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Large Five State Health System Standardizes Stroke Patient Education While Significantly Improving Health Literacy

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Readability assessments were used to determine reading grade levels for pre-standardization SPEBs consisting of 7 SPEB among 18 facilities in 5 states, the EO standardized SPEB with and without the additional carotid education, and the carotid education additions alone. These assessments were then used to calculate a readability consensus score (RCS), using an online tool, reported as grade levels.

Written stroke patient education materials are instrumental to improving the patient care experience. Since 2010, national certifying bodies recommend written materials at a maximum reading level of 5th grade to meet health literacy needs. In 2016 certified comprehensive and primary stroke centers from a multi-state health system discovered significant variation among stroke patient education booklets (SPEB) developed by separate facilities/states. In 2018 the health system implemented a standard SPEB by partnering with an external organization (EO) to add information in the SPEB specific to carotid disease and stroke symptoms.

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The recommended 5th grade health literacy level was not achieved based on the RCS.

More research is needed on the impact visual imagery has on health literacy.