't understand or aren't able to understand, it's just the way the information has been given.

TIM, WELLWAYS.

'The Self-Assessment Checklist: How health literate is your organisation?' is the main tool for the health literacy team to use to assess the health literacy of your organisation. It also helps you develop your Health Literacy Action Plan and decide on your priority areas.

The Self-Assessment Checklist is based on the 'Framework for a Health Literate Organisation' below:



Completing the the Self-Assessment Checklist will help you identify what you're doing well and where you can take further action to improve your services.

To get the most out of the Checklist, we suggest you:

- take your time filling it in – try breaking it up over a few sessions
- start wherever you want to – you don't have to follow the dimensions in order
- don't get put off if you can't answer a question immediately – make a note of who you could ask, and keep going
- get input from people outside of your health literacy team – you want well-rounded views
- try to reach agreement as a group on your organisation's level of health literacy
- use the finished Checklist as a starting point for prioritising actions and creating a Health Literacy Action Plan (🔑 **TOOL #8**)
- acknowledge the things you do well, not just the things you can improve.

This is the stuff I am thinking about all the time in my work. The checklist gets others thinking this way too.

ZOE, THE DEN.

The Self-Assessment Checklist is on our website

(🔗 www.hellotas.org.au). You can use it to create a summary report and help with developing your Health Literacy Action Plan.

There is also an example of a completed Self-Assessment report (🔑 **TOOL #3**) in the Tools section.

There is a notes section in the Self-Assessment Checklist at the end of each section of questions. Use the notes section to remind you of actions that could be included in the Action Plan and record examples of evidence of what you are already doing to support accreditation.

Remember to share your suggestions when you create your Action Plan and /or when you are collecting evidence for accreditation and quality processes



Step 3: Developing your Health Literacy Action Plan

After finishing the Self-Assessment Checklist, you should have a pretty good snapshot of your organisation's strengths and areas for improvement.

The next steps are to:

- communicate the outcome to your organisation and consumers (eg. in your newsletter, on your website, etc). Remember to include what you are doing well and what areas you will be doing some more work on. It can improve the willingness of your consumers and staff in the assessment if they see what's happening as a result of their input
- explore ideas for action to include in your Action Plan
(🔑 **TOOL #10**)
- complete your Health Literacy Action Plan template.
(🔑 **TOOL #8**)

Health literacy is
literally everywhere.

BERNY, THE LINK.

Setting Priorities: What to do first?

Your completed Self-Assessment Checklist will help you decide what is most important for you to start working on. You may choose to work on the areas for improvement indicated in the Checklist, or you may want to continue to focus on some of the things you are already doing well.

When deciding, it may help to ask:

- How important is this area to the work you do and your organisation's goals?
- What would be the biggest help to our consumers?
- Are there high risk areas that have been uncovered?
- What kind of resources and time is needed to make changes?
- Are there some small changes you could make in an area that could have a big impact?

Don't feel that you have to tackle all the dimensions at once.

You may choose to work with just one of the dimensions or even a single action. It is really important to create a realistic Action Plan.

Break down the steps to achieve the action and set realistic timeframes. Remember that you may need to adjust your actions or timeframes as you work through your Action Plan. Starting small and building on your successes is a good way to stay motivated and focused.

Exploring ideas for action

Once you have decided on your priorities, explore some ideas that you may like to include in your Health Literacy Action Plan – for example:

- Look at different ways to get feedback from consumers
- Get some health literacy training for staff and board members
- Do a survey to see if you are reaching the people that most need your services (🔑 **TOOL #6**)
- Do a 'walk-through' of your building with a consumer, especially consumers with diverse needs, to look at your signs, interview rooms, etc. (🔑 **TOOL #4**)
- Review a service pamphlet (🔑 **TOOL #5**)
- Ask staff and consumers if they are able to suggest easy ways to make improvements
- Check that your planning documents support health literacy.

Remember, simple actions can make a difference.

Completing your Health Literacy Action Plan

This step involves transferring your priorities and ideas onto the Action Plan template (🔑 **TOOL #8**), and deciding:

- who will do what, when
- what resources are needed
- how you will measure success
- on timelines to reflect on and review your progress
- are there links with other work happening across the organisation
- how to share your plan.

Consumers like to know they have been listened to and that their suggestions are being implemented. Let them know what's happening and what changes are being made through your newsletters or put a notice up in your waiting room.



There are more ideas for action in **TOOL #10** in Part 3



TOOL #8 is the Action Plan Template



While we recommend starting with a stand-alone Action Plan, you may like to add your actions into another organisational plan in future – e.g. a continuous improvement plan, business plan or strategic plan.



Step 4: Implementing your Action Plan

The action plan has been good and has kept us on track during a busy time.

STEPHEN, CITY MISSION.

Acting on your Plan

Now all the planning work is done, it's time for some action.

Let other people in your organisation know about your Action Plan and what you are doing. Where possible, link in with other work currently underway, such as any new programs you have. Aim to get some quick wins to help people see what can be achieved.

Involve consumers wherever possible. They are best placed to advise you on how to change things for the better. Invite consumers onto your health literacy team.

Be realistic about what you can achieve and in what timeframes, what costs and resources may be required to implement some actions.

Linking in with Accreditation Standards

Acting on health literacy can help your organisation to meet, further support or exceed accreditation standards in areas such as outcomes for clients, consumer rights, evidence-based practice, and community development.

The HeLLOTas! framework and dimensions for organisational health literacy link to accreditation standards commonly used in the community sector. These include:

- National Safety & Quality Health Service Standards (Second edition)
- National Standards for Mental Health Services (2010)
- DHHS Quality & Safety Standards
- NDIS Practice Standards (2018)
- Aged Care Standards (2019)
- QIC Health & Community Standards (7th edition)
- RACGP Standards for General Practices (5th Edition)

Each set of standards has been mapped against the six dimensions of a health literate organisation. The mapping for the standards is available from the HeLLOTas website Resources section www.hellotas.org.au/resources. **TOOL #11** explains how to use the mapping resources.

Documenting your actions

Keep records of all actions and what you are learning from observations, walkthroughs, interviews or surveys. Record answers to surveys. Record what training has happened, when, and who attended. Documenting what you do allows you to keep track of progress and provide evidence of changes.

Store your information, notes of your progress on actions, costs and budgets, and timeframes on your Action Plan.

The following easy-to-use tools and information are available to support you and your team with health literacy:

- Ideas for action  **TOOL #10**
- TasCOSS 'How To' guides:
 www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to
- Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services' health literacy webpages:
 www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/health_literacy
- 26TEN adult literacy resources:  www.26ten.tas.gov.au

When I'm working with people on something, I ask 'can we say this without using jargon'?

JULES-ELLEN, FLOURISH. MENTAL HEALTH ACTION IN OUR HANDS.



