

# Health Literacy Universal Precautions Guidelines

Health Literacy Universal Precautions – the structuring of health information and services in ways that everyone can understand and use. Health literacy universal precautions call for:

- Simplifying communication and confirming understanding with everyone.
- Making the office environment and healthcare system easier to navigate.
- Supporting people’s efforts to improve their health.

Banner Medicaid and Medicare has selected the [Healthcare Research and Quality \(AHRQ\) Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit, 3rd Edition](#), an evidence-based guidance, as the standard for:

- Making health information easier to understand and act on.
- Making healthcare easier to navigate.
- Increasing support for our members of all health literacy levels.

Specifically, we selected some core toolkits to be the focus our efforts:

- **Communicate Clearly**

[Tool #4](#). Communicating clearly helps our members understand and act on health information. Using strategies to be clear in spoken communication also helps our members feel more involved in their healthcare and increases the likelihood of their following through on treatment plans.

- **Use the Teach-Back Method**

[Tool #5](#). It is important to confirm that we explain things in a manner our members understand. The teach-back method is a way of checking understanding by asking our members to state in their own words what they need to know or do about their health. The related show-me method allows us to confirm that our members are able to follow specific instructions, such as how to use an inhaler.

- **Address Language Differences**

[Tool #9](#). Members who use a language other than English often do not get the health information and healthcare that others get. Addressing language differences is an essential health literacy strategy.

Banner Medicaid and Medicare will

- Ensure the Health Literacy Universal Precautions are consistent with requirements from our payers and NCQA Standards for health care literacy requirements .
- Provide training to staff in implementing Health Literacy Universal Precaution tools.
- Create communication and materials for members that are consistent with these guidelines.