



Launch of the International Health Literacy Association 2016

Report

Lighting a Candle

The dream of an International Health Literacy Association (IHLA) is now a reality. We held three unifying and mobilizing launch meetings and ceremonies to inaugurate IHLA. The meetings were held in Geneva on Oct 9th, on Oct 14th in Washington DC, and on Nov 8th we met in Haiphong, Vietnam. At each event, we lit the orange candle as a symbol to unite people and organizations around the globe for the creation of health literate societies.

We introduced our vision for an association that will nurture professional development in this growing field of health literacy research and practice. I-HLA will be run by and for its members and we introduced our website <http://i-hla.org> where all who are interested can sign up for more information or be active on one of the active Workgroups: 1) membership planning, 2) communication/marketing planning, 3) organizational structure planning, 4) research planning, 5) business planning, 6) policy/advocacy planning, 7) education & professional development planning.

It is our hope that IHLA will be health literacy's professional home – a place where we can exchange ideas about health literacy with others as engaged in the work as we are and as excited about its potential to transform health care delivery and public health, organizations and systems, communities and societies and achieve health literacy for all.



Thank you to all who has contributed to make it possible to reach this stage. We hope many more will join us!

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IHLA Launch Events

Three Unifying & Mobilizing Launch Meetings Took Place in Europe, North-America, and Asia

Century for Global Health Literacy | International Health Literacy Association, Switzerland – Oct 7, 2016

Health Literacy Research Conference (HARC) | International Health Literacy Association, USA – Oct 14, 2016

Asian Health Literacy Association | International Health Literacy Association, Vietnam – Nov 8, 2016

Launch Impressions



Century for Global Health Literacy | International Health Literacy Association, Switzerland – Oct 7, 2016



In Geneva, Switzerland the launch meeting was hosted by Institute of Global Health. The event was streamed online and followed by more than 100 people from 20 countries. Lively discussions took place among the 40 people present joined by the people who were online. The orange candle was lit in the beginning of the day and statements were gathered towards the end, statements concerning the hope and wishes for the future of the new organization.

Launch Impressions



Health Literacy Research Conference (HARC) | International Health Literacy Association, USA – Oct 14, 2016



At the HARC conference in Washington DC, USA, the opening of the HARC Health Literacy Research Conference announced the three unifying events. Nearly 50 people then joined a special session where the International Health Literacy Association was launched. The orange candle brought forward from Geneva was lit and participants discussed past, present and future activities to move forward with our hopes and dreams for an inclusive professional association.

Launch Impressions



Asian Health Literacy Association | International Health Literacy Association, Vietnam – Nov 8, 2016



During the opening of the Asian Health Literacy Conference in Haiphong Vietnam the International Health Literacy Association was launched with over 300 students and professionals present. The Vice-Minister of Health in Vietnam joined the ceremony and the orange candle was lit surrounded by the many international participants at the conference.

Wishes and Hopes

The participants across Europe, Asia and North-America shared their visions, wishes and hopes for the new International Health Literacy Association.

We hope:

- ✓ *IHLA will create open, inclusive forums building on open collaboration, accepting all, driving a young generation and focus on action research.*
- ✓ *Be inclusive, bring in new professionals, disseminate lessons learned, and support each others' work.*
- ✓ *IHLA will focus on collaboration, be strong to move on making a change and provide a better version of health in the world.*
- ✓ *The International Health Literacy Association is a great health literacy society that has members working collaboratively to make people have better health literacy and health systems have competency to interact with complexity of the people effectively.*
- ✓ *The IHLA is speaking up, sharpen your hearing.*
- ✓ *IHLA will fight for easy and clear information on health worldwide and make health related information accessible to all.*

May the IHLA prosper – it comes at the right time and can make a great difference for prioritizing health in the SDG context.

Wishes and Hopes

(continued)

We hope:

- ✓ *To see an African health literacy Association be represented and to stimulate national networks.*
- ✓ *The new IHLA raises the profile of health literacy internationally so we can catch the attention of policy makers, health and social professionals, academics as well as research funders and most importantly the general population. Creating a demand for better health literacy!.*
- ✓ *To focus develop health literacy for the people, by the people and shared with the people.*
- ✓ *That all health literacy strategies and policies include actions targeting vulnerable populations such as migrants and refugees, people from low economic households and the elderly.*
- ✓ *To emphasize that health literacy is about quality of information, decision, consultation and actions. Like all quality issues, you have to start with measuring it to improve it. It has to be measured and improved at the personal and system level in health and other factors of society.*

May the IHLA prosper – it comes at the right time and can make a great difference for prioritizing health in the Sustainable Development Goals context.