Step 5: Reflecting on Actions and Analysing your Information

Analysing your information

As you complete the actions from your Action Plan, you may have a lot of information to sift through, organise and make sense of. Think about the journey - what happened along the way, what you learnt and what your thoughts were at the time.

- What are the main stories and themes coming out of the information you have collected?
- What stories best illustrate what you have learnt?
- What literacy demands does your organisation place on consumers?
- What are you doing well to build consumer health literacy?
- What else can you do to help reduce the health literacy demands on consumers?
- Is any of this information surprising? Why?
- Did you collect information from enough sources and the right sources?
- Did any obvious actions emerge from what you have learnt?

You will need to analyse your information to make some sense of it by finding common themes or trends. Some of this information may be qualitative (involving words and ideas) other information may be quantitative (involving numbers). Analysing data does not need to be a difficult job. TasCOSS has some good 'How To' Guides to help:

- How to analyse and report on qualitative information:
www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to/analyse-and-report-qualitative-information
- How to analyse and report on quantitative information:
www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to/present-quantitative-information-your-reports

Completing an action is not the end. We need to reflect and check in with consumers and staff. Have we improved? Has the action been effective?

It is best to allow a period of time after the changes have been made to check back in.



We now try to look at everything we do through a health literacy 'lens', being guided by all the feedback from our clients, and including them in all the processes.

ANNE, CITY MISSION.

Example:

We did a walk around of our building and staff in Unit B said that clients were regularly arriving in their area when they were meant to be in Unit A for their appointment.

We reviewed the signage and realised we could improve.

We bought a large sign for the carpark entryway, and then made some simple A3 signs at each corridor intersection. We left these in place for 3 months, and then over a 2 week period asked reception staff to just check with people leaving from Unit A, how they had

found the signs. The clients said it was now very easy to find their way. We also checked back in with Unit B staff who said they hardly get any lost clients now to redirect.

Clients in Unit B were really pleased as the lost clients had been causing regular interruptions with the activities they were running. Things now run a lot more smoothly without needing to redirect clients regularly.

Sharing what you have learnt

It is really important to share what you have learnt, not just to ensure that your work is recognised, but to spread messages about health literacy through the organisation. Information on how you have engaged consumers in the process is particularly useful.

Information sharing doesn't need to mean a lengthy, detailed report with lots of statistics. The shorter and more concise our written information is, the better. Other ways to share information:

- An interactive workshop, perhaps involving some of the consumers you have worked with
- A presentation (avoid 'death by PowerPoint')
- A storybook or diary of the journey
- A video clip of people's thoughts along the path to becoming a Health Literacy Learning Organisation, or on how different people responded to what has changed through the process.

The Most Significant Change (MSC) approach involves selecting just one story that sums up the experience of a project. For more information see: www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to/use-stories-gather-data-using-most-significant-change-technique.

The Health Literacy bug is really catching on around here – it seems like everyone is getting it.

MICHAEL, WYNDARRA.

Don't forget to celebrate your achievements!

Step 6: Reviewing your Action Plan (Checking in again!)

The information you collect throughout as you implement and analyse your Action Plan will help you to review your initial plan – and start to work on the next one! You can complete the checklist again. See how things have changed and whether different priorities emerge.

We have had to be a bit flexible about when our Action Plan will be completed. Maybe it will always be a living document?

ANNE, CITY MISSION.

Your Health Literacy Action Plan can support your organisation's quality improvement plan. Your organisation's engagement with consumers is central to this process – working with, and working for, consumer health literacy. Regularly meet with your Health Literacy Team to:

- continue working through priorities
- checking completed actions have addressed the original issue
- adjusting time frames to keep things realistic, and
- regularly letting your clients and staff know how things are tracking.

When everyone sees things starting to improve it's likely you'll get further ideas and opportunities to add to your plan.

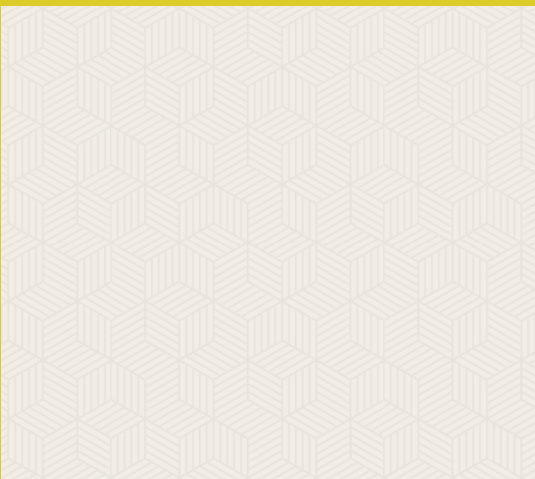
Health literacy is an ongoing process. If you make it part of your everyday business, and ensure all information, communication and processes are understandable by all consumers, then you are succeeding in becoming a Health Literacy Learning Organisation – HeLLO!





PART TWO

The Self- Assessment Checklist



1. CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT

Involving consumers in organisational planning and evaluation processes, and supporting them to be experts on their own needs and wellbeing.

NOTES

Involving consumers as experts in their own health, wellbeing, and service needs

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
1	We support consumers to develop their own goals and plans in their engagement with our service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	We make sure consumers have the information, support and time they need to give meaningful informed consent at all times.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	We respect consumers' decisions about involving or not involving families or other support people, including advocates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	When collecting and storing personal information about consumers, we:						
a	seek consent from consumers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	make sure consumers know how to access their own information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	only collect information necessary for our service and ensure consumer's ongoing privacy and confidentiality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Getting feedback from consumers

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
5	We seek feedback from consumers and other key people (such as carers, other service providers, and community members) about:						
a	our services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	our resources and consumer documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	our Health Literacy Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	continuous quality improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

NOTES

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
6 We have a clear compliments and complaints procedure and encourage consumers to use this.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Involving consumers in organisational planning and decision-making processes

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
7 We seek the views and participation of consumers and other key people (such as carers and community members) in:						
a planning our services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b planning and designing resources and documents for consumers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c developing our Health Literacy Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d strategic planning and decision-making (for example, having consumer advisory groups or consumer Board members).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. WORKFORCE

Encouraging and supporting our workforce to use effective health literacy practices.

NOTES

Encouraging a health literate workplace culture

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
1	We link health literacy ideas in with other organisational processes, such as:						
a	workplace training (eg. induction training)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	staff meetings and other activities (eg. reflective practice)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	staff resources (eg. policies and procedures)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	continuous quality improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	Performance Development Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	We use clear written and spoken communication throughout the organisation and ensure client information remains current and accurate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	We use health literate approaches when working with consumers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
4	Our staff members, including volunteers understand what health literacy means	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Our staff identify and share information about relevant health literacy resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	We encourage and support staff to attend health literacy specific training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	We encourage and support staff to attend training in areas that are related to health literacy (such as cultural safety, client directed care, and communications skills)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. MEETING THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Working to improve the health literacy of our consumers, and making sure that all consumers are able to use our services and participate effectively in our organisation, regardless of their health literacy skills.

