



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:

- 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 address patron inquiries successfully.
- 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 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 and academic libraries must coordinate with faculty and staff to embed health literacy skills into the school's curriculum and services. The K-12 libraries are required to collaborate with the public library.

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 Erin Williams Hart at the MBLC at 800-952-7403 ext. 232 or email erin.williamshart@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.” 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. (<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.