The Focus

The International Health Literacy Association (IHLA) will nurture a member-based, inclusive foundation for professional development within the health literacy field. IHLA will serve diverse medical and public health professionals, educators, as well as others engaged in health literacy research and practice. IHLA will serve its members and provide a platform to:

Stimulate and Disseminate Health Literacy Research and Best Practice

- ✓ Publish and support premiere, peer reviewed journals and other publications
- ✓ Maintain a clearinghouse of health literacy activities, projects and practices worldwide
- ✓ Stimulate multidisciplinary and international approaches to research and practice
- ✓ Foster innovation through interdisciplinary, multinational, and regional collaboration
- ✓ Elevate the profile of health literacy research and practice among health literacy professionals, other health care professions, public officials, and the public
- ✓ Foster awareness of health literacy's best practices

Promote Health Literacy Continuing Education and Professional Development

- ✓ Provide and coordinate health literacy professional development globally
- ✓ Provide support to students and faculty in higher education and professional schools
- ✓ Establish a venue for professional service among health literacy practitioners, researchers, and faculty
- ✓ Link researchers, practitioners, and faculty around the world to validate and promote best practices
- ✓ Link members to health literacy resources and services

Advocate for Health Literacy and Raise Awareness Worldwide

- ✓ Advocate for health literacy awareness within the health care delivery and public health practices
- ✓ Raise public awareness about the need to elevate health literacy
- ✓ Engage patients and adult learners in health literacy activities
- ✓ Support health literacy and health education in educational settings and non-formal adult education

Background

A timeline of meetings and discussions on starting a health literacy association

May 2012 – Health Literacy Conference , World Universities Network, Southampton. Meeting with international health literacy experts to discuss possibilities of starting an international organisation.

October 2012 – Health Literacy Research Conference (HARC). Paper presented on results from a needs survey for a health literacy “international platform” to gather guidance on establishing an international health literacy organization.

March 2013 – LINCS Health Literacy Community Online Discussion. Discussion thread entitled, “What Can a Health Literacy Association Do for You?” took place on the LINCS Health Literacy Community online discussion list.

April 2013 – Wisconsin Health Literacy Pre-summit. Meeting on sustaining health literacy collaborations included a discussion of a health literacy association to provide legitimacy, training and support.

April 2013 – Institute of Medicine (IOM) Health Literacy Roundtable. During closing remarks, the need for a health literacy professional development association was proposed. Members of the roundtable were receptive to the idea.

May 2013 – Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA) Health Literacy Conference. Pre-conference session to gather input from the field regarding the need for a health literacy professional association.

June 2013 – Health Literacy Leadership Institute (HLII). Included day-long discussion on a health literacy association. Small groups formed to discuss resources needed, organizational structure and professional development.

October 2013 – Health Literacy Association Twitter Chat. Health Communication, Health Literacy & Social Sciences #hchlits Twitterchat hosted discussion on topic of HL association.

October 2013 – Health Literacy Research Conference (HARC). Open forum discussion of international health literacy association. A one-page position paper distributed and discussed.

2014 -2015 – Building International Collaboration. Outreach to individuals and organizations around the world regarding starting an International Health Literacy Association and planning for the future.

2015 - 2016 – Small group starts meeting via WebEx . Continued discussion. Working groups form. Draft vision and mission statement. Draft organizational structure and bylaws document. International partnerships expand.

November 2015 – Health Literacy Research Conference (HARC). Open breakfast forum engaged in working group discussions on topics such as organizational structure, business planning, and membership.

November 2015 – Asian Health Literacy Association (AHLA). Ready to call for the establishment of an International Health Literacy Association.

May 2016 – International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) Working Group on Health Literacy. Discussion and growing interest in forming International Health Literacy Association.

May 2016 – Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA) Health Literacy Conference. Continued discussion of needs and challenges related to forming International Health Literacy Association.

July 2016 – Health Literacy Discussion List Guess Discussion . Update and engagement of discussion list members. Call for action. Working groups begin to form.

Oct- Nov 2016 – Unifying and launching meeting in Europe, North America and Asia

Moving Forward

International Health Literacy Association

Next Steps

- ✓ Work plans from initial active working groups
- ✓ Continued outreach to individuals and organizations
 - ✓ Proposed organizational structure
 - ✓ Draft and install constitution
- ✓ Membership drive and elect officers
- ✓ 2017 Conference and Meeting(s)

Join us at www.i-hla.org

Sign up FREE - Get more information - Join a work group

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