NOTES

Developing consumer health literacy skills		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
1	We work with other services and local communities to build health literacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	We design our services and resources to make it easier for consumers to:						
a	communicate effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	identify and manage barriers to health and wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	maintain their health and wellbeing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Meeting the diverse needs of consumers		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
3	We have clear protocols and processes in place for using interpreters or any other communication support for consumers who use our services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	We make sure our resources and services are inclusive by:						
a	making sure our resources reflect the diversity of our consumers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	having ties with key people and organisations that represent the different communities we work with	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	using research and local knowledge to make our services and resources more relevant and welcoming for all consumers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
5	Our resources and services meet the needs of people with specific communication needs (such as impaired vision)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	We support consumers to participate in advisory groups and ensure they are valued and heard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	We offer to pay, reimburse costs, or find other ways to make sure consumers' time is valued when they participate in our advisory groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Helping our consumers to get the services they need, when they need them, in a way that is most suited to them.

NOTES

Creating a health literate service environment

1	We support consumers when they come to our organisation by:	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
a	making it easy for them to find their way (eg. we have clear signs in plain English)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	providing a comfortable and welcoming environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	ensuring all staff are welcoming and offer information and opportunities for questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	making it clear what consumers need to do, without lots of written information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting consumers to understand and use our services

2	We support consumers to use our services by:	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
a	helping them understand what we can and cannot offer, including their Rights and Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	being clear about any risks or costs involved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	helping them understand and use any unfamiliar processes, such as electronic systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Identifying and addressing consumer issues with the systems and services they use

NOTES

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
3 We work with consumers and other key people in the community to:						
find out what makes it hard for consumers to use other important systems and services they need (such as Centrelink, or the mental health system)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a make it easier for consumers to access and navigate these systems and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b help consumers to access feedback and complaints mechanisms for other services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 We identify issues that make it hard for consumers to use our service (such as transport or child care access) and work with them to make it easier.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Making clear pathways for consumers to other services

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
5 We support consumers to connect easily with other services by:						
a having processes in place to make sure our information on other community services and resources is up to date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b informing consumers about available services and any associated costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c informing consumers about any referrals we make for them, including any steps needed to get there	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d informing consumers about what information we need to share with other services they are referred to, and asking them if they would like us to share any other information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e following up with consumers after a referral is made to see if any more support is needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. COMMUNICATION

Communicating clearly at all times. This includes communication within our organisation, as well as with consumers.

NOTES

Communicating clearly in interactions with consumers

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
1	We support consumers to use our services by:						
a	using plain language to explain technical concepts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	checking our consumers understand the information we give them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	using interpreters for consumers with diverse communication needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	making sure our physical environment supports effective communication (eg. having quiet areas for conversations, good lighting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	using active listening skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f	approaching consumers with empathy, openness, curiosity, dignity and respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Communicating clearly within our organisation

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
2	We promote clear and effective communication within our organisation by:						
a	checking that our internal documents and resources are clear and concise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	modelling clear communication in all our processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	encouraging staff to report any communication issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	addressing communication issues as they happen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Communicating clearly with consumers in our documents and resources

3	We promote clear and effective communication with consumers by:	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
a	using plain language wherever possible in our documents and resources for consumers (brochures, booklets, forms, websites, or surveys)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	using other ways to communicate with consumers (alongside written information), such as videos or face-to-face communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	supporting people to complete documents (such as forms or surveys) as needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	ensuring our website and other resources are useable by people with disabilities (for example, using text that can be made bigger, providing captions for video and images)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	providing communication in other common languages (translated by high-quality translation services)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f	regularly reviewing resources to make sure they are accurate and easily understood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g	adapting or removing resources that are out of date or hard to understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Valuing health literacy as part of our culture and core business, working towards health literacy goals, and demonstrating leadership in the community by working with others to improve health literacy.

NOTES

Valuing health literacy as part of our core business

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
1	Our Mission Statement and policies support health literacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	We have one or more individuals in our organisation who are responsible for keeping health literacy on our radar (such as a health literacy champion or team).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	We check the health literacy understanding of management and Board members on a regular basis, and offer skills development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	We seek advice about health literacy from experts in the field (including our consumers).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting and achieving health literacy goals

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
5	We talk about health literacy in our planning processes and specify health literacy goals, actions and outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	We regularly review progress towards our health literacy goals as part of our continuous quality improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	We allocate resources to achieve health literacy goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

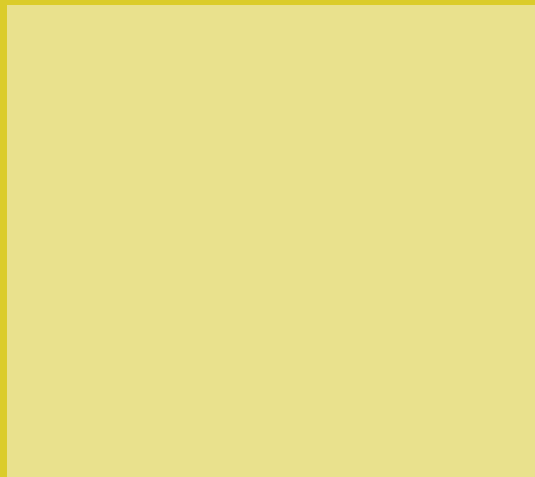
Contributing to broader efforts to improve health literacy

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
8 We encourage other organisations to improve their health literacy through partnerships and collaboration (eg. sharing information and resources, participating in networks).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 We contribute to broader efforts to improve health literacy (eg. by supporting research, or advocating for policy change).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



PART THREE

The Tools





Health literacy fact sheet

What is health literacy?

Health literacy is the knowledge and skills needed to access, understand, and use information related to physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Tasmania

Almost two in three people in Tasmania do not have the health literacy skills to manage their health and wellbeing.

Almost one in three adults with a university degree also do not have adequate health literacy.

A large number of Tasmanians find it harder to:

- understand and remember health information
- access services
- know who to see and when
- fill in forms
- tell service providers what they need to know
- arrange appointments, routine immunisations and screenings
- prevent problems, or pick them up early.

Lower levels of health literacy means people are more reliant on services, healthcare providers, hospital and emergency services. It also means people are less able to use programs to keep them healthy.

Organisational health literacy

Community sector organisations are already working hard to support people with lower health literacy. We can work on our organisational health literacy to do this even more. Good organisational health literacy practices make it easier for people to find, understand and use the information and services they need, so that they can have better health and wellbeing.

