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A Quick Guide for Case Managers

Health literacy isn't just a member's ability to read–it's their ability to **find, understand, and use health information to make informed decisions.** Small changes in how we communicate can have a big impact on medication adherence, safety, and overall health outcomes.

1 Use the “Teach-Back” Method



After discussing a medication or care plan, ask members to explain it back in their own words.

☑ **Try this:** “I want to make sure I explained that clearly. Can you tell me how you’ll take this medication?”

☒ **Avoid:** “Do you understand?”

Members often say “yes” even when they’re unsure.

2 Watch for Signs of Confusion

Members may struggle with health information but are hesitant to say so.

Look for:

- Missed doses or medication errors
- Difficulty explaining medication purpose
- Unopened medication bottles or unopened packets
- Frequently missed appointments
- Difficulty explaining recent care instructions
- Uncertainty about next steps after a doctor’s visit
- Multiple ED visits
- Difficulty identifying current medications
- Reliance on family member to explain health information



These are red flags that a member may need additional education or support.

3 Simplify Medical Language

Use everyday words whenever possible.

Remember: Clear communication isn't "dumbing it down" – it's improving understanding.

Instead of...	Try...
Hypertension	High blood pressure
Medication adherence	Taking medications as prescribed
Care coordination	Help connect your healthcare services
Prior authorization	Approval from your health plan
Polypharmacy	Taking many medications
Specialist referral	A recommendation to see another doctor
Care transition	Moving from one care setting to another

4 Make Medication Routines Easy to Understand

Helpful questions:

- "Walk me through how you take your medications each day."
- "What helps you remember to take them?"
- "What challenges make it difficult to stay on schedule?"
- "What happens when you're away from home or your routine changes?"
- "Who helps you manage your medications?"

These questions often uncover barriers that may not come up otherwise.

5 Reduce Complexity

During member conversations, listen for:

- Confusion about medication instructions
- Multiple prescribers involved in care
- Frequent medication changes
- Missed refills
- Cost concerns
- Transportation barriers
- Difficulty remembering medications
- Caregiver confusion

Members managing multiple chronic conditions often benefit from medication synchronization and organized packaging that simplifies daily routines. Consistent organization can support both understanding and adherence.

6 Involve Caregivers Whenever Possible

Family members and caregivers often help reinforce education between conversations.

Consider asking: "Would it be helpful for them to hear this information too?"

A second set of ears can significantly improve understanding and follow-through.

7 Connect Health Information to What Matters Most

Members are more likely to engage when they understand how a recommendation supports a goal that matters to them.

Healthcare recommendations often focus on clinical outcomes, but members typically focus on quality of life, independence, family, and daily activities.

Try asking:

- "What's most important for your health right now?"
- "What activities would you like to continue doing?"
- "What concerns you most about your health?"
- "What would make managing your health easier?"

Examples:

Instead of...	Try...
You need better medication adherence	Taking your medications consistently can help you stay healthy enough to continue living independently.
You need to follow up with your doctor	This follow-up appointment can help prevent bigger health issues later.
You need to manage your diabetes more carefully	Keeping your blood sugar under control can help you continue doing the things that are important to you.

Why It Matters

When members understand how healthcare recommendations connect to their personal goals, they are more likely to stay engaged and follow through with their care plan.

Reminder

Health literacy isn't about how much information we provide–it's about how much information the member understands and can act on.

A few extra minutes spent confirming understanding may help prevent medication errors, avoid hospitalizations, and support healthier aging.

Quick Health Literacy Check

Before ending the member interaction, ask yourself:

- ☑ Does they know what each medication is for?
- ☑ Can they explain when and how they take it?
- ☑ Do they know who to call with questions?
- ☑ Do they understand follow-up care instructions?
- ☑ Have barriers to care been identified and discussed?
- ☑ Does the care plan fit their daily routine and circumstances?
- ☑ Was caregiver involvement discussed, if appropriate?

If you have a member who would benefit from a simplified medication routine, call **1-844-287-1609** or email **casemanagement@anewhealthrx.com**.