



A Framework for Health Literacy

FACT SHEET

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Grants of up to \$7,500 will be awarded to libraries to strengthen their role as a resource for improving the health literacy in their community or organization. Libraries will agree to design and implement a one-year grant project. Under this grant, the Project Director will commit to the following:

- Define a specific project audience
- Enhance or develop up-to-date multi-media consumer health collection
- Provide staff training on health information resources, including, but not limited to statewide library resources, to successfully address patron inquiries
- Create/update library web page(s) relevant to the grant theme that highlights health resources and programming, including, but not limited to MBLC licensed health databases
- Plan and hold workshops and programming to meet the needs of the project audience
- Provide opportunities for the project audience to learn skills to enable them to make informed choices regarding their health decisions
- Collaborate with appropriate municipal government departments, local community organizations, educational institutions and businesses. Libraries are also encouraged to form an advisory group with these organizations as well as a member of the project audience as appropriate to help the library carry out the grant.
- K-12 libraries must coordinate with faculty and staff to embed literacy skills into the school's curriculum and services. Collaboration with the public library is also required. See MBLC's [Policy on Cooperation between Public Libraries and School Libraries](https://mblc.state.ma.us/mblc/board/policy/cooperation.php) (<https://mblc.state.ma.us/mblc/board/policy/cooperation.php>)
- Academic libraries must collaborate with faculty and staff to embed literacy skills into the school's curriculum and services

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all public, K-12 and academic libraries that meet standard eligibility requirements for Direct Grant Programs.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent form with the “Framework for Health Literacy” option checked off. For additional information about this program, please contact Marlene Heroux at the MBLC at 800-952-7403, ext. 250 or email marlene.heroux@state.ma.us

BACKGROUND

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) web page, [Learn about Health Literacy](#) states:

“The Affordable Care Act defines health literacy as the degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions... Anyone who **needs** health information and services also needs health literacy skills to

- Find information and services
- Communicate their needs and preferences and respond to information and services
- Process the meaning and usefulness of the information and services
- Understand the choices, consequences and context of the information and services
- Decide which information and services match their needs and preferences so they can act

Anyone who **provides** health information and services to others, such as a doctor, nurse, dentist, pharmacist, or public health worker, also needs health literacy skills to

- Help people find information and services
- Communicate about health and healthcare
- Process what people are explicitly and implicitly asking for
- Understand how to provide useful information and services
- Decide which information and services work best for different situations and people so they can act

As reported by the Pew Research Center, “Many view public libraries as important resources for finding health information and some conduct such searches using libraries’ online access resources.”

Whereby 73% of all those ages 16 plus say libraries contribute to finding the health information they need and 42% of those who have gone online at a library using its computers, internet connections or Wi-Fi, have done so for health-related searches. That comes to 10 % of the full population of those ages 16 and older. (Horrihan, John. “*Libraries at the Crossroads*: Pew Research Center, September 2015, <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/09/15/libraries-at-the-crossroads/>)

2013- 2017 MASSACHUSETTS LONG RANGE PLAN GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal 1: Support learners of all ages with their individual educational and learning goals.

Objective 1: MBLC partners with the Massachusetts Library System to provide statewide databases of general interest periodicals and journals, the Boston Globe and New York Times newspapers and a general encyclopedia. Both partners provide training for these resources.

Objective 3: The MBLC supports programs that provide outreach to an identified group of residents who need assistance with a particular learning need.