Examples of good organisational health literacy practices are providing clear information for consumers to help them make informed decisions, engaging with consumers in a friendly and welcoming way, and involving consumers in decision making.

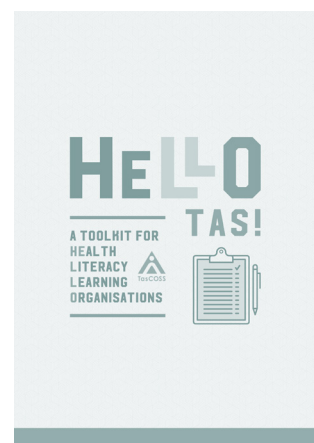
HeLLOTas! Toolkit

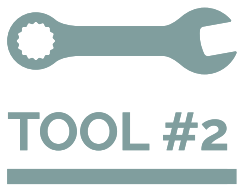
The HeLLOTas! Toolkit will help you explore your organisational health literacy. It provides:

- a step by step process for doing a self-assessment and developing a Health Literacy Action Plan
- practical tools to help you with these tasks
- links to accreditation standards, resources and further reading material.

For more information go to

 www.hellotas.org.au.





Workers Sharing Power

Becoming an ally to those who are not very good at making it through the system is a great way of using what privilege you do have to help those who have less. You can use the power you have to bring other people along, to lessen bureaucracy, to make others feel welcome and included, fully.

— Peggy McIntosh, associate director of the Wellesley Centers for Women, Harvard University.

Understanding consumer perspectives

As a service provider, you can help consumers to navigate the system by:

- Acknowledging your position of power and privilege and trying to see the world from the perspective of consumers – see, for example:
 - [Mad Workplaces](#) for a perspective on mental health consumers; also [Consumer Man](#) and [In Our Own Words](#)
 - [Cultural profiles](#) to better understand the health beliefs, pre-migration experiences, communication preferences and other aspects of consumers' cultures.
 - [NICHEportal](#) for ideas on working respectfully with Aboriginal people.

- Developing an understanding of the social determinants of health and how some of these determinants might be influencing the health of consumers
- Listening closely to consumers' stories and what they are telling you.

Working with consumers

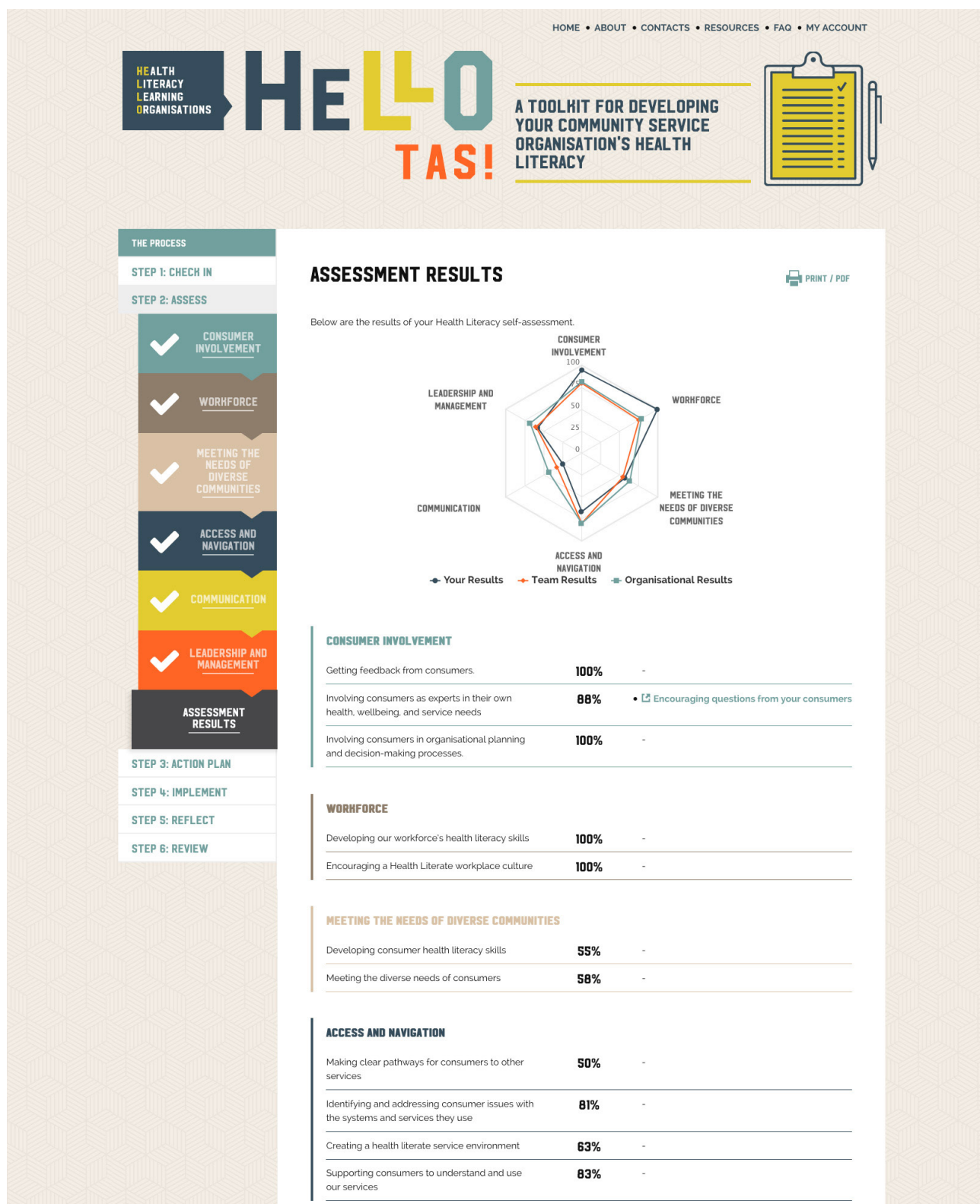
- Recognise that what you are saying may not be easy to understand – and that does not mean a consumer is stupid
- Communicate with consumers in plain English, giving them 'health literate' written materials, and using different ways to convey information
- Encourage consumers to speak up if they have not understood something
- Encourage consumers to take notes, record what you say to them, or bring along a friend or relative to help them remember what has been said
- Use tools to explain healthcare options; then giving consumers the time and opportunity to make informed decisions about their care

- Consult with other providers involved in the care of a consumer and inviting the consumer and their families into discussions
- Respect consumers' confidentiality and privacy
- Respect consumers' decisions.

Changing systems

- Work more broadly to make consumers' experiences of the health system easier and more empowering – for example, by:
 - ensuring that your organisation is working to become more health literate – see Checklist
 - putting processes in place for genuine consumer engagement, including actively participation in how your organisation operates
 - advocating on behalf of your consumers for better processes and support to help them navigate the health and community services' system
 - ensuring adequate consumer feedback and complaints mechanisms are in place
 - [consulting with consumers](#) and potential consumers and what they want from your services.

