

4.1 Why Partner?

ESOL teachers and programs all have plenty on our plates. Why take on partnering with another organization for health literacy? This document will suggest some ways that partnering can benefit your program, your learners, and potential partners.

Acquire funding.

- Some partners may be in a position to help with funding.
- Most grants for projects related to health literacy require a health care partner organization.

Share expertise.

- Health care professionals can share clinical knowledge and health care system expertise directly with learners.
- Instructors don't have to search for authentic information.
- ESOL professionals can share expertise on communicating with LEP populations with current and future health care professionals.
- Learners can share their expertise on the LEP experience in U.S. health care with health care partners.

Build relationships.

- Build an ongoing relationship with an area health care provider (e.g., clinic or hospital).
- The provider can learn about your learners, their health care and communication needs, their cultural beliefs and practices, and barriers to care experienced by learners.
- The provider can learn about your program's needs and offerings.
- Learners can receive health education, health screenings, and possibly easier access to primary care through your partnership.

Keep health instruction as authentic and relevant to learners as possible.

- Provide more authentic, up-to-date health literacy education for learners through partnerships with health care professionals. ESOL textbooks do not accurately reflect the communication needs of ELLs trying to access health care.



- Bring health lessons to life for learners with facility tours, health screenings, presentations by health care professionals, demonstrations of medical interpreting, local resource guides, and other authentic experiences/materials.
- Let learners practice asking questions of health care providers, and let providers get more practice answering learners' questions.
- Inform your materials and curriculum development. Health care partners can be part of a health curriculum development process to ensure accurate, up-to-date information on health care, health communication, and system navigation.

Decrease learner fear around health care.

- Many ELLs report anxiety around accessing U.S. health care and interacting with health care providers.
- Encounters with health care professionals and facilities through ESOL classes can help decrease learners' fears of accessing health care and communicating with health care providers.

Resources

[Focus on Basics: Health and Literacy Partnerships](#)

The September 2008 edition of *Focus on Basics* (volume 9, issue B) was published by World Education.

[Focus on Basics: Literacy and Health](#)

The February 2002 edition of *Focus on Basics* (volume 5, issue C) was published by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL).

[In Other Words ... Health-Literacy Partnerships ... Working Together Can Make a Difference](#)

This article by Helen Osborne, M.Ed., OTR/L, appeared in the October 2002 edition of *On Call* magazine. It is available on the Health Literacy Consulting website.



Clinical-Community Relationships Measures (CCRM) Atlas

For insight into ways clinical partners might hope to define, measure, and evaluate a partnership project this resource developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality in March 2013.

