

**Health Literacy in Communities Prototype Collaborative  
Get Real: Partnerships for Moving Health Literacy Forward  
December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Office Practice Breakout Summary**

The Health Literacy in Communities Prototype Collaborative brought teams together from around the province to test changes in literacy organizations and office practices with the aim of improving health literacy in communities. The prototype wrapped up December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 with a closing event in Vancouver, BC, where teams shared their learnings, and policy makers, health care professionals, community organization representatives, and others interested in improving health literacy met to determine next steps to move health literacy forward in the province.

Dr. Shirley Sze, Connie Davis (Impact BC) and Cheryl Rivard (Vancouver Coastal Health) facilitated an office practice breakout session in order to describe resources teams used, introduce resources for health literacy in the office practice, describe practice tips and tools for getting started, and discuss next steps to move health literacy forward in office practices across the province. Below is a summary of this session.

**Resources from this session:**

- Low Literacy: "Six Tips for Communicating with Low Literacy Clients" and "Recognize and Respect Your Low Literacy Clients" (Manitoba)
- Clear Doc Checklist (Manitoba)

both available at:

- Literacy Partners of Manitoba. Clear Language and Health Literacy.  
<http://www.plainlanguage.mb.literacy.ca/healthlit.htm>
- Walkabout tool (Burnaby, available at [www.impactbc.ca](http://www.impactbc.ca))
- Health Literacy Resources List
- American Medical Association Health Literacy Video. Available online  
<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/no-index/about-ama/8035.shtml>

**The attendees shared ideas to move health literacy forward in office practices:**

- Get easy to use tools to physician offices
- Incorporate health literacy into Practice Support Program modules (physician education program in BC)
- Support for group visits that are literacy friendly
- Share what's been learned from this effort
- Partner with pharmacists
- Develop volunteer patient coaches
- Use close the loop
- Encourage family and friends to come to visits
- Refer to library for health information (there is a program in Richmond, BC where physicians write a prescription and patients go to the library for health information)
- Put computers in physician's office waiting rooms
- Plain language materials readily available to offices
- Add information to patient referral forms (such as health info, reliable websites)