Example of self-assessment report



ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Making clear pathways for consumers to other services	50%	-
Identifying and addressing consumer issues with the systems and services they use	81%	-
Creating a health literate service environment	63%	-
Supporting consumers to understand and use our services	83%	-

COMMUNICATION

Communicating clearly with consumers in our documents and resources	25%	-
Communicating clearly within our organisation	25%	-
Communicating clearly in interactions with consumers	25%	-

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Setting and achieving health literacy goals	58%	-
Contributing to broader efforts to improve health literacy	75%	-
Valuing health literacy as part of our core business	50%	-

YOUR TEAMS RESULTS

	CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT	WORKFORCE	MEETING THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE COMMUNITIES	ACCESS AND NAVIGATION	COMMUNICATION	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
user1@emailaddress.org.au	77%	61%	52%	63%	48%	67%
user2@emailaddress.org.au	48%	66%	34%	91%	27%	47%
user3@emailaddress.org.au	95%	100%	57%	67%	25%	58%
user4@emailaddress.org.au	100%		75%	100%	30%	69%
YOUR TEAM RESULTS	80.0%	75.7%	54.5%	80.3%	32.5%	60.3%
YOUR ORGANISATION RESULTS	81.6%	78.8%	63.6%	80.3%	43.6%	68.2%

[BACK TO TOP](#)

[PRINT / PDF](#)



Observing and Rating your Organisation's Environment

Please tick appropriate box

Yes Needs improvement No Not relevant

Getting to the service

Phone information is offered using plain, everyday words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear instructions are provided on how to get there.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpreter services are offered when required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled car parking is available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public transport is available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Entrance

Name of the organisation is clearly visible from outside (carpark, street).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability access (ramps and/or service elevator) are available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An entry sign can be seen from the street.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signs use plain, everyday words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A reception desk is near the entrance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A sign shows where the reception desk is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Assistance

Someone is available at or near the main entrance to help people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any sign-in procedures are clearly visible and simple.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpreter services are available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff offer to help consumers complete paperwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A support person is welcomed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to other appropriate assistance is provided – eg. showers, laundry, clothing exchange.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick appropriate box

Yes Needs improvement No Not relevant

Waiting area/s

Are toilets and exits clearly signed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water and tissues are available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are enough stable, supportive chairs for standard client numbers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Temperature, drafts and noise levels are controlled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate reading material is provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posters are informative and visually appealing and there are an appropriate number of them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are clean toys/activities for children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If required, an alternative waiting area is available for individuals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signs advertise the availability of interpreter services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Interview area/s

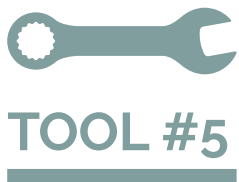
Sound barriers ensure confidentiality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water and tissues are available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are stable, supportive chairs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posters are informative and visually appealing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate quiet, well-lit area to encourage conversation and ensure privacy and confidentiality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signage

Consistent language/graphics are used on signs throughout the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets and exits are clearly signed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signage uses large, clearly visible lettering.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The names of any service areas are clearly visible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Information & engagement

Consumers have been involved in all aspects of environmental assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written materials for consumers have been developed with consumers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Translated materials are available in the primary community languages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Website and any social media follows plain language guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Reviewing Consumer Resources

Name / title / type of resource

Published / revision date

What is the purpose of this resource?

Who is the target audience?

Where available?

Other languages?

Readability

You may like to use a Readability Assessment tool to measure the appropriateness of the content for your audience. Aim for a reading level of Year 6 for general audiences:

- SMOG (Simplified Measure of Gobbledygook):
<http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/SMOG-calculator/smogcalc.php>
- SAM (Suitability Assessment of Material):
www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/health_literacy/health_literacy_toolkit/suitability_assessment_of_material_score_sheet
- Readability Score: Readability of text ranking based on several researched methods: <https://readability-score.com/text>

See also

- Communicate Clearly: A Guide to Plain English:
<http://26ten.tas.gov.au/PublishingImages/Tools/26TEN-Communicate-Clearly-A-Guide-to-Plain-English-Current-September-2014.PDF>
- Health Literacy training and other events:
www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/wihpw/news_and_events/events2

Please tick appropriate box

	Yes	Needs improvement	No	Not relevant
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Resource content

The content aligns with the needs of your target audience.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information in the resource flows from one point to the next.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The resource uses simple and familiar words, short sentences and paragraphs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Each paragraph contains one concept or message. There is no excess wording.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The resource uses the active voice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any jargon or is explained, and abbreviations are spelled out.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical terms and technical or difficult concepts are explained using simple, familiar words, with examples where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key terms are used consistently throughout the resource.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any numbers are clear, easy to understand and avoided where possible – eg. Use 'very few people' rather than '1 out of 10,000 people'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key points are summarised or emphasised where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The topic areas in the resource have informative headers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The design helps the reader find information easily – eg, consistent use of fonts, headings, tables; limited use of upper case, italics and underlining; effective use of white space and dot points.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is clear what a reader is meant to do with the resource/information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The resource uses visual aids whenever these can make content clearer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visual aids are appropriate to age, gender, culture etc. of the main audience.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graphics/information is clear when photocopied or printed in black and white.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The date and contact information is included.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The resource content and readability has been tested with consumers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Surveying Consumers about your Organisational Health Literacy

You may like to survey consumers about their experience of your organisation's health literacy - how easy they found it to negotiate and how clear and useful they found the information they received.

TasCOSS 'How To' Guides

The TasCOSS website provides a series of 'How To' guides on conducting surveys:

- How to write questions for a survey: www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-write-questions-survey-0
- How to create a paper-based survey: www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to/create-paper-based-survey
- How to create an online survey: www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to/create-online-survey

These guides provide information on how to decide what questions to ask, how to structure the questions, how to rank them, and when to use open-ended questions. They cover some of the things to consider when developing paper based or online surveys.

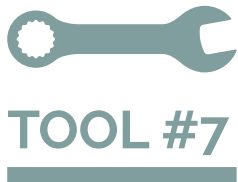
Possible questions

- How easy was it to get to our service?
- How easy was it to find our service?
- How would you rate your initial reception?
- Were you given clear information about the service and what it could do for you?
- Was the information you received from the worker clear and easy to understand?
- Was the written information you received clear and easy to understand?
- Did you feel that you were treated with empathy and respect?
- Were you able to ask all the questions that you had?
- Were you encouraged to ask questions?
- Did you feel comfortable to ask questions?
- Were you offered help to fill in forms?
- Did you find the physical environment comfortable and welcoming?
- Were signs and directions easy to read and follow?
- Were you given information about any service costs?
- If you were referred on to another service, were you given information about that service?
- Do you feel confident that you have been provided with the information that you need?
- Do you have any suggestions for improvement?
- Did you feel listened to?

