Health Literacy and Health Care Quality

Moderator: Darren DeWalt, MD, MPH
University of North Carolina School of Medicine
Importance of Health Literacy

• We have accumulated more studies on the relationship between literacy and health
• More interventions published that improve outcomes for people with low literacy
• Little published on the implementation of literacy sensitive care
Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit

• Designed to facilitate implementation of strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of low literacy

• Recognition that knowledge transfer is not enough, need to change individual behavior and system functioning
Successful Implementation Requires

• Winning the hearts and minds of people across a health care organization
• A vision of what care will be
• A sense of urgency to change
• Support and resources from the top
• Integration with other quality initiatives
• Close attention to measurement and feedback
Expert Panel

• All have engaged in system change or evaluation of system change
• First hand experience working with practices and health systems to implement health literacy related quality initiatives
Laura Noonan, MD

- Director of the Center for Advancing Pediatric Excellence
- Levine Children’s Hospital at Carolinas Medical Center

- Leading a health system-wide transformation around health literacy
Cheryl Courtlandt, MD

- Co-Director of the Center for Advancing Pediatric Excellence
- Director of the Pediatric Asthma Program
- Levine Children’s Hospital at Carolinas Medical Center
- Has led several process improvement and patient safety initiatives
- Integration of health literacy with the patient-centered medical home
Angela Brega, PhD

• Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health at the Colorado School of Public Health
• Social psychologist with expertise in measurement, health outcomes, and health psychology
• Leading an AHRQ contract entitled “Demonstration of Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit”

• Measuring whether care and outcomes change when we try to implement health literacy universal precautions