

A Funder's Perspective

*Integrating Health Literacy
Practices, To Achieve Better
Health Outcomes*

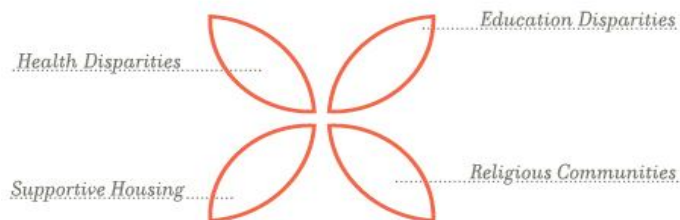
The Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland

- One of 20 ministries of the Sisters of Charity Health System
- Our mission is rooted in the mission of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine
- We are formed from the merger of two foundations:
 - 1973 - Saint Ann Foundation
 - 1996 - Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland
 - 2006 - Merged

MISSION

To extend the values of Jesus Christ by improving the lives of people in need, with special attention to families, women, and children

We seek to address the root causes of poverty through work in these areas:



Our Funding Priorities.

Why Health Literacy

Health Disparities is a strategic focus of the Foundation. Gaps in health status, access to care and health care services remain significant in our community.



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

The Issue

Health literacy lies at the intersection of many socio-economic conditions; from gaps in education to the complexity of the healthcare system.



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

Literacy & Health

- Low literacy, poor health and early death are **strongly linked**.
- Studies have shown that people with limited health literacy skills have been found to be **more likely** to have chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes, and obesity, and less likely to be able to manage the conditions.
- The National Center for Family Literacy maintains the **family is the most important** influence on a child's ability to succeed, and that family literacy is proven to break down barriers to success, including poverty, unemployment, children, and inadequate housing.

(Cleland & Van Ginniken, 1988; Grosee & Auffrey, 1989; Hohn, 1997; Tresserras, Canela, Alvarez, Sentis, & Salleras, 1992).



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

Health Literacy

- Studies have shown that people with low health literacy **understand health information less** well, get **less preventive health care**—such as screenings for cancer—and **use expensive health services** such as emergency department care more frequently.

(Institute of Medicine)



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

The risk of low health literacy

- Research has substantiated an association between low health literacy and poor health outcomes.
 - Chronic disease management (*diabetes, asthma, HIV*)
 - Inappropriate use of Emergency Room
 - Medication errors
 - Utilization of prevention health services (*pap smears, prenatal care, immunizations*)



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

Health Literacy - *Women & Children*

- Low birth weight and infant mortality rates are increased among children of less educated mothers.
- Mothers with more education are likely to have received early prenatal care.
- Mothers with less than 12 years of education are 10 times more likely to smoke during pregnancy.
- Each increase in social position measured by income or education improves the likelihood of being in
- good health.

SOURCE: Rudd, Rima, Harvard School of Public Health, 2002 Slide Presentation

Where Health Literacy Is Going

- **Nationally**, HL's profile is rising with "mentions" in the Affordable Care Act, articles discussing HL in the New England Journal of Medicine, Kaiser Health News and the Washington Post, and HL conferences and Calls to Action by the Institute of Medicine, The Center for Disease Control & Prevention (National Action Plan) and federal government, among others.

National Action Plan for HL

- This National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy seeks to engage organizations, professionals, policymakers, communities, individuals, and families in a linked, multisector effort to improve health literacy. The plan is based on the principles that (1) **everyone has the right to health information that helps them make informed decisions and** (2) **health services should be delivered in ways that are understandable and beneficial to health, longevity, and quality of life.**



The Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland

To improve the health outcomes of those most in need in order to enhance the health status of Cuyahoga County residents with specific emphasis in the Central neighborhood.



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

Objectives

- Improve health literacy skills, particularly among high-risk, low-literacy, underserved populations
- Empower and engaged community of consumers
- Increase integration of health literacy principles, policies and practice among community-based and clinical providers.



SISTERS *of* CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

Addressing Health Literacy

- SOCF launched health literacy initiative in 2007 with a community convening.
- Established a funding partnership with the Cleveland Foundation
- Funded a combination of planning, demonstration, continuation and sustainability/transition grants 2007 – Current.
- Hosted quarterly Health Literacy Circles to build capacity.
- Evaluation – CASE Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods
- Dissemination Report



SISTERS *of* CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

Lessons Learned

- Organizations need to **increase internal capacity** to support the health needs of the community:
 - Trainings to build staff awareness and capacity
 - Revisions of health education materials



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

Lessons Learned

- Health Literacy requires a **cultural change** within organizations to maximize impact and ensure sustainability
 - Organizational leadership
 - Organizational practice



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

Lessons Learned

- Literature and demonstration projects support a focus on families (children 0-5) and older adults/seniors
 - Higher interface with healthcare system
 - Multiple levers that impact health outcomes
 - Vulnerability
 - Disparities and Chronic conditions



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION
OF CLEVELAND

What We've Help to Create

A MOVEMENT

- Local Champions
- Model programs and best practices
- Statewide and regional network and relationships
- Institutional leaders
- Tools and resources

Do your homework!

Understand the funders

- Mission
- Funding priorities
- Alignment
- Strategic Vision
- **Approach to grant making**
- **Response to emerging needs**

Resources

- Center for Disease Control – <http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/>
- The Foundation Center - <http://foundationcenter.org/cleveland/>
- St. Vincent Charity Medical Center – Health Literacy Institute
<http://www.stvincentcharity.com/programs-services/centers-excellence/health-literacy/>

Questions?

Sisters of Charity Foundation of
Cleveland

Tthomas@socfcleveland.org

www.socfdncleveland.org

www.clevelandpromiseneighborhood.org