Some tools for online survey design

There are quite a few good online survey design tools available, the following being well-tested.

- Survey Monkey: www.surveymonkey.com
- Google Forms: www.google.com/forms/about
- Typeform: www.typeform.com



Assessing your listening skills

Which of the following do you recognise in yourself?

Please tick appropriate box

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Are there some individuals that you avoid having to listen to?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there certain categories of people you find it difficult to listen to?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Would someone's appearance prejudice you so that you could not listen objectively?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you tune out on certain topics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you refuse to listen to things that make you feel uncomfortable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you pay attention only to the good/bad things that you hear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you listen chiefly for facts and overlook feelings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you listen purely for your own purposes without thinking what the other person needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you let your mind wander or pursue thoughts of your own?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you spend most of the time thinking what you are going to say next?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you easily distracted by other things going on around you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have ways of kidding the speaker that you are paying attention when you are not?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your body language ever reveal that you are getting bored, impatient or irritable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you always ready to jump in with your own ideas as soon as the other person pauses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the other person says something you disagree with do you interrupt to put your point of view across?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you can guess the end of the person's sentence do you complete it for them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To be good listeners we are aiming to answer 'Never', If you answered mostly 'Never or Sometimes', well done! You are doing well as a listener - keep working on it - we can always improve.

If you answered mostly 'Often and Always', it's time to start focussing on your listening! Awareness is the first step, and with practice you (and those around you) will see real changes.

This questionnaire is part of the 'Asking Better Questions' Training. For more information go to www.betterquestions.com.au.



TOOL #8

Health Literacy Action Plan template

Organisation/Team: Health Literacy Team							
Organisational Goal: An organisation that is easy to find for consumers, provides user friendly information, is welcoming and meets consumer needs							
Dimensions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT: Involving consumers in organisational planning and evaluation processes and supporting them to be experts on their own needs and wellbeing. WORKFORCE: Encouraging and supporting our workforce to use effective health literacy practices. MEETING THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE COMMUNITIES: Working to improve the health literacy of our consumers and making sure that all consumers are able to use our services and participate effectively in our organisation, regardless of their health literacy skills. ACCESS AND NAVIGATION: Helping our consumers to get the services they need, in a way that is most suited to them. COMMUNICATION: Communicating clearly at all times. This includes communication within our organisation, as well as with consumers. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Valuing health literacy as part of our culture and core business, working towards health literacy goals, and demonstrating leadership in the community by working with others to improve health literacy. 							
Dimensions /s (insert number/s as above)	Actions <i>What actions are needed to make to make it easier for people to find, understand and use the information and services we provide?</i>	Key steps <i>What steps are needed to get the action underway and implemented</i>	Who will do this?	When?	Success indicator <i>How will we know our action has been successful?</i>	Progress	Review and Evaluation <i>Have the implemented actions resolved the issue?</i>












TOOL #9








Example Health Literacy Action Plan

Organisation/Team: Health Literacy Team							
Organisational Goal: An organisation that is easy to find for consumers, provides user friendly information, is welcoming and meets consumer needs							
Dimensions/s	Actions <i>What actions are needed to make it easier for people to find, understand and use the information and services we provide?</i>	Key steps <i>What steps are needed to get the action underway and implemented</i>	Who will do this?	When?	Success indicator <i>How will we know our action has been successful?</i>	Progress	Review and Evaluation <i>Have the implemented actions resolved the issue?</i>
1	Improve participation in community reference group to increase consumer feedback	Improve resourcing to support participation – reimbursement of out of pocket expenses, providing food and staff support. Document and communicate to consumers.	Volunteer Coordinator budget item	Sept 2020	Increased participation of community members, more feedback provided	Underway - clarifying what we can offer within budget, and priorities for the group	
2	Improve Staff knowledge around consumer goal setting	Provide training for staff in listening to consumers and consumer goal setting	Managers	By end Oct 2020	All staff have been provided with training, consumers report positive feedback, documents show good goal documentation	Underway - First session held, two more to come next month	
4	Amend signage to ensure all consumers can find the service – language and placement of signs	Review signage design - simplify language and include graphic symbols, and check placement in key locations	Operations Manager	June 2019	Consumers say signage is clear and they can easily find the service	Complete – new signs designed and installed	Surveyed consumers in Dec 2019 (using Organisation Environment Tool 4) – got a much higher rating and really positive feedback from consumers and staff
5	Improve consumer information provided to new clients	Establish a Consumer Communications Working Group (CCWG) with consumer representation to focus on consumer information and communication processes with new consumers	Operations Manager	June 2020	CCWG established (sub-group of client documents and interview information reviewed and updated and positive feedback received from new clients	Complete	CCWG have had 2 meetings, group have redesigned the Client Handbook, including the translations, and simplified the new client interview info list. New clients have given very positive feedback

Ideas for Action

Action area	Actions	Tools
Review organisational documents HeLLO Dimensions: Leadership and management Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic and operational plans • Policies and procedures • Minutes of meetings • Budgets • Needs assessments • Staff induction programs • Staff training opportunities • Staff handbooks • Registers of consumer feedback • Risk registers • Client care or service plans • Staff survey 	Assessing policies and protocols about communication and health literacy: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/health_literacy/health_literacy_toolkit/policies_and_protocols_for_supportive_health_literacy_environments
Review documents for consumers HeLLO Dimensions: Consumer involvement Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment and referral letters • Client's care or service plan • Information about services • Your website and/or Facebook page • Brochures, posters and other promotional material • Consumer questionnaires • Informed consent forms • Information about how to give feedback. 	 TOOL #5: REVIEWING CONSUMER RESOURCES
Observe pathways and processes HeLLO Dimension: Access and navigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check how easy it is for consumers to find your service. • Do a walkthrough of your service with a consumer to find out how they experience your organisation, including consumers with varied mobility needs (wheelchair, walker, pram etc). 	 TOOL #4: OBSERVING AND RATING YOUR ORGANISATION'S ENVIRONMENT
Check interactions with consumers HeLLO Dimensions: Access and navigation Consumer involvement	Observe staff interactions with consumers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How consumers are greeted at reception. • Whether consumers are given time to process information and encouraged to ask questions • Whether consumer questions are answered • How processes and instructions are passed on to the consumer. • Ask consumers whether they felt welcome, respected and listened to by staff. 	Hello my name is.... www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/health_literacy/hello_my_name_is It's ok to ask www.26ten.tas.gov.au/sites/test/our-focus-areas/Pages/It's-OK-to-Ask-Resources.aspx  TOOL #7: ASSESSING YOUR LISTENING SKILLS

