



WATERFORD LITERACY LINK

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**Health Literacy
Breakfast Seminar
Thursday May 26 2011**

Health Literacy Breakfast Seminar

- **Welcome**
- **Introduction to Waterford Literacy Link**
- **Health Literacy Initiative for Waterford**
- **Waterford Healthy Cities Initiative, Michael Garland**
- **Health Literacy – NALA, Jennifer Lynch**
- **Health Literacy – HSE, Sarah O’Brien**
- **Users and providers views**

Health Literacy Breakfast Seminar

- **Waterford Literacy Link established in 2008**
- **Recommendation was to establish a coordinating network across the city**
- **The link is comprised of community groups, support agencies and other stakeholders involved in supporting adult literacy learners across Waterford**
 - ▣ **to raise awareness about adult literacy**
 - ▣ **to increase access to services for those with literacy difficulties**
 - ▣ **to develop clear referral systems across support agencies for literacy learners**

Waterford Literacy Link

**Community Development Programmes, Family Resource Centres,
Schools & Work Placement Programmes**

City of Waterford VEC

Waterford City Council

Waterford Institute of Technology

Waterford Area Partnership



Waterford Literacy Link

- **Health Literacy Initiative – Why?**
- **Waterford Healthy Cities Initiative**
- **Importance of Health Literacy**
- **Literacy Link had previous links with medical practitioners**
- **On going initiative supported with training and research**

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- **Some questions for this morning:**
- **What is Health Literacy?**
- **Why is it important?**
- **What can you do about improving access to your services for service users who may have literacy difficulties?**

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- **Health Literacy – a definition**
- **“The capacity of individuals to obtain, process and understand the basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions” (Seldon, Zorn, Ratzan & Parker 2000)**
- **An individuals ability to be able to manage their own health – ask the right questions – read and understand prescriptions, follow medical instructions/guidelines and access services**

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- IALS (1996) almost 60% of those surveyed did not understand the word *prognosis*
- In Waterford the population as per the last census (2006) was 45,748 of which 33,630 are over 20
- IALS identified 1 in 4 adults with very low literacy levels
- This equates to approximately 8,500 adults in Waterford with very low literacy levels

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- **Impact of low literacy levels and low levels of health literacy**
 - **Misuse of services**
 - **Misuse of medication**
- **Leads to poor quality of life, poor health**

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- **Michael Garland, Chief Executive, Waterford Chamber, member steering committee Waterford Healthy Cities**

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- **Jennifer Lynch, National Adult Literacy Agency**

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- **Sarah O'Brien, Health Services Executive**

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- **Michael Power (User) and Joann Power (City of Waterford VEC())**
- **Cormac Johnston (Waterford Health Park) and Gayle Barry (Waterford Area Partnership)**



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