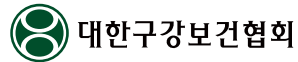
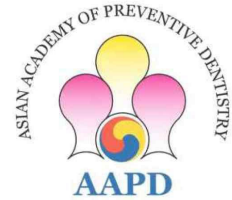


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The Invisible Barrier: Literacy and Oral Health

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Abstract

This presentation provides an overview and update on oral health literacy that will include its evolution, impact on oral health outcomes, and the status of oral health literacy initiatives and what we can do in our respective positions to increase oral health literacy. Early on oral health literacy was primarily focused on the individual patient. The revised definition in Healthy People 2030 expands this definition to include health organizations:

Personal health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

Organizational health literacy is the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

Both individuals (patients, providers and policy makers) and organizations (hospitals, clinics and private practice) have a responsibility to reduce barriers to oral health and oral health literacy.