Observe your organisation's environment HeLLO Dimension: Access and navigation	Check out your facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is water freely available? • Are tissues freely available? • Are there accessible toilets? • Look at signage: • Are signs clear? • Are toilets and exits clearly marked? • Are there only as many signs as necessary? Reflect on processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it clear what to do when you first enter the service? • Is it clear what you can do if you have a question or need help? 	 TOOL #3: OBSERVING AND RATING YOUR ORGANISATION'S ENVIRONMENT
Interview staff HeLLO Dimension: Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore your colleagues' awareness of health literacy and how it is practised in your organisation. • Seek feedback on whether your organisational documents are easy for staff to use. 	 TOOL #1: HEALTH LITERACY FACT SHEET  TOOL #7: ASSESSING YOUR LISTENING SKILLS
Interview consumers HeLLO Dimensions: Access and navigation Consumer involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask consumers whether they: • are clear about the purpose of their appointment or visit • understand what they need to do following an appointment or visit • have had their questions answered • have experienced challenges in getting health services • have found services helpful and supportive. • Note: You will need to get permission from consumers for observations and interviews. 	 TOOL #6: SURVEYING CONSUMERS TasCOSS 'How To' guides  www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to plan and run a focus group • How to do a semi-structured interview • How to do a snap shot survey
Interview other service providers HeLLO Dimension: Access and navigation	Explore other service providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding of your organisation and what you do • ideas on how you can work together to meet the needs of consumers such as joint projects, better referral pathways, ways to share feedback from consumers. 	FindHelpTAS  www.findhelptas.org.au/
Interview people in the community HeLLO Dimension: Meeting the needs of diverse communities	Ask people in the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether they know about your organisation • what services they need • how they think you should promote your service • for any ideas they may have to improve your organisation. 	

<p>Conduct surveys</p> <p>HeLLO Dimension:</p> <p>Consumer involvement</p>	<p>Survey consumers about their experience of your organisation's health literacy, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How easy they find it to communicate with workers. • How clear and useful they found the information they receive. 	<p> TOOL #6: SURVEYING CONSUMERS</p> <p>TasCOSS 'How To' guides</p> <p> www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to write questions for a survey • How to create a paper-based survey • How to create an online survey <p>Some online survey design tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey Monkey • Google Forms • Typeform
<p>Do a cultural audit</p> <p>HeLLO Dimension:</p> <p>Meeting the needs of diverse communities</p>	<p>Look at how culturally-appropriate your organisation is for different groups, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal people. • People from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. • People with disabilities. • People who are lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex. 	<p>Working with Aboriginal people and communities:</p> <p> www.whealth.com.au/mtww/documents/MTWW_Audit_Tool.pdf</p> <p>How to make your organisation feel welcoming for people of all sexualities and gender identities:</p> <p> www.tascosslibrary.org.au/how-to/make-your-organisation-feel-welcoming-people-all-sexualities-and-gender-identities</p>
<p>Improve skills of staff and consumers</p> <p>HeLLO Dimension:</p> <p>Workforce Communication Meeting the needs of diverse communities</p>	<p>Link consumers to training and support provided through the 26TEN network.</p> <p>Encourage staff to do training in health literacy, e.g. as provided through the Tasmanian Health Service's Health Promotion team, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Communicate clearly and check understanding' • 'How to design easy to read resources' • 'Written and verbal communication' • Link consumers to training and support provided through the 26TEN Network. 	<p>Tasmanian Health Service Health Literacy training:</p> <p> www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/wihpw/news_and_events/events2</p> <p>26TEN resources and support – search at:</p> <p> www.26ten.tas.gov.au</p>
<p>Link with other organisations</p> <p>HeLLO Dimension:</p> <p>Leadership and Management</p>	<p>Become a member of the 26TEN members network.</p>	<p>26TEN members network – search at:</p> <p> www.26ten.tas.gov.au</p>

How Organisational Health Literacy supports Accreditation

By working through the HeLLOTas! Toolkit, organisations can generate further evidence and supporting documentation for their accreditation compliance.

We have provided information to help you see where your organisational Health Literacy links in with commonly used community organisation accreditation standards.

Accreditation Standards

We have identified the 7 most common accreditation standards that community service organisations in Tasmania are required to comply with. We have mapped the Health Literacy Dimensions against each of these, so you can see where they align.

These are the 7 accreditation standards that community service organisations are most commonly required to comply with – each is linked to the online set of standards:

- [Aged Care Quality Standards](#)
- [National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards](#)

- [National standards for mental health services](#)
- [DHHS Quality and Safety Standards](#)
- [QIC Health and Community Services Standards](#)
- [NDIS Practice Standards](#)
- [RACGP Standards for General Practices](#)

How Health Literacy Dimensions support the standards

In the resources section of the toolkit we have put together a document for each of the above standards, mapping the organisational health literacy dimensions against the accreditation standards.

For each set of standards, we have listed the different sections and subsections, and then shown which Health Literacy Dimension is aligned. If there are standards where you need some more evidence or improvements, you can see which aspects of organisational health literacy can assist.

The HeLLOTas health literacy dimension numbers listed relate to the dimensions as

outlined in the Self-Assessment Checklist. For example 1.3 relates to Dimension 1 (Consumer Involvement), question 3 “We respect consumer’s decisions about involving or not involving families or other support people, including advocates.”

Designing a Health Literate Website

1. Plan your site

- Website or social media?

Website

Pros	Cons
Full control	Design and setup can be costly and time consuming
Flexible re layout	Needs regular maintenance
Can include much more content than social media	

Facebook

Pros	Cons
Quick and easy to setup	Limited control
Free	Design limitations
Very interactive	Needs regular monitoring
Easy to delete	Limited reporting tools
	Limited to small chunks of information

(Tip: If you develop both a website and a Facebook page you can link these together and get your messages to a much wider audience.)

- Will you DIY or get it professionally designed? (Tip: there are many website building tools online that do not require coding or design skills – search on your browser).
- What is the purpose of the site?
- Who do you want to reach?
- Have you chosen and registered a domain name (www.domainregistration.com.au/domains/tips/)?
- What size site? How many pages, how much storage will you need (images and videos greatly increase storage space)?
- Do you want to include online forms, blogs, maps, links to social media, links to other sites and resources, video and/or audio players?
- Do you need to optimise content for tablets and phones?

2. Develop content

- Plan the content –focus, key messages, what to include, how information will be organised
- Create a simple engaging homepage

- Put the most important information first
- Put key messages 'above the fold' (content you don't need to scroll down to)
- Include simple navigation – clear pathways, menus and buttons with meaningful labels
- Use images to explain content and help people learn, not to distract them
- Use interactive content that users can tailor to their own needs.

3. Check style

- Talk directly to your intended audience, using common language
- Use plain English – everyday words rather than complex words
- Use active voice (subject-verb-object) where possible
- Be concise, keep it simple
- Keep sentences short
- Write short, single-topic paragraphs
- Avoid clichés
- Avoid jargon and abbreviations
- Use clear, meaningful titles, sub-titles and links
- Avoid underlining, italics,

bold print, capital letters or exclamation marks

- Use inclusive language - gender neutral, culturally appropriate, disability-friendly
- Always capitalise 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal' when referring to Aboriginal Australians
- Use different ways to get messages across – graphics, multimedia, graphs, images
- Limit content to one or two main fonts
- Use a clean (sans serif) readable font for text – at least 12 points
- Use 1.5-line spacing
- Include plenty of white space
- Chunk content into manageable pieces
- Use dot point lists to break up text
- Test content for readability (see: Readability statistics)
- Test content with your consumers.
- Resource: Writing for the web
[Ⓜ http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/health_literacy/health_literacy_toolkit/writing_for_the_web](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/health_literacy/health_literacy_toolkit/writing_for_the_web)

4. Check accessibility and useability

- Refer to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ([Ⓜ https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/glance](https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/glance)) for international best practice recommendations for improving website accessibility
- Australian Government page: ([Ⓜ www.guides.service.gov.au/content-guide/accessibility-inclusivity/](http://www.guides.service.gov.au/content-guide/accessibility-inclusivity/))
- Check out [Vision Australia's Accessibility Toolkit](#)
- Check that:
 - images meet the 6 relevant accessibility guidelines (alt text, colour, contrast, images of text, flashing, icon consistency)
 - link text is easily understood and clearly marked
 - HTML tags have been used appropriately for headings, lists, quotations, tables and emphasised text
- Make title and headings clear, meaningful and easily searchable
- Include organisation name in title or sub heading
- Write a useful meta description (summary of content)
- Use Search Engine

Optimisation – include highly ranked keywords

- Make sure content displays correctly on different screens – desktops, laptops, tablets, mobile phones
- Embed social media buttons on your website; include links to your website on your Facebook site.
- Resource: For useability tips, see Web Useability
[Ⓜ http://usability.com.au](http://usability.com.au)

5. Promote your website

- Promote your web address everywhere possible – social media, directories, posters, business cards, etc.
- Do an online search on ways to [increase website traffic](#)
- Monitor use of your website – search online for [web analytics](#) tools

6. Maintain your site

Develop a regular schedule to:

- Check all content is up to date
- Check all links work
- Add new content, links and resources.
- Resource: Health Literacy online: A Guide for Simplifying the User Experience
[Ⓜ https://health.gov/healthliteracyonline/](https://health.gov/healthliteracyonline/)

Finding your way through the healthcare maze

There are lots of services and resources out there to help you navigate the health system. Searching online will provide you with up to date information and links. Here are just a few:

- [Find Help Tas](#) provides a publicly accessible, independently managed database of Tasmania's social services
- Consumers Health Forum of Australia: [Find your way. Guide to our Health System](#)
- Primary Health Tasmania: [My Passport to Better Health. Connecting Care](#)
- Beyond Blue: [The Beyond Blue Support Service](#)
- Association for Children with Disability (Tas.) Inc [Finding your way](#)

Before an appointment

Get clear in your mind about what you want to get from the appointment.

- Write a list of any questions you want to ask and anything you want to tell the service provider before you go.

- Gather together information to take with you on current conditions, past surgeries or illnesses, and any medications you are taking.
- Decide whether you want to take anyone else along for support and an extra pair of ears.
- Work out where you need to go and how long it will take to get there.

Asking questions

You have a right to ask questions of service providers and to get clear answers. Some people find it overwhelming to receive lots of information, while others want as much information as they can get.

- Let the service provider know how much information you want and how much you want to be involved with decisions about your care.
- If you don't understand what they are saying, tell them. This does not mean you are stupid – just that they are not good at communicating.
- Make sure they listen to what you say and what you want.
- Don't be afraid to ask 'silly' questions – these are often important.

- Take notes of what they say.
- Ask for an explanation of anything that you don't understand.
- Ask if there are any handouts, websites or other places you can get more information.
- If they can't help with any specific issues, ask who you should contact for more help.
- If any drugs are prescribed, ask:
 - Why should I take this?
 - Are there any side effects?
 - What does it cost?
 - Is there a generic (cheaper) form of the drug?
- If you are sent for tests ask:
 - What is the test for?
 - How much does it cost?
 - When will I get results?
- If a procedure is recommended, ask:
 - Why do I need this procedure?
 - How many times have you done this procedure?
 - Are there any alternatives?
 - What happens if I don't do anything?
 - What are the possible complications?
 - What are the costs?

Resources:

www.chf.org.au/health-consumers-tasmania

www.consumerreports.org/cro/news/2015/02/3-questions-to-ask-a-doctor/index.htm

www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/patient-involvement/ask-your-doctor/10questions.html

www.26ten.tas.gov.au/sites/test/our-focus-areas/Pages/It's-OK-to-Ask-Resources.aspx
<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/question-builder>

Know your providers

- Find out who's who in the world of health practitioners – check out [Clinicians' Guides - a Consumer Perspective](#); and [The Company We Keep: A user's guide to mental health clinicians](#).
- Ask other consumers for advice on who to see (noting that most service providers are not able to make specific recommendations).
- Find specific service providers. Some provide a list of the services they offer and details such the availability of bulk-billing,

cost, accessibility. Check out:

- Primary Health Tasmania: [Tasmanian Health Directory](#)
- DHHS Service Finder – [South](#) | [North](#) | [North West](#)
- [Find Help Tas](#)

Get involved

There are lots of ways for consumers to get involved in changing health and community services' systems so that they are more 'user-friendly and empowering. [Find Help Tas](#) lists lots of advocacy groups that you may like to join. Search for 'consumer advocacy' or for a specific group or condition.

Being on committees

Decision-making and advisory bodies need to 'abandon the idea that a consumer can possibly be "representative" on a committee' but acknowledge that every consumer is an expert in their own right and has their own lived experience.

- Before agreeing to go on a committee, find out some background information – eg. why they want a consumer representative, whether

any other consumers are involved, and what expertise is needed.

- Ask about entitlements – are there any sitting fees, reimbursement of expenses, resources to consult with other consumers, support from the organisation?
- Has the committee undertaken any training in recognising and working with consumers, or are they willing to do this?
- Is there recognition within the committee of [entrenched power imbalances](#) and the tyranny of status?
- Is the committee aware of the need for health literacy and have they undergone any training?
- Are committee members willing to sign up to a ['committee agreement'](#) on how to work collaboratively with consumers?

Resources:

[Our Consumer Place](#): Resource Centre for Mental Health Consumers

[Positive thinking about consumers](#)



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p 03/6169 9500
www.tascoss.org.au

